The Speech-Act Theory in Theological Hermeneutics

BY

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SUMMARY

This dissertation offers an interdisciplinary analysis of some features of the *Speech-Act Theory* in biblical hermeneutics. It highlights some of the probable aspects of the studied analysis regarding hermeneutic issues within biblical and theological analysis. The paper shall describe the philosophical interpretation of the examination of the *Speech-Act Theory*. It will focus on the principles and standards of demarcating the Speech-Acts and allocating the written texts theory. The paper shall also describe the difference between 'weak' and 'strong' speech acts. The dissertation shall commence by analysing the main concerns about the speech act theory. It will concentrate on the works of Thiselton and Vanhoozer's works and modifies their works with the aim of highlighting some of the key elements of their hermeneutics. Therefore, the dissertation shall offer the views of Thiselton and Vanhoozer and differentiate their two different views of the *Speech-Act Theory* in the field of the hermeneutics in search for a third option.

Key terms: Speech-Act Theory, Vanhoozer, Thiselton, Theological Hermeneutics, Interdisciplinary, Difference between Vanhoozer and Thiselton, Biblical Interpretation

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1. Research Objective

The objective of this work is to compare critically and juxtapose the approaches of Thiselton and Vanhoozer respectively on the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological hermeneutics. While both Thiselton and Vanhoozer rely on the *Speech-Act Theory* in biblical interpretation, each of these utilises the *Speech-Act Theory* differently; therefore, this study aims to differentiate the use of the *Speech-Act Theory* of Thiselton and Vanhoozer in search of a responsible heuristic tool.

2. Research Questions

The research questions in this study are as follows:

1. How do Thiselton and Vanhoozer differ on the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological hermeneutics?
2. How do Thiselton and Vanhoozer agree on the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological hermeneutics?
3. What are the scholarly influences Thiselton and Vanhoozer in their conception and ideas surrounding the *Speech-Act Theory* have?

3. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is critical information that will be added and disseminated concerning Thiselton and Vanhoozer's view of the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological hermeneutics to an already existing knowledge base in this area of inquiry. This study will compare the views of Thiselton and Vanhoozer and differentiate their two different views of the *Speech-Act Theory* in the area of hermeneutics in search for a third option.

4. **Methodology**

This study will comprise of an extensive and comprehensive review of literature which will be a comparative analysis of the views of Vanhoozer and Thiselton in relation to the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological hermeneutics. First a literature review will be conducted that will be lengthy, presenting the view of Vanhoozer and Thiselton separately. The literature review will be followed by a comparative analysis of the writings of Thiselton and Vanhoozer on the *Speech-Act Theory*. The work of Collier (1993:105) entitled, "The Comparative Method" states that comparison is a key analytical tool which serves to fine tune descriptive power and which also plays a critical role in formulation of concepts through the suggestions of contrasts and similarities among the cases (Collier 1993:105). Furthermore, Collier (1993:105) relates that comparison is a tool utilised in the testing of hypotheses and can serve as a contribution to discovery that is inductive and the construction of new hypotheses in building theories.

5. **Hypothesis**

The stated hypothesis in this study is that the views of Vanhoozer are based on the fact that language is a God-given endowment to human beings so that they can communicate with God and among themselves meaning that language is covenantal in nature while Thiselton's development of the *Speech-Act Theory* is so reliant on the work of others and so incomplete, although he holds that there is an almost mysterious and immanent meaning contained in scriptural text of the Bible, he fails to inform readers of his work sufficiently for them to further explore or embrace *Speech-Act Theory*.

6. Statement of the Problem

There are similarities as well as differences in the views of Vanhoozer and Thiselton on the *Speech-Act Theory* of Hermeneutics which ultimately makes a great difference in the interpretation of biblical text.

7. Background to the Study

The *Speech-Act Theory* was one first proposed by Moral Philosophy at Oxford University professor, J.L. Austin (Minton 2014). Austin is reported to have been a tutor and lecturer who was charismatic and that influenced his students immensely (Minton 2014). Unfortunately, Austin passed away in 1960 and had not at that time rendered his theory into a written publication (Minton 2014). Yet, Austin is reported to have set out his view on language in his lectures and other works in writing which were published after he died (Minton 2014). In understanding the effect of the language theory of Austin the context must be understood (Minton 2014). While Austin was still lecturing, the philosophy most dominant in language in England was that proposed in the work entitled, "Language, Truth and Logic" written by A.J. Ayer (1946) and this was the primary context for all philosophy in language throughout the decade of the 1950s (Minton 2014). It is reported that Ayer proposed a version of what was termed 'Logical Positivism' among the philosophers in the 'Vienna Circle' and was an approach stated to have been, "most notable for the principle of verification" (Minton 2014:21). This principle was held by Ayer to be such that it could make a determination of whether a sentence can be taken literally (Minton 2014). Quite simply this formulation would be such that there was literal meaning in a sentence however only, "if the proposition it expressed was either analytic or empirically verifiable" (Minton 2014:21). From the view of Ayer, "unless a statement satisfied the principle of verification, it would not be capable of being understood in the sense in which other scientific hypotheses or common-sense statements are habitually understood" (Minton 2014:22). Austin held that Ayer was not providing a description of ordinary language

or language that is actual, and the assumption of Ayers is that the act of speaking or the use of language is for the performance of action and to have dialogues that are ongoing with others. Austin differed from Ayer in that language is not utilised for the primary purpose of description and cannot be analysed through deeming it to be false or true (Minton 2014). It can be thus understood that the:

> fundamental insight which underlies *Speech-Act Theory* is that speaking is an action and a performance, rather than simply a report or a description of factual states of affairs and that spoken utterances are thus not, or not merely, true or false but are also actions which effect changes in states of affairs (Minton 2014:22).

The *Speech-Act Theory*, according to Botha (2006) cannot be held to be a language theory that is comprehensive in nature and that can be used in isolation from other language theories because of the focus on specific utterances in a certain situation of speech and therefore is far too narrow to apply comprehensively. There are essential components of the *Speech-Act Theory* including insofar as how language is utilised to perform various acts and to include what Austin termed as, "the putative constative-performative divide" (Minton 2014:22). Included in the performative action through use of language categories are: (1) locutionary; (2) illocutionary; and (3) perlocutionary acts (Minton 2014; Kubo 2001). It is suggested by Austin that other than etiolations and such are, "parasitic on normal usage" and "are a combination of phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts" (Minton 2014:23; Kubo 2001). Rhetic acts are reported to be comprised by a meaning or definition that is comprised by "their sense and reference" (Minton 2014:23; Kubo 2001). Therefore, it was held by Austin that when one partakes in the:

> act of uttering phonetic, phatic and rhetic acts, and this 'act of saying something' he calls the performance of a locutionary act" stated to be akin to an utterance of a specific sentence using a certain sense along with a

reference and therefore, "to utter a 'normal sentence' that makes sense, is to perform a locutionary act" (Minton 2014:23).

Illocutionary acts are reported to be according to Austin utterances that have the force of convention or the act is performance in something being stated (Minton 2014:23).

Therefore, the act that is locutionary can be understood as being the act being performed through what is stated (Minton 2014). However, it was later observed by Austin that in reality there is not any actual locutionary act which is pure because all language acts are performative because to say is to effectively act (Minton 2014). Therefore, there is an ongoing and virtual aspect of utterance meanings that are in use (Minton 2014). The perlocution is stated by Austin to be the language act category most likely to present challenges these are what he terms illocutions since each of these are not like the locutionary act of performative in nature since locution does not have any force and is essentially not real (Minton 2014). In 1963, it is reported that Donald Evans suggested that the *Speech-Act Theory* might be utilised for such as biblical hermeneutics and the work of Evans was then undertaken by Thiselton who is reported to have resulted in more interest in this theory (Minton 2014). Thiselton is reported to have made many references to Austin in his own writings (Minton 2014). However, Vanhoozer did not enter into the *Speech-Act Theory* through the work of Evans and has a particular interest in the utilisation of the *Speech-Act Theory* in his attempt to regain the idea known as 'authorial intention' in defence of the concept launched by Derrida as well as others (Minton 2014). According to Briggs in the work entitled, "The Uses of *Speech-Act Theory* in biblical interpretation":

> The various types of communicative situation relevant to biblical interpretation can be grouped into two broad categories: those where the communication takes place within the narrative world of the biblical text…and those where the communication takes place between the author and the reader, or the narrator and the reader. To my mind this distinction corresponds roughly to that noted by Buss concerning whether *Speech-Act*

Theory is a tool for exegesis (i.e. relating to speech-acts within the narrative world) or whether it is part of the reconceptualisation of exegesis (concerning how a reader is acted upon by the speech-acts of the text) (Minton 2014:24).

Translation of the Bible is such that it, "intersects with theology" in the simplest manner in that the source of all Christian theology is that of the Bible. This means that it is obligatory that biblical interpretation is focused on the expression of the words that are actually present in the text that was originally written to ensure interpretation of an accurate nature (Ryken 2002). A speech theory that is accurate and sufficient is based upon the acknowledgement that speech is inherently a communication form (Solum 1989) Communication is generally for message transmission (Solum 1989). However, there is more to speech than just communication or in other words speech does more than simply communicate information and to grasp a sentence's full meaning makes a requirement that the reader has more information about the conditions of that truth being written (Solum 1989). For example, such as giving orders, or making promises, making apologies and greeting another are all communication but cannot be explained simply as instances of communication being conveyed (Solum 1989). The speech-act is such that might simply be an utterance but could also be the "assertion of a proposition, as purposive action, or as affecting the listener" (Solum 1989:87).

The work of Briggs (2003:25) entitled, "*Getting Involved: Speech-Acts and biblical Interpretation*" stated that the idea that, "the words of the scripture themselves could be living and active puts us in the area of *Speech-Act Theory*: a speech-act being an act performed in (or by) speech." This theory of speech-act is reported to be "a fashionable option" (Briggs 2003:25). Hermeneutics is reported by Briggs (2003) to be, "the science or art of interpretation, and the challenge facing Bible readers today is to hear the voice of God across the immense gap which separates our modern and/or postmodern world from the 'world of the text'" (Briggs 2003:25). Represented in the gap are such as language, history, worldview, culture and of course theology

(Briggs 2003). The 'Correspondence Theory of Truth' is in the form that is the most simple and suggests that the proposition is indeed true in relation to its correspondence "to reality, when what it asserts to be the case is the case" (Moreland 2005:76). The sentence is an object that is linguistic in nature and formulated by markings in strings that can be perceived, and which are formulated in alignment with a set of rules that are syntactical and arbitrary depending on the specific culture and that are well-formed in terms of grammar. A proposition's truth is based on facts (Moreland 2005). Yet to the postmodernist, formed loosely by a group of thinkers who are quite diverse and who come from academic disciplines that are different and represent reinterpreting precisely what knowledge actually is and a determination of what can be accounted as knowledge (Moreland 2005). Postmodernism is also such that is representative of relativism that is culturally-based in relation to truth, reality or reason and meaning in the area of linguistics (Moreland 2005). Furthermore, postmodernism holds that no objective truth or reality exists and that each of these are quite simply constructed socially and arise from linguistic practices and have no relevance for the individual but only for groups that are social in nature and that have a sharing in the narrative (Moreland 2005). R. Albert Mohler (2005) writes in the work entitled *Truth and Contemporary Culture* that God has almost disappeared from scripture reading and meaning due to the minimalist thinking in the postmodern narrative. Briggs (2003) states that it is necessary therefore to understand what comprises a bridge of understanding that is excellent and states that this type of excellent bridge is such that makes provision of a link between the text and the reader and enables a dialogue both ways across this bridge. Theological hermeneutics is concerned with the manner in which a text is read and specifically in terms of principles and rules to be used in the reading (Yale Divinity 2009). Specifically, theological hermeneutics is the search for the meaning of a text and specifically its normative meaning and interpretation that is valid (Yale 2009). Discourse is such that it is a temporal realisation as well as one that is present and is a language system which is "virtual and outside of time" (Ricoeur 1973:131). However, an ever-present question

is who is speaking and determined by indicators that are complex and inclusive of personal pronouns and for this reason discourse is such that it "is self-referential" (Ricoeur 1973:131).

According to Briggs (2004) the *Speech-Act Theory* was coined by J.L. Austin in 1955 at Harvard and is a theory that is concerned with language and its performative language and specifically, "how language utterances are operative and have effects whether they occur in face-to-face personal conversation or in any communicative action." This is echoed in the work of Childs (2005) and Both (2007). This was provided by utterances such as, 'I do' at the appropriate time in a wedding ceremony. Another example is the naming of a ship by a celebrity after smashing a bottle of champagne against it pronouncing, "I name this ship the Titanic" (Austin 1962:11). At some point, there is the creation of responsibility through the simple act of pronouncing that, 'I shall be present at 10:00 on Monday morning'. In all these cases, there is the performance of acts through the application of speech (Austin 1962). Thiselton did not construct the *Speech-Act Theory*. However, the subject now stands as the most developed. He was successful in accounting for most of his performance utterances (Briggs 2003). The outstanding debate concerns the direction in which his work was developed. He developed a significant approach by concentrating on the idea of conversational implications. He provides various ways that ranges from conciliatory methods to some more partisan contributions like logical-linguistic stress (Topping 2016).

According to Thiselton the *Speech-Act Theory* has developed several applications. In this regard, there is a great interest in the *Speech-Act Theory* (Briggs 2004). Previous studies of the *Speech-Act Theory* were applied to biblical languages. Of late there has been a great increase in the interest in the *Speech-Act Theory* by theological and biblical studies (Stiver 2007:145). On the other hand, there is concern about the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological and biblical studies. First, Thiselton says that the concept of prerogative language appears to be constructed by individuals that are opposed (Poythress 2008). The theological *Speech-Act Theory* established that the

resources are transformed by their findings and purpose and developed a new ideology of biblical Scriptures. Therefore, it is better to remain with the doctrine of the Orthodox Protestants and the Scriptures.

According to Thiselton, the *Speech-Act Theory* aims at placing aspects of theology into various articles. Thiselton proves the fact that language does have some propositions that act as the basic prerogative of languages (Oliverio 2009). Thiselton rejects the opposing ideas from biblical intellectuals who have expressed the purposes of biblical language. According to him, "the Bible is a performative symbol that semantically conveys the contents" (Oliverio 2009: 55). The primary purpose of every language is to refer Thiselton, "applied this insight to the Bible in general as it seeks to contextualise the sophisticated evaluation of the modern hermeneutics" (Brown 2007; Bowald 2007; Bock 2015:34). Thiselton emphasises the self-evolving characteristics of biblical language. This only applies to the reading of the Bible as a learning process that is involved in the authors association with the subject matter. As a theologian, he focuses on different analytical aspects that are offered by the *Speech-Act Theory* (Childs 2005). He evaluates the literary details in numerous biblical *genres* that are perceived from various forms of speech-acts as a function that is related to its authority and truth (Blue 2002:171). He outlines proper descriptions of biblical doctrines of the speech-act as the Scriptures apply them to God (Thiselton 2007:74). There is a modern development in Trinitarian hermeneutics in the discussions and negotiations within contemporary literary theory, hermeneutics and theology (Jeanrond 2005:66). Briggs (2013:57) the scriptural texts always have a view and it is necessary for approaches in hermeneutics, "to be measured against the overarching goals of why Scripture is being read" and meaning that those who are reading God's word for a better understanding of God will be for a different purpose than the individual reading the scripture for the purpose of historical stratification of the communities of the Bible.

Thiselton has appropriated the *Speech-Act Theory* in an insightful and innovative manner with philosophical protection by the act of God that indeed speaks through the Bible. He established that the *Speech-Act Theory* has an important implication in society (Oliverio 2009). His works are, therefore, important as the concerns and the arguments of his findings unfold. The *Speech-Act Theory* is relevant, especially for theologians. However, the theological appeal of this theory remains pragmatic and *ad hoc* for some tasks (Hunter 2006). It should not be assumed that special hermeneutics need to be subsumed in general hermeneutics, but it needs to be entailed in biblical doctrines that remain untouched by the questions of general hermeneutics (Green and Turner eds. 2000:204; Munday 2016). The principles of the special activity theory are useful as it studies doctrinal and theological formulations.

According to the *Speech-Acts Theory* of 1979 John, R. Searle explained the various actions that relate to the acts of speech. It entails getting words that match other words in the utterances or performances (Blue 2002). This is the opposite of the other descriptive proposition of getting the words that are equal to the world while it aims at reflecting or representing the global reality (Thiselton 2007, Bock: 2015). Systematic theology could be described through the analogy that was derived from the Anscombe philosophy that indicates that a shopping list is the active reason of the world while there is a similarity of the store that matches the kitchen. This acts as a directive performance. Similarly, there appears to be a static fact in the reflection on the conduct of a shopper, if the store could give a report about the conduct of a shopper.

There appears to be numerous theological applications of this concept. The first application will be the aspect of Jesus, pronunciation about the forgiveness of sin. The paper will look at the validity of forgiveness that is subject to the authority and the status of the speaker. According to Matthew 9:2 Jesus announced, "Your sins are forgiven" (Adam 2006:27). Jesus is, therefore, applying the use of speech through a status that appears to be Christological despite those that criticise him, like the Pharisees. Jesus is here acting in the position of God.

God selected the aspect of freedom while making the covenant promise. God remained committed to what He had promised (Steiner 2010). In essence, He will not keep back on His promise. According to the speech-act, it reveals how constrained and limited God was in his own acts by His speech without a compromise to his sovereignty. There are various theological implications related to speech-acts as indicated by Richard Briggs. The speech-act explains the theological impact of the theory of speech that produces great results for biblical studies and systematic theology.

Briggs (2003) states that hermeneutics "is the science or art of interpretation" (25). The hermeneutic analysis of the *Speech-Act Theory* includes a description of the crucial elements from systematic theology. It is important for the purpose of the present interpretation of the Bible. The theory liberates the history of theology that has now become more tedious due to numerous failures and successes of the past. Accordingly, hermeneutics is nowadays comprised by interdisciplinary studies. According to the Systematic Theology of Thiselton, there is a relationship between the *Speech-Act Theory*, hermeneutics, philosophy and the exegesis of the Bible.

Indeed, the concepts of theological hermeneutics and religious language have been considerably used in the past number of years regarding aspects of the variant forms of foundationalism. This aspect remains applicable to the American Society due to the disintegrating result of the supposed consensus of enlightenment about intellectual inquiry. This has now become common in the theology and philosophy of America because of the self-centredness that comes without a continuous tradition (Jeanrond 2005, Briggs 2004:23). The *Speech-Act Theory* is considered to be postmodern as it seeks to propose understanding of the doctrines of religion. Thiselton, Evans and Vanhoozer explicitly highlight a path between the models of the cognitive proposition, the experimental express models and the religious languages that typify the liberal position. Scholars apply a linguistic-cultural model as an option. It operates as a

descriptive method that is personified through the traditions that provide the language currency (Larkin 2003, Bleicher 2014:47).

The *Speech-Act Theory* expresses the traditional options of dissatisfaction. There has been a proposal of a dichotomy between the language of experience and the language of fact that is transcended by the media in a third way. However, the cultural tradition's *Speech-Act Theory* of Thiselton, Evans and Vanhoozer is reported to be such that:

> highlights how a speaker invests itself in any utterances as he seeks to take a stance with a personal backing. The scholars posit a different axis as a method to establish the sense of the content of the *Speech-Act Theory* that demonstrates the two-integral links. The *Speech-Act Theory* is post-foundationalism in dealing with some particular hermeneutical aspects that offer no basis for the practice of epistemological linguistics. The application of language in religion is non-foundational and self-consciously according to the *Speech-Act Theory*. Thiselton, Evans and Vanhoozer presented the *Speech-Act Theory* framework. Their work articulates how God speaks in the biblical context (Bock 2015:38).

It acts as a philosophical polemic fact that is incoherent with the Bible and how God speaks through it, which is the reformed epistemology that is used in the foundations of the religious belief theory. Thiselton suggests and recommends the *Speech-Act Theory* framework since God speaks to humanity through Biblical texts in context. This is referred to as the reformed epistemology that is intended to blunt and negate the epistemological theories and conceptual basis related to religious beliefs (Porter and Robinson 2011:36). These scholars suggest that the biblical locutions indicate that God speaks in the production of illocutionary acts. However, it is not clear how one can make substantive progress in elucidating what is being said by God (Oliverio 2009). Apparently, the speaking of God remains secured in the situation as opening of a gap that may be considered between the divine locutions and the textual locutions. According to the analysis, for something to be considered as a divine locution tight

rules must be applied in order not to offer important problems in interpretation (Ward 2002).

8. Development of the *Speech-Act Theory*

The significance hermeneutically speaking of a verbal tradition is most clear in relation to written tradition (Gadamer 1975). The manner in which language can be detached from speaking devices through putting that into writing results in, "a unique coexistence of past and present, insofar as present consciousness has the possibility of a free access to everything handed down in writing" (Gadamer 1975:391). From the view of Gadamer(1975) texts have the power and at all times are expressive of the whole and even texts that are not clear when taken into the context of the whole can be comprehended (Gadamer 1975:392). Understanding is also reported to have a direct relation to the verbal tradition (Gadamer 1975).The work of Smith (1991) reports a study that examines precisely what the speech-act really is or what the speech-act should be and reports that the *Speech-Act Theory* had its origins and was conceived as a theory in the area of language philosophy and for the purpose of providing an explanation of the manner in which language is used by that since its emergence the *Speech-Act Theory* has been used more widely. The work of J.L. Austin is reported to have conducted an examination of the idea that when facts are stated this should be in some manner verifiable (Smith 1991). Austin had the belief that many problems were philosophical in nature resulted because there was a tendency for all utterances to be treated as being statements that were verifiable (Smith 1991). Austin termed statements that were straightforward and factual to be 'constative' (Smith 1991). However, Austin also stated that there are statements that failed to provide a description, or a report of truth and that sentence is merely, "a part of the doing of an action which would not normally be described as saying something" (Smith 1991:2).

It is reported that Austin was speaking of such statements as, "I name this ship…" (Smith 1992:3). According to Austin when there were problems with performatives

these were infelicities and with this said the distinction was made by Austin between utterances that were performative and constative (Smith 1991). Austin further conducted an analysis of utterances that are constative and performative and viewed a type of entailment that involved utterances that were performative, and the example stated is that, "I 'promise' entails 'I ought'" and it is reported that in relation to this that Austin was somewhat unhappy about the idea that constative and performative utterances each have entailments (Smith 1991). Austin says, that a problem that existed is that there is no way to verify every statement as being either a truth of falsehood and went on to conduct an analysis that was detailed in relation to "the nature of performative statements" and then made an attempt to relate a more general way of this idea in all statements (Smith 1991). However, the conclusion of Austin is that "all utterances that he examined had a happiness or unhappiness dimension, an illocutionary force, a truth/falsehood dimension and a locutionary meaning; and he argued that what was required was a study of the range of illocutionary forces of an utterance" (Smith 1991:3).

Vanderveiken (2001) sets out five total illocutionary language points including the following with their associated functions: (1) assertive point – representation of the situation of the world; (2) commissive point – the speaker becomes committed to do something; (3) directive point – attempting to gain some action from the hearer; (4) declaratory point – something is being done by the author setting a representation of it being done; and (5) expressive point – an expression of attitudes.

Logic that is illocutionary in nature is new to the scene of hermeneutical understanding (Leclerc 2001). However, language and its grammar are not such that can be merely "reduced to its declarative fragment (Lerclerc 2001:63). The mood of verbs that are perlocutionary may be such that can be either, "psychological states and propositional attitudes, or even to dispositions…all of these moods of thought are as many 'energies' of the mind, a dynamic concept that plays approximately the same role as that of 'illocutionary force' in *Speech-Act Theory*" (Leclerc 2001:86). Austin is reported to

have contrasted performative with constatives holding that performatives constituted actions including stating an order and making promises while constatives constituted 'sayings' such as describing or stating (Searle 2001). However, this was not workable since some types of performatives including those of warnings may either be true or be false (Searle 2001). If the application of Austin toward performatives that are explicit is adopted for use, there is a resulting requirement to make a distinction between utterances that are performative and sentences and verbs that are performative (Searle 2001). The sentence that is performative is held to be one in which the utterance that is literal in circumstances that are appropriate is constitutive of an illocutionary act being performed (Searle 2001). However, the utterance that is performative is such that utters a sentence that is performative, and which represents an act being performed and which the expression in the sentence which is performative names (Searle 2001). Finally, a verb that is performative is one that may occur as the performative sentence's primary verb (Searle 2001). Searle (2001) states the need to acknowledge that verbs exist in a specific class and which possess the idea of intention and which is included in their meaning and states specifically as follows:

> To say that a person performed the act named by the verb implies that he or she did it intentionally, that if it wasn't intentional, then the agent didn't do it under that description. Illocutionary verbs characteristically have this feature. I cannot, e.g., promise unintentionally. If I didn't intend it as a promise, then it wasn't a promise (Searle 2001:101).

Thoughts that are conceptual in nature are such that pointed toward facts and objects within the world and which are "represented by their propositional content". So, they have conditions of satisfaction (Searle 2001:117). Therefore, assertion and judgment meet with satisfaction where they are true and the same can be said for intentions at the time those intentions are executed and the same for kept promises (Melo 2001). Searle holds that four potential directions exist for the language-world fit including

those which are, "particular to assertions" or that is directed by world toward things and "particular to promises and orders" or that is directive from things toward words, "particular to illocutionary acts of declarations" or that has a fit in a double direction; and those which are congratulatory or thankful and which are held to be empty or null (Melo 2001:117). While Searle in the theory of intentionality only takes under consideration just, "three directions of fit between the mind and the world" Melo posits the addition of "the double direction of fit between the mind and the world" (Melo 2001:122).

Searle was Austin's student and differs from his teacher in various areas (Smith 1991). Specifically, it is reported that Searle was sceptic about the distinctions that Austin made concerning the acts that are perlocutionary, locutionary and illocutionary and instead is reported to have preferred "a rigorous approach to the description of illocutionary acts" (Smith 1991:3). Second there is a difference in Seale's and Austin's emphasis on the speech-act in terms of its meaning and force since,

> the force of a speech-act is a form of gradation of particular type of speech-act. Thus, if we accept directive as a term to describe those speech-acts that are attempts by the speaker to get the hearer to carry out an action, then a suggestion would carry a weak force whereas a command would carry a stronger force (Smith 1991:3).

Illocutionary force then was the cornerstone of Searle's theory however, it is reported that Austin was more highly focused on the speech-acts of the individual than on the illocutionary force (Smith 1991). It was the claim of Searle that there are just four "directions of fit in language" and that those included the following:

> (1) Word-to-World, where the utterance fits as independently existing state of affairs in the world. A statement of fact; (2) World-to-Word, where the work is altered to fit the propositional content of the illocution. An example of such an act would be a directive speech-act, such as an order; (3) the double direction of fit is when the world is altered to fit the propositional content of

the utterance be being represented as so altered. For example: I name this ship the SS Titanic; and (4) the null direction of fit. Where there is no question of achieving success of fit between the word and world. (Those where the speaker is expressing his feelings). (Smith 1991:4).

However, Smith (1991) states that Searle's view falls short because it only acknowledges two dimensions and results in the denial of the potential for relationships that are referential. Searle did however, state that there were differences in the types of illocutionary acts and identifies 12 differences of importance including: (1) reasons for the act type and the differences (2) the fit between the words and world difference in terms of direction; (3) psychological state expressed difference; (4) strength or force differences; (5) hearer and speakers differences in terms of status; (6) the manner that the utterances relate to the hearer and speaker's interest; (7) differences as it relates to the entirety of the discourse; (8) propositional content differences when illocutionary force makes the determination with indicating devices; (9) differences between the acts that are always speech-acts and acts which can never be speech-acts; (10) differences that exist between the acts that make a requirement of instruction that is extra-linguistic for performance and those which do not make this requirement; (11) Differences that exist between the acts where the illocutionary verb that corresponds does and does not have a use that is performative; and (12) the illocutionary act which has performance styles which are different (Smith 1991). There are five categories in Searle's speech-act conception including those of: (1) assertive (predict, insist, assert); (2) directives (order, direct); (3) commissive (threaten, promise); (4) expressive (thank, apologise, praise); and (5) declaratives or the types of acts that result in a real-life change to occur that is viewed clearly within the world. (Smith 1991; Vanderveiken 2001). Smith (1991) reports that the formal *Speech-Act Theory* is related in the work of Searle and VanderVeiken (1985) and states specifically that in the formal *Speech-Act Theory* that the idea "of illocutionary force is central to this theory" (9). Searle and VanderVeiken (1985) are reported to have stated: "Part of the meaning of an elementary sentence is that its literal utterance in a

given context constitutes the performance of an illocutionary act of a particular illocutionary force" (Smith 1991:9). Searle and VanderVeiken (1985) state that there are seven components of the illocutionary force including: (1) its purpose; (2) its strength; (3) its mode for achievement; (4) propositional content conditions; (5) preparatory conditions; (6) sincerity conditions; and (7) sincerity condition strength (Smith 1991). The formal theory further holds that there are five specific illocutionary points including those of; (1) assertive point; (2) commissive point; (3) directive point; (4) declarative point; and (5) expressive point (Smith 1991). Clearly, there are various views of *Speech-Act Theory* in terms of the aspects of importance when assigning meaning to text.

The work of Bianku (2015:5) states that the work of Austin observes that some utterances are a miss of what it is thought as a primary property of all statements and that being 'truth value' and as such fail to report or describe however, the sentence being uttered is "the doing of an action." According to Austin, these are performatives which are different from that of constitutes since the demand of performatives is for circumstances which are proper as well as language that is appropriate (Bianku 2015). In addition, it is reported that the verb that is performative is in the tense of the present (Bianku 2015). Austin is reported to go on to form categories of the circumstances which are such that can allow the utterance function to be performative (Bianku 2015). It is reported that the circumstances range of an act is inclusive of, "the existence of recognised conventional procedure holding a definite conventional effect. The concentration of attention is no longer sentences but the releasing of an utterance in a speech-act situation" (Bianku 2015:1). Speech-acts are reported to be, "performed by utterances, which are made up of a locutionary act, an illocutionary act and a perlocutionary act" (Bianku 2015:5). It is reported to be suggested in the work of Searle, "that the speech-act is the fundamental unit of communication" and this means that a theoretical analysis of speech-act examines how acts and meanings are communicated linguistically speaking (Bianku 2015:5). *Speech-Act Theory* is more

focused on the type of utterance instead of on the actual utterance itself as well as emphasising the types of knowledge that those who hear and those who speak bring to the discussion (Bianku 2015). Bianku (2015) notes that a speech-act in the statement of: Cup of tea, cup of coffee? and where the response is "tea please" is such that the question is also an offer and a request and since the speaker is lacking in the area of knowledge in relation to a certain state of affairs or the preparatory rule and desires to attain that knowledge or 'sincerity rules' by asking the hearer for information or 'essential rule' the statement of: Cup of tea, cup of coffee? is such that, "could be regarded as a reduced form an in interrogative" (Bianku 2015).

9. **Definition of Terms**

Locutionary: "of or relating to the physical act of saying something considered apart from the statement's effect or intention" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online 2017:1).

Locution: "The saying of an utterance (making noises conforming to certain vocabulary and grammar) that has a meaning (a particular sense and reference)" (Lloyd 2007:4).

Perlocutionary: "of or relating to an act (as of persuading, frightening, or annoying) performed by a speaker upon a listener by means of an utterance — compare" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online 2017:1).

Perlocution: "the effect of an utterance, the action performed by speaking" (Loyd 2007:4).

Illocutionary: "relating to or being the communicative effect (such as commanding or requesting) of an utterance" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online 2017:1)

Illocution: "the force of an utterance such as informing, warning or undertaking etc." (Loyd 2007:4).

Phonetic: "representing the sounds and other phenomena of speech: such as (a) constituting an alteration of ordinary spelling that better represents the spoken language, that employs only characters of the regular alphabet, and that is used in a context of conventional spelling; (b) representing speech sounds by means of symbols that have one value only" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online 2017:1)

Phatic: "of, relating to, or being speech used for social or emotive purposes rather than for communicating information" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary Online 2017:1).

Retic: Meaning

Chapter 2: Research Delineation

1. Vanhoozer

The work of Briggs (2004:6) writes that, "*Speech-Act Theory* is not a solution to the hermeneutical problem." Briggs (2004:6) writes that the *Speech-Act Theory* "most suggestively has been seen as the path taken by the discipline of philosophy after it reached the limits of its own former approach with Kant." According to Briggs (2004:6) the understanding of historical texts or even people or events from the view of an observer situated in the real world and its relevance to the individual's personal horizons always falls somewhat short, "of a supposedly objective view from nowhere." Hermeneutics, according to Briggs (2004:7) has resulted in responses that are various in nature and are in a range, "from the ardent defence of various forms of pre-hermeneutical objectivity through to doom-laden predicts of the end of the epistemological world as we knew it, with the collapse of all criteria except those of community predilection. However, there is no requirement, according to Briggs (2004) for the adoption of either one of what are extremes in a response. Hermeneutics, according to Briggs (2004) in terms of it being a discipline has shown that knowledge is based on context and that the individual is always situated whether it be in the past, present or future. Briggs (2004) states that Vanhoozer has distinguished two types of thinkers who are postmodern including; (1) Undoer, also called deconstructor; and (2) user, Briggs (2004:74) reports that Vanhoozer, "appeals to *Speech-Act Theory* in his approach and in this case, he attempts to chart a middle way between the undoer and the user." However, Vanhoozer is concerned with interpretive theology instead of that of biblical interpretation. Thiselton on the other hand, is reported by Briggs (2004:24) to, "focus on the significance of the category of communicative action in various biblical and theological pursuits, with *Speech-Act Theory* being one prominent way of articulating this category." The interests of Thiselton however is reported to be the, "conceptual clarification of the philosophical issues involved in biblical interpretation" and one tool utilised by Thiselton is the *Speech-Act Theory* however, this is not the

only tool that Thiselton has made use of (Briggs 2004:25). Thiselton has also used exegetical insight in relation to specific text types and most that pointedly relate to texts that are concerned with, "speech-acts as promising, blessing or commanding" (Brigg 2004:24). Furthermore, Thiselton is said to, "persistently demonstrate that false dichotomies have bedevilled the hermeneutical models brought to bear on biblical interpretation, and he uses *Speech-Act Theory* to bring together what has been unnecessarily separated" (Brigg 2004:24). In effect, Thiselton in his attempt to balance makes use of the *Speech-Act Theory*, "as a powerful resource for refining and clarifying the varied tasks of hermeneutics" (Briggs 2004:24).

Vanhoozer is reported by Briggs (2004:24) to have an ongoing interest in the *Speech-Act Theory* and this is featured in his 1986 work entitled, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?* In this early work Vanhoozer is focused on the question that asks, "how does the diversity of scripture's literary forms affect the way we take biblical propositions and understand scriptural truth?" However, according to Vanhoozer there is an existent correlation between the *genre* of the text or its' literary form in addition to the illocutionary force and point of the text (Briggs 2004). Therefore, Vanhoozer suggests that the content formed by propositions are such that have an intended function as some part of the act of communication. (Briggs 2004). Castelein (2000) writes in the work entitled, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader and the Mortality of Literary Knowledge, Kevin J. Vanhoozer* that Vanhoozer's sermon was both moving and persuasive in nature and that the text of Vanhoozer's sermon *Is There Meaning in This Text* might serve in paraphrasing the scripture contained in John 1:1 by stating, "In the beginning was the Meaning, and the Meaning was with God, and the Meaning was God" (Castelein 2000:3). Vanhoozer's sermon is reported to have been quite urgent and bold in terms of the problematic challenges in epistemology and hermeneutic which Christians and churches face in contemporary times. Vanhoozer believes that the present day postmodernists in their deconstruction of texts and authors knowledge and readers may be as a result, "prevented from degenerating into

the total nihilistic loss of determinate meaning only if the presence in the universe of the Trinity revealed in the Bible is acknowledged" (Castelein 2000:2-3). There is appreciation expressed by Vanhoozer for the various methods utilised by postmodernist critics in their forbidding of bowing to the idols of personal interpretation since those who read the Bible are known to be influenced at all times by their desire to attain power. Power that is over other individuals, whether it be the influence that they desire to hold power above others, whether that be through violence or pride. Their desire for themselves to be justified, no matter what the cost, as well as by their community and its socially constructed knowledge (Castelein 2000).

Yet, according to Vanhoozer, while there is to be a state of humbleness when approaching the biblical text there should not be a humbling of the text itself and Christians if they are to be responsible and ethical in their interpretation should be in opposition to any reduction in the text's meaning away from the author (Castelein 2000:3). Vanhoozer's desire is to ensure that the meaning and its transcendence is preserved against any reductionism and hermeneutics and cynical views (Castelein 2000:3). Vanhoozer is reported to be reliant on John Searle and J.L. Austin and their speech-acts theory and holds that metaphysically speaking it is God who is the Father and thereby is the locutionary. Because of his word possessing power that is active, has the power to bring about a resurrection of the author of the text who was murdered by deconstruction in the chains of meaninglessness. From the level of reception the reader experiences God as being the perlocutionary who is able to bring the reader into responsive as well as responsible obedience (Castelein 2000:3). Vanhoozer is reported to conclude by stating that present day Christians must approach the Bible by stating, "here I stand. So, help me God. My conscience is captive to the Word of God" (Castelein 2000:3).

Minton (2014:226) reports that in the work of Vanhoozer meaning is held to be, "the illocutionary property of a text, and is produced simply by the speaker/author" and in terms of the reader there is no "room for indeterminacy." It is suggested by Vanhoozer

that it is quite clear that the Gospel of John was written for the purpose of persuading the reader that Jesus is Christ indeed it is less clear if this purpose is an aspect of the text's meaning as the audience's response and their behaviour is extrinsic in nature and not always stable and because of this cannot be held as being part of what constitutes a speech-act. This is because the Gospel of John testifies that Jesus is the Christ and is not dependent upon the response of the readers and only has persuasive power if the response of the reader is that of belief (Minton 2014:226)

Vanhoozer is reported to have considered the meaning to be that which the author meant by the text (Minton 2014:227). Also meaning is relative to the manner in which the author attends to that text (Minton 2014:227). Therefore, from the view of Vanhoozer there is no change in textual meaning although it is linked to the intentions of the author and their actions in times past (Minton 2014:227). From the view of Vanhoozer, the text is read and attempting to bring that text into the present is referred to Hirsch as significant. Significance can change whereas meaning does not change and significance is the related meaning of the text and a context that is larger. (Minton 2014). It is suggested by Vanhoozer that, "meaning is a matter of illocutions, while significance concerns perlocution" since significance is "a consequence of meaning and cannot be a part of the illocutionary act." (Minton 2014:228). This is held by Vanhoozer to be illocutionary because the existence is not dependent on consequences that are extraneous (Minton 2014:228).

Vanhoozer is different from Thiselton in that Thiselton applies the research he has conducted in studies of the Bible yet the theological hermeneutics of Vanhoozer are such that a development of teaching and on anthropology that concern the scripture's reader and their formulation or acceptance of earlier doctrines (Luah 2017:4). Luah (2017:4) considers that the claim was made by Vanhoozer that theological hermeneutics makes provision of the proper framework for hermeneutics that are general. Vanhoozer deems that scripture is the varied testimony from many *genres* of

the communicative actions of God for intervention in the form of redemption, establishment and the maintenance of His relationship with believers (Luah 2017:10).

According to Vanhoozer the distance of the reader of the scripture whether culturally or historically distanced does not serve to, "invalidate a reader's ability to read out of a text, in the classical sense of exegesis" (Luah 2017:36). In fact, it is the reader's 'otherness' that results in the texts in its fullest potential being fulfilled (Luah 2017:29). While some view the cultural, historical, personal and other individual differences as similarities to be disconnected from the writer of the text and makes provision for the reader of the text to perform that text. Vanhoozer places a limitation of the textual interpretation based on the possible intentions of the author in relation to the enactment of that text on the part of the reader (Luah 2017:29). The relationship between the reader and the text is such that makes the assumption on the intent of the author being varied situationally (Luah 2017 page: 29).   Vanhoozer believes that God's word is the foundation of understanding in theology and also thinks that reading is self-reflective in nature and that, "reading is not only about finding points of reader-assent to isolated ideas in the text, but also encountering authorial-dissent and struggling through the difference" (Luah 2017:37).   In the otherness condition the text is enabled to speak to the life of the reader and to do so transcendentally and ultimately, "becomes a self-fulfilling exercise of self-replication" (Luah 2017:37). There is a concern reported to arise from the view of Vanhoozer that from his view there is some degree of response from the reader and 'meaning' is such that is in part a type of interaction with the text's horizon and the formal structure of that text (Luah 2017:30). However, Vanhoozer considers that when the polarity or the author is eliminated then there no longer exists any type of distinction between the intention of the author and that which is acted out within the text and the sense-making by the reader of that text (Luah 2017). Vanhoozer's engagement in hermeneutics philosophically speaking does adjust to the understanding of modernist in terms of interpretation of scripture but at the same time Vanhoozer does not reject nor does he

accept all of the modernist premises but does so in accordance with the "truth value of their descriptions" (Luah 2017:38). Furthermore, Vanhoozer is not rejecting the traditional or the modernist methodology approaches but instead makes modifications to these so that accommodation is made for, "an expanded rationality of the text as human discourse" (Luah 2017:39).

Vanhoozer (2005:89) in the work entitled, *Lost in Interpretation? Truth, scripture and Hermeneutics*, states that the interpretation of the Bible is theology's soul and truth, "is the ultimate accolade that we accord in interpretation." Kostenberger (2005:11) addresses what constitutes truth and does this through examining the question posed by Pilate in John 18:38 and states that many layers of understanding exist to this specific biblical text and indeed this question has relevance in today's study of biblical text. According to Kostenberger the word truth is such that it had Greek philosophical currency within that philosophy; *alethea* as a sense of one involving a perspective that was accurate in relation to reality while for the Roman *veritas* meant that events were factually represented. However, in the scripture of John it is related that truth is more than anything a concept that is Christological. This not only represents the connection with reality but is also propositional and such is the root of ideas which are relational and person and originated in God since in Isaiah 65:16 God is stated, "the God of Truth" (Kostenberger, 2005:21). Thiselton (1997:99) notes that what is forgotten by many who address speech is the fact that believers and most Christian thinkers have an understanding of speech as being communication which is interpersonal and is accounted as the language of God who is specifically addressing them. For example, Thiselton (2006:342) states that in the study of 1 Corinthians it has been common to place the understanding squarely into the living and working context of Paul because there are issues that are quite remote to contemporary times. However, through placing the material in Paul's context resulting in features being revealed which results in parallels that are quite close to those in a contemporary context. Therefore, Vanhoozer (2005:89) holds that the failure of success of Christian theology is directly

related to the ability of that theology to produce interpretations that are true to God's written word. Vanhoozer (2005:89) states that in the discussion of using the Bible in the area of theology, he realised that systematic theology was not represented, "as such in the other plenaries" therefore he states the intention of having a focus on doctrine which is the primary outcome of interpretation by theology of scripture. Thiselton (2006:325) reports that many of the early Christians carried over their personal and often pagan beliefs into the culture of new Christianity and that included among these are self-promotion and highly held values of success. However, Paul's gospel was carried into Corinth and was a responsibility that Paul reported to have viewed with great fear and much trembling especially since the gospel he carried told of a Christ who was crucified and humiliated and for those people in Corinth who put such a strong value upon that of success this message was abrasive. Thiselton (2006:332) relates the declaration of Moores (1995:26-8, 133-35) remark to contemporary concerning the people of Corinth and states that Paul believed that the identity of those hearing the message was that which made the determination of their response to the message.

There are two views reported to be held by Vanhoozer (2005:89-93) and the first of which is those who view evangelicalism in terms that are pietistic and view the Bible as a way to obtain spiritual sustenance and the others who view evangelical essence in terms that are doctrinal in nature and view the Bible mainly as a method of communication that is propositional. However, Vanhoozer (2005:98) takes neither side because he stated that to do so would result in a reduction, distortion of what is doctrinal as well as biblical truth. Vanhoozer (2005:90) states that some of the more contemporary approaches are such that result in the loss of the author. Failure to acknowledge context according to Vanhoozer (2005:91) makes it impossible for textual meaning to be established and this is well acknowledged, however the reader's location or context has gained significance for interpretation of Biblical Text rather than the author's context. Vanhoozer (2005:91-2) states that Bultmann during the 1950s

posed the question of whether it is possible for exegesis without use of presuppositions and reports that by the decade of the 1980s it was not possible for exegesis to transcend the ideology. Postmodern individuals are reported in the work of Vanhoozer (2005:92) to hold that interpretation is an act that is political in nature and reports that he himself has been accused by students of oppression by way of claims on truth. The lesson of postmodernity is one that is held by Vanhoozer (2005) to be of a negative nature and one that the prophets of the Bible have already identified and that being contemporary hermeneutics are not only situated but are also limited as well as being contingent, leaning in the direction of idolatry. Contemporary hermeneutics is reported by Gadamer (2006:30) is affected by scientific tradition and the scientific concepts that are modern and for this reason there is the assumption of a consciousness that is methodological that comes into play. However, from a theological standpoint hermeneutics is representative of the correct and truth scripture interpretation and as such is an art that is quite ancient. Interpretation that is allegorical in nature is the root to hermeneutics in ancient times and arises from the Greek *hyponoia* or the meaning that lay beneath the text's literal meaning. The options that present according to Vanhoozer (2005) are not good ones but he states that there is another way and that specifically hermeneutics must set our seeking as pilgrims and use the tools of hermeneutics which are available and while navigating, pray that the Holy Spirit will enlighten the reading of scripture and provide the necessary humility so that any missteps are acknowledged as well as working in collaboration with other Christians who have already gained understanding. It is supposed by Vanhoozer (2005:92) that which must not be done is to simply postpone until all questions that are interpretive in nature have been resolved since the, "hermeneutics of procrastination" has been too common a practice and results in the knowledge concerning the truth never being realised. This is the implication of Derrida who stated of an endless deferment which is not an intellectual but is rather a spiritual condition (Vanhoozer 2005:92). To drive home his point Vanhoozer (2005) illustrates this through asking the reader to imagine living in a country where the decrees issued by

the country's King are handled through attempting to interpret the decree rather than to follow what the King has decreed. Vanhoozer (2005:92) states that what is needed is, "a hermeneutics of activation that engages the matter of the text." According to Vanhoozer (2005) and as it is generally acknowledged there are a diversity of people reading the Bible in contemporary times and all with their own interest in regarding interpretation of the text. Truth is such that, "may be the correspondence of 'what one says' to 'what is'" but it falls in interpretation to discern what it is that the biblical authors are affirming, and whether there is more than one way of saying something about it: The issue…is not whether scripture is "inerrant nor certainly whether the God who speaks therein is inerrant both the nature of the scripture that the inerrant God has given us" (Vanhoozer 2005:97).

Vanhoozer (2001:1) writes in the work entitled, *From Speech-Acts to Scripture Acts: The Covenant of Discourse and the Discourse of the Covenant*, that the study of language that is human is one that is interdisciplinary in nature and is studied by many including, "linguists, cognitive psychologists, historians, logicians, philosophers – and, yes, theologies." In order to undertake a study of language then required is the touching upon issues that include a view of the world as a whole and a view of life as a whole (Vanhoozer 2001). It is related that in some of the approaches in a study of the origin of language and its purpose that the presupposition is made that the existence of humans and their associated behaviour can be explained best in relation to Darwin's evolution while others hold that language, "is essentially a cognitive rather than communicative tool that enables an organism with memory to process information" (Vanhoozer 2001:2). Christian theology is such that places faith in Jesus Christ as a revelation foretold in the scripture and uses this as the top requirement in the judging of what it is that is true, or good or even beautiful (Vanhoozer 2001:2). What is important to understand according to Vanhoozer (2001:2) is that all people, whether Christian or not, arrive at the reading of scripture with their framework of interpretation already set. Vanhoozer (2001:3) writes that there must be first the

conduction of an investigation that is theological with regard to literature and language and is a general investigation before the task of scriptural interpretation can be undertaken. Vanhoozer (2001:3) holds that the optimal and most, "recent development for the dialogue about language between philosophy and theology is undoubtedly the emphasis on language as a species of human action: speech-acts." Vanhoozer (2001:3) states that his goal is to allow, "discourse of the covenant to inform and transform our understanding of the covenant of discourse (e.g., ordinary language and literature." It is reported by Vanhoozer (2001:4) that it was written by Faust as follows, "The mystery of the sign I have now cracked; 'in the beginning was the communicative act'." Vanhoozer (2001:4) states that his view of biblical interpretation is aligned with this statement in Faust's work in that these lines, "have the merit of directing our attention to Jesus Christ in such a way that Christ becomes, as Bartholomew puts it in his article, the clue to theology and philosophy…the clue to the whole creation." In addition, Vanhoozer (2001:4) held that it is the communicative action that, "takes up and integrates the four possibilities for translating logos that Faust considers: word, thought, power, deed." This is because, according to Vanhoozer (2001:4) that word deeds are inclusive of "both thought (propositions content) and power (illocutionary force)." This 'communicative action' involves God's communication of himself in terms of "Father, Son, and Spirit – to others" (Vanhoozer 2001:5). In relation to the theory of communication, God, the Trinity is the agent of communication as the Father and the action of communication in the form of the Word or Son and the result of communication is the Holy Spirit or the reception (Vanhoozer 2001:5). Furthermore, Vanhoozer (2001:6) claims that he has spent many years studying Biblical Scripture in terms of speech-acts since viewing the scripture as being speech-acts work to ascertain the manner that the Bible views speech that is human and categories of speech-acts. Such that it possesses the capacity to assist in the appreciation of, "what it means to call the scriptures God's word." Vanhoozer (2001:6) holds the view that the greatest contribution of philosophy to speech-act is that it assists in breaking away from the reduction of meaning as a tendency or to simply focus on the scripture's

propositional content. To view the Biblical Texts as being more than just a representative of the state of things widens the potential for reading that is transformative in nature which the contemporary focus upon information has ultimately eclipsed (Vanhoozer 2001:6). However, there is reported to be divisions among those theorists of speech-act in terms of the intentional importance over that of convention (Vanhoozer 2001). Therefore, according to Vanhoozer (2001:6) there is a challenge that presents in relation to the specification of the commonalities that are of the most importance as well as the, "greatest common denominator…without diluting the remaining significant differences." Because of this there may be agreement on some basic principles and presuppositions while differences that are significant remain (Vanhoozer 2001:6). Vanhoozer (2001) wrote that the agreement includes: (1) language is used more than to simply illustrate the state of things since no one believes that words are merely symbolic in nature or used only as reference; (2) the idea is rejected except among those postmodern thinkers reference and meaning are greatly indeterminate in addition to the view that the author is not relevant in the interpretive process; (3) there is agreement that it is action instead of representations that is the operative concept and that closely tied to this are specific responsibilities as well as rights on the author's part as well as the part of the readers. Vanhoozer (2001:7) holds that Thiselton incorrectly associates him with, "those who see meaning in terms of reference" based upon the phrase of 'single determinate meaning' however, what Vanhoozer claims as being determinate is actually the entirety of the communicate act. The statement of 'single' as well as 'determinate' had the intention of solidifying the idea that the author's words or actions caused a fixed textual meaning and that this does not change due to the reader's own ideas (Vanhoozer 2001). The phrase 'single determinate meaning' is in reality just a more economical way to stating that the intuition of the realist is the intended action of the author however is not such that interpreters can simply change later in history (Vanhoozer 2001). Acts that are determinate and communicate possess in many cases, "presuppositions and implications that preclude our viewing interpretation in terms of 'endlessly wooden

replication' of a single propositional content" (Vanhoozer 2001:7). Vanhoozer (2001:7) additionally states a rejection concerning the postmodernists' idea that readers are at freedom in their manipulation and manufacturing of meaning of the text so that they can "serve their own aims and interests." In regard to where Thiselton differs with Vanhoozer, there are two specific areas including that some believe that the analysis of speech-act is assistive in gaining and understanding of specific parts of scripture such as the parables of Jesus or the preaching of Paul and specifically related to the methods of Thiselton and others make use of the theory of speech-act in order to revive the idea of:

> authorial discourse and to open of possibilities for reading the whole Bible as divine discourse such as the work of Wolterstorff but Vanhoozer states that he does not deny either of these views the philosophy of speech-act, as contributing categories for a full-fledged interpretation theory that resonates well with properly theological themes (Vanhoozer 2001:7).

Vanhoozer (2001:7) reports that the discussion is one that is concerned with the question of "whether biblical interpreters should be concerned to develop specific strategies for reading scripture in particular (special hermeneutics) as opposed to applying biblical and theological insights to interpretation theory in general (general hermeneutics)." In addition, there is a difference that exists concerning the "role of the interpretive community's response and audience reception of a text" and specifically to Thiselton and his exploration of the idea of Jauss and Ricoeur who say that, "the meaning of a literary work rests upon the dialogical and relation between the work and its audience in each age" in relation to the time and mode of God speaking and whether God is speaking again and in newness in the readings of the scripture and whether what God says is the same in nature or if there is something different in terms of time and mode (Vanhoozer 2001:7). The theory of speech-act is not in any way the queen within the science of hermeneutics since this philosophy was developed for the purpose of dealing with oral discourse and not literary (Vanhoozer 2001). The majority

of theories relating to communication that is linguistic in nature has been formulated upon the basis of what is, "a code model, where language is the code and communication a matter of encoding and decoding messages" (Vanhoozer 2001:8). From this view, Vanhoozer (2001) reports that words are then signs representative of thoughts or thoughts that are encoded however, the primary issue of this model is the fact that it is not adequately descriptive since: (1) there is not actual encoding of all of the information; (2) there is more to understanding than just the decoding of linguistic signals; and (3) words perform more than to simply convey information. Therefore, the use of code theory lacks in explaining the gap that exists between meaning and code that the language is actually communicating and to mastery a system of signs does not in any way guarantee that understanding will be had. Stated to be much more adequate in the work of Vanhoozer (2001:7) is the, "descriptions of language use of discourse and for this reason relying on the textbook of hermeneutics in order to be able to reach the highest shelf would represent use it would not in this manner be representative of interpretation". For Ricoeur and Thiselton believe that there is a distinction that exists between semantics and semiotics and that therefore this, "is the key to the whole problem of language" (Vanhoozer 2001:7) However, it is necessary to use an example that is simple in nature and that explores and inspects more fully and for example the following demonstrates the way in which the meaning is linguistically spoken when used alone:

> a sentence-long discourse falls short of encoding what a speaker, S, means when she says: 'Coffee would keep me awake'. There is no problem breaking the code of this sentence. The language is clear and stands in good syntactical order. The information conveyed is that coffee, presumably the caffeinated kind, has an accelerating effect on the human nervous system. But what does the discourse – the use of the sentence on a given occasion – mean?" (Vanhoozer 2001:9).

According to Vanhoozer (2001:9), "it is not nearly enough to simply decode the language since there is a need to be informed about the discourse and its' circumstances". Vanhoozer (2001) continues the investigation of this sentence discourse investigation and states,

> consider the two different scenarios where S is asked 'Would you like some coffee?': (1) S is studying for an exam and is struggling to stay awake; (2) S has finished studying for an exam and would like to retire early in order to be fresh for the exam the following morning. In the first case, the meaning of S's statement 'Coffee would keep me awake' is 'yes': in the second instance, 'no'" which serves to illustrate that there is more involved in communication that just linguistic encoding since communication includes "the broader, unencoded circumstances of someone's use of language" (Vanhoozer 2001:9).

Words by themselves contain only the potential of meaning and that languages of humans should not be held to be sign systems that are floating free with an existence that is autonomous from those using them (Vanhoozer 2001) In addition, dictionaries report only on the usages that are common for any specific word and that the attempt to investigate a language in separation from the actions of uses with the language is quite simply hopeless (Vanhoozer 2001). William Alston is reported by Vanhoozer (2001:9) to support what is termed as, "Use Principle: An expression of having a certain meaning consists in its being usable to play a certain role (to do things) in communication" and that this means that language is simply communication's vehicle. Furthermore, according to Vanhoozer (2001:9), Alston holds that communication that is interpersonal in nature is language's primary function and that, "its other functions, for example, its use in the articulation of thought, are derivative from that" and that the use of the theory of speech-act is then the study of discourse and therefore is "language-in-communicative-use." The use of language for communication therefore, according to Vanhoozer (2001:9) is not arbitrary in nature but instead that the language 'design plan' is for the enabling of understanding and communication and

that his thesis is as follows: "Language has a 'design plan that is inherently covenantal. Language is a divinely given human endowment and serves as a crucial medium for relating with God, oneself, others and the world" (Vanhoozer 2001:10). The "missional model of communication (theology)" is reported to be one in which the source of the author or speaker, "encodes a message into a linguistic signal (speech, text) that serves as the channel which conveys the message (through air, across time) to a destination (listener, reader) who receives the message by decoding the signal" (Vanhoozer 2001:10). Vanhoozer (2001:10) states that the Trinitarian doctrine is, "a paradigm to human communication." This is because the Trinity of God is an eternal and ongoing communication that exists between God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and states that his argument is formulated on the economic Trinity. Vanhoozer (2001:10) states that this economic Trinity is a term that is technical for the manner in which, "the triune God progressively reveals himself in history. The economic Trinity is the name for God in communicative (and self-communicative action)" which leads to Vanhoozer next thesis which holds that, "the paradigm for a Christian view of communication is the triune God in communicative action." From this view, the mission of both the Spirit and Son with authorisation on the part of God who is the author and Father resemble, "the economy of the sender-receiver model of communications. They represent God's attempt to reach out to human others in truth and love" (Vanhoozer 2001:10). The Son and the Spirit are representative of the attempt of God "to reach out to human others in truth and love". The mission of God is the Son, and this is reported in John 17:18 stating that Jesus was, "sent into the world…Jesus' mission at least in part was to give to his disciples with the words the Father had given him. At the core of Christian theology then, is the theme of the 'word sent'" (Vanhoozer 2001:10). A scripture reported to uphold that philosophy of the speech-act stated by Vanhoozer (2001:11) is that of Isaiah 55:11 which states that God's word, "like rain goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Therefore, it is questioned by Vanhoozer (2001:11) as to whether the idea of mission

is such that "entail[s] the code model of communication" and states that is dependent upon if the 'Word' as being held exclusively that of, "thought or as power and deed as well." God having sent to the earth his son in terms of the purpose of God and his later sending to earth of the Holy Spirit was a great deal more than just the conveyance of information (Vanhoozer 2001:11). This is because God's word being sent to earth, "was as much transformative as it was informative and was an error made by Gnostics in believing that they could be saved by information only" (Vanhoozer 2001:11). Communication in its missional model leads thinking toward discourse as being action that is intentional. It is reported that cognitive psychologist, Robert Gibbs has adopted what is known as the "cognitive intentionalist premise: Peoples experiences of meaning are fundamentally structured by their inferences about the intentions of others" (Vanhoozer 2001:11). Gibbs is reported to hold that evidence that is empirical in nature exists, that there is hard wiring in the human being to enable the search of other people's intentions, "in human linguistic, artistic, and cultural products" which was learned through paying attention to the eyes and faces of their parents (Vanhoozer 2001:11). Therefore, it is thought that words are utilised in first conveying the intentions of communication rather than the meanings semantically relating to words or causes that are unintentional and that may be underlying in their intentions (Vanhoozer 2001). This means that the human being's idea of language is conditioned in a mutual way by the individual's idea of what constitutes being a human being and from the view of the Christian "human beings are neither mechanical automatons nor free spirits, but embodied agents" (Vanhoozer 2001:12). Therefore, from the view of Vanhoozer the intention of the author is not a psychological feature but instead is, "a…irreducible aspect of action. Intentions are embodied in a material medium, enacted via bodily movement or by saying something" (Vanhoozer 2001:12). It is only through the idea of intention that enables human beings to view texts and words as being much, "more than mere material marks" (Vanhoozer 2001:12). In fact, the authorial intention concept is alone that which provides the ability to identify, "what the author is doing in using just these words in this way" (Vanhoozer 2001:12). The worst

type of reductionisms is stated to be the, "so-called death of the author…where communicative acts and intentions are stripped away from the text, leaving an autonomous linguistic object" (Vanhoozer 2001:12). If the intention is ignored which is that factor accounting for "the unit of action – we lose the act itself: no intention, no wink" (Vanhoozer 2001:12). Every single stage of that physiological process or the winking that, "the neural firings, the muscular contraction – could be described separately" since no single stage is the precise location of that wink or intention and attempting to dissect this results in murder (Vanhoozer 2001:13). Furthermore, failing to ascribe the intentions ultimately has the result of descriptions being thin and the outcome is the thin description that occurs when there is a reliance on the concepts that are of a lower level as in neural findings instead of on the, "higher level, intentional categories like flirting" (Vanhoozer 2001:13).

Thiselton (1997:107) states that in Wolterstorff's *Divine Discourse*, he warns against the *Speech-Act Theory* merely being laid aside and the celebration of the author's death or the belief that the author's intention is irrelevant. However, Wolterstorff is reported to have had an ongoing emphasis of the fact that believers and thinkers in the Christian religion have an understanding that speech is communication of an interpersonal nature and that in scripture they are being addressed by God. From the view of Vanhoozer, the Bible provides what is termed a 'theodrama' and is God's words and God's acts across history resulting in the coming of Christ and therefore truth can be viewed as correspondence that is Theo dramatic (Kostenberger 2005:16). Kostenberger (2005:14) writes that J.P. Moreland holds postmodernism as being both cowardly and immoral. Vanhoozer (2001:13) states that the intention of the author is the factor that is intrinsic in nature that, "constitutes an act what it is". A speech-act, then is the result of an enacted communicative intention. Vanhoozer (2002:170) states that there is importance in locating the text's cause at the correct level rather than in the system of signs or even at the superstructure level at the completed act level and the author's intentional level. In addition, Vanhoozer (2002:170) notes that there has

been a tendency for the reduction of meaning "to morphemes in motion" however it is not possible for a reduction of intention to "the non-intentional without losing the phenomenon of the action itself".

Vanhoozer (1998:249) writes that the intention of the author, "is the real causality that alone accounts for why a text is the way it is. It is important to locate the cause of the text at the right level: not at the level of infrastructure (the sign system) or at the level of the superstructure" or that of ideology. But rather, Vanhoozer (1998: 249) states that the intention of the author is located "at the level of the completed act- the level of that to which the author was intending". Therefore, in other words, Vanhoozer (1998:249) holds that the intention of the author is critical to the meaning of the text regardless of symbols and ideology and it is what Vanhoozer terms as eliminative semiotics in the reduction of the text's meaning as he expresses it as, "morphemes in motion" in terms of providing an explanation for meaning within the system of language (1998:249). Vanhoozer (1998:249) states that his reformulation of the intention of the author is supported and this is because "Consciousness, and intentional action in general, requires a different set of predicates to describe it and a different type of explanation to make sense of it than those ordered either by naturalists such as Darwin or by textualists such as Derrida." Vanhoozer (1998:249) makes use of the debate on mind and body and states, "that meaning, like the mind, is an emergent property. An emergent property is one that characterises a higher order phenomenon (e.g., the brain) that has attained such a level of organisational complexity that it displays new properties and requires new categories to describe them." Vanhoozer (1998:249) believes that meaning and mind along with the sentence and self are such that represent, "higher level phenomenon – new beings, as it were – that are discontinuous, at least in some respects, with the lower forms from which they emerge." Therefore, according to Vanhoozer (1998:249) "the theory of emergence is an effective counter to the postmodern tendency to reduce higher level phenomena (meaning) to lower materialistic levels." It is the belief of Vanhoozer (1998:249) that

the communicative action theory is such that results in an explanation that is much fuller, "of how things at the lower linguistic levels get taken up into more complex literary forms and provides a better account of what we must postulate in order to account for the emergence of textual meaning." The intention of the author, according to Vanhoozer (1998:249) is then, "reconceived in terms of agency, explain how we get from the physics to the semantics." Vanhoozer (1998:249) states that he believes, "in the reality of the author's intention, for without it I cannot explain the emergence of meaning, that is to say, how meaning supervenes on written marks." According to Vanhoozer (1998:250) Searle and Wittgenstein both, "escape the trap of treating intentions as though they were mental processes that can be observed by introspection." Vanhoozer (1998:250) notes the statement of Thiselton, "to intend a linguist meaning is emphatically not to perform some actions or process separable from the linguistic act or process itself." Therefore, Vanhoozer (1998:250) holds that from the view of Thiselton and that of Schleiermacher, "despite saying that we have to understand an author better than the author understood himself, is less interested in getting into the author's psyche that he is in understanding the life world or background of his communicative acts". Vanhoozer (1998: 250) points out the view of Wittgenstein who holds that the meaning of grammar is such that it, "is embedded in a situation from which it takes its rise". This means, from the view of Vanhoozer (1998:250) that:

> intended actions have contexts. However, the intention only emerges as a distinct phenomenon when one offers descriptions of a communicative act in the light of an appropriate context. In order to reconstruct the author's intention, therefore, we must triangulate the intention, the linguistic conventions and the communicative context.

However, in order to attend to not only conventions but constitute rules makes a requirement of understanding the system of language within a specific timeframe and moreover in relation to the communicative actions circumstances (Vanhoozer 1998). Vanhoozer (1998:250) notes the statement of Moises Silva, "the context does not

merely help us understand meaning: it virtually makes meaning." Vanhoozer (1998:250) holds that the "golden rules for evaluating propositions and property alike is location, location, location." There are reported to be three pertinent questions: (1) what is context; (2) what do contexts do? And (3) How large is a context? (Vanhoozer 1998:250). In relation to what a context is or "the intentional context" Vanhoozer (1998:250) states that context is that which makes identification of those, "circumstances relevant to something under consideration." The circumstances that are relevant must be identified in addition to, "the background rules that make a string of words or sentences count as such and such a communicative act" (Vanhoozer 1998:250). Context, is according to Vanhoozer (1998:251) defined, "as the various factors one has to take into consideration together with the text in order to understand the author's intention. This could include the contexts or circumstances which are: (1) historical; (2) linguistic; (3) literary; (4) canonical; and (5) sociological, as well as others (Vanhoozer 1998). The intention of the author, according to Vanhoozer (1998:251) is always found within, "a network of beliefs and practices that form the background for communicative action." The background can be conceived as a type of "board on which a rule-governed game will be played" (Vanhoozer 1998:251). However, Vanhoozer (1998:251) reports the belief of Michael LaFargue that interpreters of the Bible should attempt "to recover not merely the mind of the author but the background, the mind-set: the authors word- and image-associations, the linguistic and literary conventions governing his speech, the span of his existential concerns, and his mode of engagement with his own text." Vanhoozer (1998:251) states that otherwise said, "interpreters should recover, not only the author's intentions but the corporate intentions that constitute the state of linguistic and literary conventions at a given time, for the prevailing corporate intentions, by and large, are what structure author's life world." As the context is better known, thereby is the capacity to understand the words of the author as they were construed by the author and ultimately to view the reality seen by the author (Vanhoozer 1998). Wendell Harris relates to interpretation that is *koinonoetic* for highlighting the reliance of understanding on contexts that are shared

and states that, "meaning is dependent on the author prospectively and the reader respectively sharing the context" (Vanhoozer 1998:251). Vanhoozer (1998:250) then addresses the context in terms of the size of its importance and states that this is dependent upon, "the circumstances relevant to understanding texts" and that this can depend upon: (1) the author; (2) literature form; (3) background knowledge generally; and (4) situational knowledge. It is reported to be argued by Searle that one can make sense of intentions against the practices and assumptions of the background and that practices and assumptions are not intentions. Vanhoozer (1998:251) deems that, "the context of textual interpretation should be as broad (or as narrow) as it needs to be in order to make sense of the author's communicative act." Vanhoozer (1998) states that the text alone and the context of the text is evidence enough of the intention of the author. Vanhoozer (1998:252) notes that the determination of the intention of an agent is many times "a matter of life and death" and notes that in the courtroom that the establishment of the intention is related to responsibility being assigned since the individual is not held to have committed criminal acts in the absence of the, "consideration of *mens rea* (the mental element of the act)" and therefore the act is not constitutive of guilt unless the person's mind is guilty. Intention is from the view of R.A. Duff a legal philosopher to be that which brings "about a result. Intention is distinct from both desire and from foresight. Intention is rather acting in order to" (Vanhoozer 1998:252). Therefore, the analysis of Duff as reported by Vanhoozer (1998:252) is consistent with his own view and is reported to be such that the distinction Duff makes, "between the result of an action and its consequence corresponds precisely to the distinction between illocutions and perlocutions." It is observed correctly by Duff, according to Vanhoozer (1998:252) that, "I intend what I have decided to bring about; but I cannot intend a result which is wholly beyond my control. A result is what occurs when the action is done." Therefore, as reported by Vanhoozer (1998:252) an action's consequence is the event following that which the action causes however, "consequences are not tied to actions as closely as are the results. Consequences are not intrinsic, but extrinsic to actions. Consequences have to do with ulterior,

perlocutionary purposes. As such, they fall outside the purview of intended action." However, intentions that are perlocutionary are held by Vanhoozer (1998) to have the goal of the production of consequences. The illocutionary act which is performed is discovered by asking what is being done and the question answered through the specification of what it is that counts as a result that is satisfactory in nature (Vanhoozer 1998). From the view of Searle that, "the propositions condition of a promise is that the speaker must predicate a future act of himself or herself. The essential condition of a promise is that the utterance counts as a commitment to do the future act. These conditions must be satisfied in order for the action to have a result, or to be performed at all" (Vanhoozer 1998:253). In the context of that which is legal it is critically important that the action is properly described because these descriptions are such that, "ascribe responsibility – blame or merit – to the agent" (Vanhoozer 1998:253). In addition, in describing the actions of the agent it is not necessary to set out some previous process of psychology but instead intention can be discovered through viewing the action alone (Vanhoozer 1998). The intention of the author is not simply "a matter of recovering psychic phenomena but of reconstructing a public performance in terms that makes its nature as an intended action clear" (Vanhoozer 1998:252). Vanhoozer (1998:252) writes that from the view of Duff it is rejected in relation to a dualistic nature of the mind and body since, "intention is not some mental process that precedes bodily movement, but is rather intrinsic to the action itself." J.L. Austin in his work entitled *Three Ways of Spilling Ink* makes the suggestion that, "intentionality pertains to the fact that agents usually have a general idea of what they are doing?" (Vanhoozer 1998:253). Intention is such that works like, "a miner's lamp on our forehead" lights up the way that one is moving along (Vanhoozer 1998:253). The intention of the agent is reported to be, "the way an agent thinks about what he is doing in his mind as he is doing it; an agent's purpose is something to be achieved as a result of what he is doing. It is this intentional stance toward her activity that makes an agent's bodily motion count as a wink to a friend rather than an involuntary bodily movement" (Vanhoozer 1998:253). In sum, the text's

meaning is only emergent, "against the backdrop of the author's intended action and the background of the author's context" (Vanhoozer 1998:253). Each text arises from an intention that is enacted and that each writing possesses its time and agent. According to Searle "the meaning intention" is" the intention with which the act performed which makes the act that is" (Vanhoozer 1998:253). More exists to meaning other than signs in relation to additional signs or that, "the more is the author's intention, but this does not refer to hidden mental states so much as to the directedness of the text as a meaningful act" (Vanhoozer 1998:253). In other words, intention cannot be simply reduced to events that are non-intentional and simpler but instead is:

> an emergent property that is required to explain what illocutionary act has been performed in a text. When we see the text is the author's intentional act: Persons and action, that is, are locally basic categories; these concepts cannot be explained by an analysis which seeks to reduce them to supposedly simpler elements (Vanhoozer 1998:252).

2. Thiselton

Hermeneutics are concerned with first, the information in the read and second the actual reading of that text then divided into the meaning of the sentences and words and the questioning of the contained meaning (Yale 2009). According to the work of Porter (2012) entitled *A Single Horizon Hermeneutics: A Proposal for Interpretive Identification*, reported that the idea of there being two instead of just one in the form of a horizon of interpretation or that of the text from the author's view and the interpreter's contemporary horizon is such that, "has become a standard paradigm in Western hermeneutical thought" (Porter 2012:45). However, that which has arisen from the view of two manners of understanding is the fact that, "the hermeneutical appreciation of the distance, otherness, and difference, and the need to find means of

bridging the chronological, cultural and perspectival breach between the two horizons and their concomitant worlds" (Porter 2012:46). Yet, this approach in the Western world has resulted in due to alienation both hermeneutically and interpretively speaking a loss of confidence in the Bible and anxiety in theological pursuits. (Porter 2012). However, Thiselton says, that it is hermeneutics that provide the confirmation that texts of the Bible carry authority across even the distance that is historical and work in transforming the readers of today no matter the pre-understanding problem (Knowles 2014). In addition, Knowles (2014) reports that it is believed by Thiselton that gifts are given by the Holy Spirit which work in facilitation of exegetical scholarship and that also works with an understanding that is creative in nature as well as inspired. From the view of Thiselton, God's word is an address that is not just authoritative but that is multiple in form and from God and that is dependent on the reader's response being obedient (Knowles 2014). There is reported to exist what is a, "theology of contextualisation" according to Osborne (1991) in that the writing of the Bible and the reading of the Bible should be spirt-controlled specifically by the Holy Spirit (340). It was the Holy Spirit who led the writing of the scripture and assisted in the reproduction of the factors in the life of Christ known by God to be required by the church and cited in John 14:26 (Osborne 1991). In addition, it is the Holy Spirit only who empowers those preachers ensuring the message is such rather than displaying the wisdom of a human being that of "the Spirit and the power" possessed by God as set out in 1 Corinthians 2:4-5 (Osborne 1991). The Holy Spirit does support the reader's gaining of insight into God's word and specifically "the Spirit allows us to overcome the effects of sin on the rational process" (Osborne 1991:341). The human being is often irrational and inconsistent (Vanderveiken 2001).

Thiselton (1974:283) in the work entitled, *An Initial Application and a Caveat: The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings* stated that many biblical scholars hold the view that, "the spoken word in ancient Israel is never an empty sound but an operative reality whose actions cannot be hindered once it has been pronounced."

Thiselton (1974:283) states that from the Hebrew perception, "the word appears as a material force which is always present and at work." From the view of Gerhard von Rad as reported in the work of Thiselton (1974:283), the word is, "an objective reality endowed with mysterious power." However, according to Thiselton (1974:286), undergirding "the word of power" is not just focused on God's power in his word but also "even in everyday life…certain words were thought of as having power inherent in them." Thiselton (1974:286) states that language is a "phenomenon composed of sounds which almost possess a creative power of its own to conjure things up. It is as if objectives in all their material solidity have been taken up into the word." Thiselton is reported to reject the idea that, "*Speech-Act Theory* should be restricted to oral discourse" and states that "legal texts, for example, clearly embody commitments and set up transactions which potentially function as acts: acts of transferring property, acts of authorisation, and so forth" (Lloyd 2007:11). In addition, Thiselton is reported to state that love letters, wills which are legal and promises in written form can all function as acts that are effective and that result in situational changes in the domain that is public (Lloyd 2007).

Lloyd (2007:14) states that Thiselton wrote as follows:

> In the case of the biblical writings, the persistence of the terms Old and New 'Testament' serve to remind us of the covenantal context in which pledge and promise feature prominently. The biblical writings abound in promises, invitations, verdicts, confessions: pronouncement of blessings, commands, namings and declarations of love (Lloyd 2007:14).

Thiselton is further reported in the work of Lloyd (2007:19) to have based upon the fact that "God is thus personally involved in his word...[the]…argument that speech-acts are also self-involving for readers." Since the texts in the Bible state the claim that it is God who is the creator and that, "Jesus is Lord in ways that are not merely descriptions of fact but which require dispositions, commitment and consequent action

on the part of reader to live in God's world in God's way with Jesus as ruler" that Thiselton sets out, "a hermeneutic of self-involvement in which we invest ourselves in the text and in the process, we are changed; acted upon by its speech-acts" (Lloyd 2007:19). In fact, Thiselton places emphasis on the speech-act as being centric in terms of Christian theology importance (Lloyd 2007).

While Thiselton does not deny that there is symbolism in the written word of the scripture he states the belief that the word is also to be taken literally. For example, regarding Adam and whether this name is one that is personal to the first human being created by God, Thiselton (2015:4) writes that Adam may be used in the form of a name that is personal "or as denoting humankind…It also denotes the first man or primal humankind, leaving open the question of a named individual" however, it is stated that this is in no way an exclusion of the idea of an individual who is historical and named Adam. Thiselton (1992:55) writes that in the context of biblical scripture that the entire Bible and all the books contained within the Bible are such that constitute texts however, he questions "what is the smallest working unit that can be called a text?." Thiselton (1992:55) writes that it is spoken of by John Lyons in what is termed 'utterance units' or units of utterance and can be labelled as a question, statement or even command but even so these are "heavily context dependent." Thiselton (1992:55) states that there is no way to make a decision in relation to the possible meanings of text without first, "drawing upon the information that is given in the co-text or context of situation." However, according to Thiselton (1992:55) the use of 'utterance units' creates a great deal of controversy and not just that concerning the application of definitions since "differences between theories of the nature of texts and textuality carry with them fundamentally different conceptions of what it is for a text to convey meaning", there may be a link with the author's text and situational context that cannot be interpreted separately or view the meaning as being pluralistic such as in a range. According to Thiselton (1992:56) the dominant paradigm for analysing text had been the classical-humanist in which texts are held to be language that serves in the

expression of the ideas or even the thoughts of those authoring the text and referenced as, "states of affairs in the extra-linguistic world." In fact, Thiselton (1992:56) reports that texts were viewed as linguistic mediators of communication that was interpersonal in nature and in relation to the texts of the Bible the idea exists that God, his son Jesus, or even the apostles or prophets, "could speak directly through texts". This viewed from a theological standpoint is such that is a comfortable fit with the idea that biblical texts provide revelation and that, "the revealed word is enfleshed primarily in Jesus Christ as the Word of God; and that this word is also embodied in the lives and deeds of the apostolic community and in the history of Israel as the people of God" (Thiselton 1992:56). The reason that many of the assumptions that are traditional have experienced collapse is due to the reassessment and reformulation of these due to, "the invasion of hermeneutics by three sets of forces: movements in literary theory; the development of certain strands in semiotics and deconstructionism; and the development of a tradition of sociology that owes much to the sociology of knowledge" (Thiselton 1992:56). If one ignores that invasive effect of semiotic theory on hermeneutics it is not all that problematic to view why it is that, "many biblical interpreters find the paradigms of textuality which are offered by literary theory and sociology of knowledge to be attractive and constructive" (Thiselton 1992:57). Thiselton (1992) goes on to question whether situations or those reading the texts are actually part of the texts and states that the Anglo-American literary theory exerted influence in the area of biblical interpretation specifically in the area of literary devices including: (1) ambiguity; (2) metaphor; (3) irony; (4) tension; and (5) paradox. From the views of Warren and Welleck it is urged that the entirety of the intention of the author or, "as a criterion of meaning in literature seems quite mistaken. The total meaning of a work of art cannot be defined merely in terms of its meaning for the author and his contemporaries. The text is autonomous: it speaks on its own terms" (Thiselton 1992:59). However, Wimsatt and Beardsley in their essay, *The Intentional Fallacy* maintains that the use of the author as the criteria for gauging a literary work's success is based on a fallacy because the intention of the author is representative of

a personal mind-set and which cannot be accessed through the text alone (Thiselton 1992:59). For example, Thiselton (1992:59) believes that if there is a successful intention then the text and the intention are identical requiring no need to dig beneath the text and since the idea of digging beneath the text is such that embodies "not only an intention but also a genetic fallacy derived largely from romanticism." According to Thiselton (1992:62) there is an idea that is controversial in nature that meaning is created by interpreters at the time that they interpret texts however this is paradoxical and Thiselton questions to what extent the interpreter has the freedom to make a choice of what specific goals it is that, "effectively define textuality for them in the case of biblical texts." Thiselton (1992:62) states that it is important to ask questions such as whether the emerging considerations arising from Christian theology serve to add some factors that are fresh in "the nature of textuality in the case of biblical texts." In addition, Thiselton (1992) questions whether emergency issues of semiotic theory result in new freedoms or constraints on the interpreter's choices. In order for Arens to build a speech-act in the form of a theory on the parables then it is imperative that a search be conducted 'behind' the parable texts in the New Testament in order that an entirety of the speech-acts performed are properly examined (Thiselton 1992). Du Plessis is reported in the work of Thiselton (1992:289) while accepting this, states the argument that the speech-acts context goes further in embracing the "wider textual embedding of the parables." Thiselton (1992:289) reports that it was written by du Plessis as follows: "The thesis of this study is that the primary function of the parables in the narrative world of the gospels is to establish Jesus as the narrator of the parables, in an authoritative position towards his addresses." The arguments of du Plessis are not constructed upon theology but instead views the parables to be, "part of a process of communicative action" (Thiselton 1992:289). Thiselton (1992:290) writes that the work of du Plessis makes a distinction between what is termed fictionality stated to be a potential attribute, "not of texts but of the process of communication between the author and audience, and 'fictiveness', which can characterise texts, textual content or textual devices. 'Fictive' denotes a production of

the imagination; fictional denotes a certain mode or category of speech-act." Thiselton (1992:290) states that du Plessis, Searle and Wolterstorff all emphasise the, "fundamental role of human agents within an extra-linguistic world for determining the operative nature and effect of certain speech-acts." According to Thiselton (1992:290), the differences between a historical narrative, falsehood, fiction or historical report is dependent upon "what status, stance, commitments and responsibilities have been presupposed and accepted by authorial agents. They do not depend simply on judgments by communities of readers about systems of literary effects detached form the world or causal and count-generation (Thiselton 1992:290). Thiselton's work is such that

> enters into dialogue mainly with Searle and Recanati and that through routes that are parallel that implications which are similar are drawn about the basis of operative currency for Christological texts although they do so somewhat differently (1992:291).

Thiselton is highly reliant on the theoretical foundations of others in his view of the *Speech-Act Theory.* The work of Porter and Adams (2016:407) states that with regard to the theory of speech-act that Thiselton holds as follows:

> *Speech-Act Theory* sharpens the importance of the extra-linguistic features which lie at the stream of life out of which language operates, but may not always be 'said'. *Speech-Act Theory*…draws a careful distinction between what is 'said' as a propositional content and the illocutionary force of an utterance in which an act is performed in the saying of the utterance in the writing of a text. An appraisal of the force may 'show' (if not 'say') that certain presuppositions or implications must hold if this illocutionary force is to be successfully operative.

Porter and Adams (2016) report that Thiselton's statement is revealing in several topics that are key in his application of the *Speech-Act Theory* and that in the majority of the writings of Thiselton, that J.L. Austin's lead is followed in that there are three

types of acts including: (1) locutionary; (2) illocutionary; and (3) perlocutionary. Locutionary acts are those which relate to the act which is physical in stating something and held to be separate from the intention or effect of the act while perlocutionary acts are related to such acts that are performed by the speaker and upon the listener through the meaning of that utterance. Illocutionary is the effect of the communication of what is uttered. Thiselton is reported in the work entitled, *The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings* to state that words are possessing of power and that certain words in the Bible have a power in the conveyance of "reality itself, rather than ideas about reality" (Porter and Adams 2016:411). According to Thiselton on the power of curses and blessing believes that once these have been uttered they will be fulfilled and by doing so is reported to, "locate blessings and curses within the parameters of illocutionary speech-acts in which these performatives do something rather than just say something. Instead of relying on natural cause and effect, illocutionary utterances are bound by the accepted institutions or state of affairs present in the context of the speech-act" (Porter and Adams 2016:411). According to Thiselton where there was no way to revoke the blessing of Jacob there was no set convention for removing the utterance which was performative in nature and meaning that the performative utterance that was original remained in its force (Porter and Adams 2016:411). It is reported that the work that held the most influence by Thiselton was his, "exegesis of the New Testament in his commentary on 1 Corinthians" (Porter and Adams 2016:412). In this work Thiselton is reported to have written as follows:

> Perlocutions can change people's perceptions and values merely by the orator's playing to the gallery. Illocutions transform worldviews not merely by rhetorical utterance but in the very utterance. The making of a promise provides a model example. For the addressee to be persuaded that the promise is valid (perlocution) may depend on sheer causal rhetoric. For the promise to achieve operative currency the speaker must be able to fulfil the promise, address it to the appropriate hearer, and sincerely match words with deeds (Porter and Adams 2016:412).

However, it is reported that according to Paul's statement in 1 Corinthians 2:1-15 with regard to rhetoric of that time that it is only, "logical that Paul, holding the authoritative position of apostle, relied more on illocutionary speech-acts than on perlocutions that attending to convince by the sheer power of rhetoric" however Thiselton is reported to comprise a list of speech-acts that were utilised in Paul's time that would have been used by Paul due to his status of being authoritative to include those of: (1) commanding; (2) blaming; (3) reproaching; (4) rebuking; (5) admonishing; (6) congratulating; (7) accusing; (8) authorising; and (9) thanking (Porter and Adams 2016?). Other places in Thiselton's commentary where the speech-act idea is reported to occur is in Thiselton's view on the phrase in 1 Cor.1:2 which states "all who call on the name of the Lord" and his identification of this phrase to be "a self-involving commissive speech-act that is simultaneously an act of appeal-request and an act of commitment/trust" which means that to call on the Lord's name is not just a neutral appeal to God" (Porter and Adams 2016:412). Thiselton is reported to view the statement that "Jesus is Lord" is not only being a belief of this as the status of Jesus but also to be "a heart orientation of stance and will which constitute the performative, self-involving, and illocutionary nature of a confession from the lips and the heart" (Porter and Adams 2016:414). Porter and Adams (2016:414) wrote that the illocutionary declaring of Jesus being Lord is such that has a "belief setting in which certain events have occurred and certain states of affairs are true." Specifically, it is reported that in this specific case that there is a basis for the belief setting in that "the words, deeds and identity of Christ, and above all their divine indication and corroboration in the resurrection of Christ have occurred" (Porter and Adams 2016:414). There is a clear view of the proposition or the locutionary utterance as well as the illocutionary act which is personal and a declaration (Porter and Adams 2016:414). Thiselton is reported to make use of different speech-acts in his differentiation between those prophet roles and teacher roles and specifically that the performance of acts by prophets including "announcement, proclamation, judgment, challenge, comfort support, or encouragement" and teachers are reported to perform

such acts including "transmission, communicative explanation, interpretation of texts, establishment of creeds, exposition of meaning and implication, and more cognitive, less temporally applied communicative acts" (Porter and Adams 2016:414). Since the dawn of the theory of speech-act it is reported to have been acknowledged that acts, that are acts held as 'effective' are those which prophets perform and are only effective where, "they are based on certain states of affairs that are in place. The teacher performs the necessary acts of expounding and explaining that establish these states of affairs" (Porter and Adams 2016:414). It is stated of Thiselton's application of the *Speech-Act Theory* specific to Heb. 10:19-39 that, "one quickly realises that the simple 'I promise I will come tomorrow' sentences in which it is easy to see the illocutionary force (I promise) and the propositional content (I will come tomorrow) are not as easily discerned in a passage such as this" (Porter and Adams 2016:416). From the view of Thiselton, it is imperative that one examine that illocutionary force within the realm of the author's intent and which is located "in the mood of the verbs in many of these sentences" (Porter and Adams 2016:416). Porter and Adams (2016:417) state that in their evaluation of the work of Thiselton he is commended both in the areas of his hermeneutical works and in the way that he applies the *Speech-Act Theory*. This is reported to have made provision for the Christian community with a justification that is well thought out as well as Thiselton's "defense of scripture as the Word of God and Jesus as a historical figure whose persons and actions must have been rooted in historical truth if anyone is to believe and follow him" (Porter and Adams 2016:417). In Thiselton's discussion of general words it is stated that, "Christology, scripture, or the point of Paul's letters to the Corinthians, he reaches the same basic conclusion: the actions being described are illocutionary speech-acts that require an institutionalised state of affairs to exist in order for the actions to be valid" (Porter and Adams 2016:418). However, the lack of a method on the part of Thiselton and when "combined with the same repetitive emphasis on illocutionary acts, leaves the reader wondering if this is all *Speech-Act Theory* has to offer and if it is worth the effort to try and to go back to its founders and other practitioners in order to find further application

to biblical interpretation" (Porter and Adams 2016:418). Stated as another problem is that there is a dependence of Thiselton on the work of Austin and in which Austin delegates his work to be simply "a preliminary classification" and because of this Thiselton's work on the *Speech-Act Theory* does not have sufficient rigour and as such makes it difficult to understand how indeed this theory from Thiselton's view will gain acceptance on a wide basis in biblical study disciplines (Porter and Adams 2016:418).

The work of Christopher Spinks (2007:133) reports that the theory of speech-act has been lauded by Anthony Thiselton for use in studies of the Bible for more than 30 years and states that Thiselton has stated a claim that this theory has been greatly neglected in the areas of religion philosophy, systematic theology and biblical studies. Richard Briggs, who is a student of Thiselton, is reported to have extended Thiselton's work on *Speech-Act Theory* and it is reported by Spinks (2007:133) that, "Briggs distinguishes himself and Thiselton from Vanhoozer in that they do not promote "*Speech-Act Theory* as an overarching perspective within which different *genres* are at work." Rather, Thiselton and Briggs are reported by Spinks (2007:133) to offer the theory of speech-act to be an investigative tool rather than use in the form of a method in hermeneutics of, "certain types of strongly self-involving biblical language." Spinks (2007:18) states that from the view of Thiselton in relation to modern ways are far too simplistic and the convictions of reformation in relation to, "*sola scriptura* that separated scripture from ecclesiastic dogma, and romantic curiosities which devoted attention from the original authors of texts and the historical and cultural influences on them that these developments in combination had the result of practices and convictions that, moved toward a single pre-occupation with historical method". Spinks (2007:32) additionally reports that it has been observed by Anthony Thiselton that questions in relation to texts and their nature are such that, "not only remain entirely open and in need of further debate, but also interact closely with issues about the nature of meaning and also about the hermeneutical goals of the interpreter." Spinks (2007:109) reports that Thiselton has "called into question whether Vanhoozer's use

of *Speech-Act Theory* truly gets him past the pursuit of the author's thoughts" and Spinks writes that the use of a concept that was more holistic and capable would give Vanhoozer relief of the burdens he possesses in his defence of, "the communicative model which excludes perlocutionary effects at the point of detecting meaning." Stated as a problem with the theory of speech-act in the work of Vanhoozer is that there is no appearance of the making of a "distinction whatsoever between authorial discourse interpretation and divine discourse interpretation" (Spinks 2007:133). Thiselton holds that there is are three features that are fundamental in biblical speech including: (1) authorial intention; (2) facts that are relevant; and (3) transformative effects (Lim 2008:73). Lundin, Thiselton and Wallhout (1999:144) state that Thiselton has been accused of being seduced by Wittgenstein and states that this is not the case and actually that is it quite the reverse because "Since 1970, if not earlier, I have produced a series of writings urging that a biblical and theological account of language gives weight and currency to the importance of speech-acts, especially to acts of declaring (kerygma): acts of worship (hymns and psalms); acts of pronouncement and legal direction (laws and commissions); and most especially acts of promise." Lundin, Thiselton and Wallhout (1999:144) state that in Thiselton's commentary on Hebrews where he notes that this sermon contains: (1) acts of worship; (2) acts of appointment; (3) acts of witness and others. Lundin, Thiselton and Wallhout (1999:146) state that in the case of Hebrew chapters one through to twelve that this is representative of a sermon that is delivered, "in the form of a communication to addresses from whom the writer or speaker is unavoidably absent." It is reported that verses one through to four in Chapter 1, "provide one of the most arresting beginnings possible, combining elegance, alliteration, rhythm, rhetorical artistry, and unstoppable force with probably the most sophisticated and stylish Greek in the entire New Testament" (Lundin, Thiselton, and Wallhout 1999:146). However, there are actions that are both multidirectional and multi-layered according to Lundin, Thiselton and Wallhout (1999:146) in that they are comprised by: (1) sermon; (2) creed; (3) confession; (4) hymn; (5) praise; (6) acclamation; (7) exposition; (8) argument; and (9) celebration.

The poverty present in today's preaching is reported to result from attention that is focused only on one of these aspects rather than be multi-layered richly with preaching that is multi-levelled (Lundin, Thiselton, and Wallhout 1999). While it is claimed by some that the material that is hymnic has been gained from sources that are not Christian, Lundin, Thiselton and Wallhout (1999:146) state that "a locutionary action that formerly operated in a different context is not utilised [and] becomes an instrument of action" and therefore performative in nature.

Thiselton (2013:325) examines the Holy Spirit's role in understanding the biblical texts in the work entitled, *The Holy Spirit – In biblical Teaching, Through the Centuries and Today* and states that the work of Barth is insistent maintaining, "that theology is not about God, but from God" and this infers that just the same with the Holy Spirit that once again "it is not about the Holy Spirit but from the Holy Spirit." It is impossible according to Thiselton (2013) to separate the Holy Spirit "from the word…His power is…the power that lives in and by the Word" (Thiselton 2013:325). This in essence means that the Holy Spirit is always present in theology and therefore always has the final word (Thiselton 2013). In addition, Thiselton (2013:325) states that, "God is active through the Spirit because his revelation is a speech-act." Thiselton (2013:327) notes that in Barth's work the difference is expounded between justification and that of sanctification and states that each of these are "two different aspects of the one event of salvation." According to Thiselton (1975:17) in the formulation of the hermeneutical problem conceived as having two-sides that:

> one moves the centre of gravity entirely from the past to the present in the tasks of interpretation and by doing so all of it is dominated by the pre-understanding of the one who is interpreting the texts that are ancient and because of this the result is a mere projection of the interpreter's ideas or any preconceptions.

Thiselton (1975:17) illustrates this by referring to the suggestions made by Smart and Palmer and reports that while Gadamer is followed in Palmer's understanding of their

being two existing horizons, at the same time, it is reported that, "he claims to find a precedent for this view of hermeneutics in the scriptural text of Luke 24:25-27 which involves Christ's interpretation of the Old Testament in relation to "his own messiahship." It is written by Luke "Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures of the things concerning himself" (Thiselton 1975:17). According to Palmer, this interpretation of more than simply repeating the texts that are ancient and even more than examining them in relation to their context but instead is a placing of the texts of the Old Testament within the "context of the present events of Jesus' messiahship, and at the same time expounded his own sufferings in the context of the Old Testament passages. Meanings depend on context" (Thiselton 1975:17). In the speech-act, all utterances are performative, with an original delineation in the wider perspective. Performance utterances entail a situation whereby something is issued when doing something. Those that do something according to a convention constitute and count in what it might be. Thiselton gives examples in general speech like when warning an individual that the bus shall arrive at four, therefore one needs to eat lunch quickly. In this regard, there is no convention that makes the utterance a warning act. It highlights that there is an illocutionary force that is not properly instituted. Thiselton disentangles what he describes as the two cases, one that is based on convention that is original and performative and the explicit performative that has wrong timings as a special case. Thiselton alludes that it is not convention and it is the meaning of these sentences that creates a sentence to be like a warning. There is a linguistic meaning that is conventional. The different fragile applications applied in a conventional way is associated with the envisaged and is according to Thiselton an application of the original performative utterances. Despite the fact that Thiselton does not apply this terminology, there is a great distinction between the weak and strong application of the illocutionary forces. This operates in the dynamic strength spectrum. The *Speech-Act Theory*, then allows the problematic tendency that polarises or differentiates the extravagant that must be correct. According to the work of Porter (2012) best work of

Anthony Thiselton on hermeneutics is that of the work entitled "The two horizons" which is reported to be such that, "plays with the fixed notion by creating reciprocity in his book on general hermeneutics, 'The Hermeneutical Spiral'" (45-6). The idea of the two horizons is reported by Porter (2012) to be one that is reasonable, and it is stated that interpreters in contemporary times acknowledge and even appreciate the distance hermeneutically that is in existence between the individual's personal horizon of understand and the ancient author's horizon and text and is such in which each horizon is formulated upon each individuals text and horizon and the presuppositions as well as assumptions. However, the understanding that is based upon that horizon or understanding is Israel and during ancient times is inclusive of that which is "patriarchal, pre-exilic, or post-exilic period; or the Palestinian, Mediterranean, or even European worlds of the New Testament" (Porter 2012:46). However, it is worth noting that in Hebrews 4:12 that it is stated that God's word "is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and Spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (NIV). This when joined with John 6:51 in which Jesus states, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the word" (NIV) denotes that Jesus is indeed God's word alive. In John 6:63 Jesus states, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are Spirit and they are life" (NIV). This clearly denotes that the Holy Spirit is the agent that assists in the interpretation of scripture contained in the Bible and that requires on the part of the individual the act of completion of the agreement contained in the new covenant. The analysis of the views of Thiselton and Vanhoozer on the *Speech-Act Theory* will be guided through their adherence and coherence to what the Bible says and whether they stray from the application of the Bible in terms of God's word as alive and active in the life of the believer and what Jesus had to say about himself being the 'living word'.

Thiselton (1975) opines, that even more specific this is establishing the existent relation between what are two horizons and involves the disciples understanding of the texts when they were able to view the subject matter from their own reference frame. Thiselton (1975:17) then moves on to examine the issues of where the present is, then a factor that dominates in gaining an understanding of the past and questions whether the past could in fact "be understood on its own terms"? Thiselton (1975:18) leans on the work of Proper Greech who stated that writers in the New Testament:

> interpreted Old Testament texts within the framework of a tradition and of contemporary events and that this means that the scriptural context was no longer the original context in which it was written but the context of their own Kerygma based on the recent crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth (Thiselton 1975:18).

Greech holds that the New Testament writers had no interest in interpreting scripture in an objective manner but that this however:

> does not mean that their exegesis was arbitrary or out of context but rather the scripture is reported to have been read in a state of pre-understanding and then interpreted with two contexts and those being God's salvific action in the past and that of contemporary happenings (Thiselton 1975:18).

The view and vision of the New Testament writers is subjective rather than arbitrary and is hermeneutical and has as its beginning that of pre-understanding (Thiselton 1975). Gadamer is reported in the work of Thiselton (1975) to have the view that the New Testament writers are able to come to terms with the gap that was in existence between the writers of the Old Testament and their contemporary day. According to Thiselton (1975:88) it has been argued that there is "no natural point of contact" that is already in existence between God's word and man and that the only way that it is possible to bridge this discontinuity is through the Holy Spirit's work. Thiselton (1975:88) states specifically that the chasm between human understanding and the Bible is no less than that gulf that exists between God himself and human

understanding since, "it is not the right human thoughts about God which for the content of the Bible, but the right divine thoughts about men". In fact, Thiselton (1975:88) enhances the view of Barth in relation to this discontinuity that, "the subject matter of scripture can be known only spiritually, i.e. on the basis of the work of the...Spirit". Barth is reported to go further in his appeal to the Reformers and to Luther advocating the "doctrine that the word of scripture given by the Spirit can be recognised as God's word only because the work of the Spirit…becomes an event for its hearer or reader. How else will God be recognised except by God himself"? (Thiselton 1975:88). Thiselton (1975:89) holds that it is not possible for human beings to understand God's word, "except as the act of God." God's word "is not a continuation, but the end of all other events that we know" and God's word is not only a stance of being discontinuous with all experiences and thoughts of humans but additionally, "also stands altogether apart from them: The presence of the Word of God is not an experience, precisely because and as it is the divine decision concerning us." Thiselton additionally notes the work of Ott who opines that there is no need for such a great concern about the issues of understanding since the Holy Spirit ensures that the Word of God is understood (Thiselton 1975). Thiselton (1975:91) writes regarding the case of Paul that Paul did not work independently from the Holy Spirt but in cohesion with the Holy Spirit and states that the idea that the:

> Holy Spirit works through human understanding and does not therefore short-circuit the problem of hermeneutics can be confirmed in Torrance's work entitled God and Rationality in which it is noted that in speaking in the Spirit's epistemological relevance does not in essence mean that the knowledge problem is centred on the Spirit in the superficial sense and specifically: By His very mode of being as Spirit He hides Himself from us so that we do not know Him directly in His on hypostasis and in His mode of activity as transparent Light He effaces Himself that the one triune God may shine through Him to us (Thiselton 1975:91).

Thiselton (1975:92) writes that the Holy Spirit does not in essence bypass the rationality of humans or even questions the language of humans, but instead as noted by Torrance works in the illustration of, "the interaction between the Word of God and methods of communication through concrete human language." It is the transformational and dynamic aspects of this knowledge in which the "epistemological relevance of the Holy Spirit lies" (Thiselton 1975:92). Thiselton (1975:94) writes then that it is not suggested that hermeneutical problems are bypassed through the Holy Spirit and its considerations but instead that this serves to emphasise the importance as well as the legitimacy of hermeneutics. Next examined are hermeneutics and language and writes that there are three periods of importance with the first being the Antioch school which sought for the literal meaning of the texts, with the second being the reformation in which it is stressed by Martin Luther that language studies provide contributions that are positive for the hermeneutics of the Bible. The third period is reported to be when language study in the 18th century was not held to be a tool in hermeneutics (Thiselton 1975). Thiselton (1975) writes that from the view of hermeneutics the approaches that are traditional relating to language inherently possesses a limitation in that the concentration of the attention is on the language of the ancient texts and there is not any attempt to find cohesion between the interpreter and the world content of what is written, and this results in an ignoring of the problem related to pre-understanding. Ebeling is noted to have stated that one may understand each individual word that is contained in a text but may miss the meaning of that text (Thiselton 1975:94). Thiselton (1975:119) reports on the work of Trier and his field theory explicitly in 1931 who is reported to have made the assertion that, "a word has meaning not independently of its linguistic context but only as part of a whole, only within a field." This principle is reported to have emerged first in the work of Saussure (1857-1913) stated to be modern linguistics founder and whose work holds three principles: language operates on the basis of human convention, in contrast between synchronic and diachronic linguistics; and on the nature of language as a structured system" (Thiselton 1975:11). Thiselton (1975:119) notes the statement of Saussure,

"Language is a system of interdependent terms in which the value of each term results solely from the simultaneous presence of the others. All words used to express related ideas limit each other reciprocally." Ricoeur is reported in Thiselton (1975) and it is reported that more misunderstandings are present in the debate that exists between thought and language and that when this is combined with some of the views of hermeneutics and pre-understanding that the problem is exacerbated. Thiselton (1992:5) writes that the work of Ricoeur conducted an examination of the contribution made by, "Freudian categories as methodological tools of suspicion and criticism. But he also seeks to retrieve the creative power of symbols, metaphors and narratives in texts and especially in religious discourse." According to Thiselton (1992:5) the importance of the task of hermeneutics is in the manner in which the "texts impinge on readers: what processes they set in motion, and whether these processes are valid." In relation to what it precisely is that the text does, Thiselton (1992:6) states that it "raises a multitude of critical questions in philosophy, theories of language, and socio-critical theory." Specifically, Thiselton (1992:6) believes that one should search for a criteria that makes a determination that is valid in relation to, "what a text does within this or that community or for this or that occasion?" There is a question of whether one should work towards the setting of some criteria that makes a determination of textual validity within one or another community and for one or another occasion (Thiselton 1992:6). As well, there is a question of whether plagiarism is acceptable as long as texts are made to actually do something (Thiselton 1992). Finally, there is a question of, if it is possible to "critically rank the different criteria by which we judge what counts as meaningful or productive effects of texts within this or that context in life" (Thiselton 1992:6). The concern of Gadamer is based upon his conviction, philosophically speaking that, "post-Enlightenment rationalism has set us on the wrong track by its pre-occupation with a 'method' as the means of grasping truth" (Thiselton 1992:7). In other words, 'method' is such that makes the presupposition of "an abstract generality" (Thiselton 1992:7). Thiselton (1992) states that the consequences of what appear to be only small changes in the theory of hermeneutics can be quite radical in nature.

The work of Apel as well as Habermas are such that have the objective of developing a critique that is emancipatory in the area of hermeneutics, "which reaches beyond the horizons of particular persons or communities" (Thiselton 1992:7). The "early Church Fathers" understood that there are issues within the given context of the "linguistic world of some given community" and that the idea of the Gnostics to make the cross into an idea that was docetic rather than being temporal and anchors in other than the world of linguistics (Thiselton 1992:8). Paul noted that the "message of the cross" resulted in presenting a challenge to the community and individual constructs as well as their expectations and in terms of fulfilling their wishes (Thiselton 1992:7). However, the cross did not reflect the social horizons that were already in existence but instead is reported by Thiselton (1992:7) to give "birth to new horizons, which in turn effected a trans-contextual liberating critique and individual and social transformation." As such, the idea that the community can effectively project what they think onto scriptural texts to construct the meanings that they wish does not hold sway and the use of contextual practice or hermeneutics that are socio-pragmatic, "leaves no room for the new creation as the work of grace in Christian theology, and no room for new horizons in hermeneutics" (Thiselton 1992:7-8). Thiselton (1992:8) states that the "distinctiveness of the horizons of the text" must be respected and then imposed on the reader's own distinct horizon if there is to be productive as well as creative interactions of those horizons to occur. It is this distance that exists between the text and the reader that works in the performance of a hermeneutical function that is positive in nature" (Thiselton 1992:8). When there is assimilation that is premature in terms of the perspectives of readers then the reader is left backed into a corner due to their personal and previous horizons (Thiselton 1992:8). Biblical Text reading in the Christian community is often, "governed by horizons of expectation already performed by the community of readers or by the individuals" and that those preaching an extract from the text which they had already decided to preach, with the congregation's view and reading of the Bible being confirmation of their identity in the community and the style of life that is already enjoyed by them (Thiselton 1992:9). As such the writings of

the Bible "become assimilated into the function of creeds; they become primarily institutional mechanisms to ensure continuity of corporate belief and identity" (Thiselton 1992:9). In relation to that of text creativity it is held that Ricoeur places and emphasis on the "creative effect of symbols, metaphors and narratives, on imagination and on thought" (Thiselton 1992:9). This is reported to set out possibilities that are new and which have the capacity to stretch past the previous boundaries of systems of thought (Thiselton 1992). Thiselton points out that the emphasis of Gadamer is on that of wisdom that is practical which stands in sharp contrast to reasoning that is theological and makes the provision of a starting place for developments that are meta-critical. However, Thiselton (1992:10) notes that Apel and Habermas are critical of the insensitivity of Gadamer "towards the socio-ethical implications of hermeneutics" arguing instead that certain social interests rather than contextual contingencies which are finite and bare "lie behind different actualisations of text or of truth." Thiselton (1992:10) states that the "task of socio-critical hermeneutics is to unmask these social interests through an emancipatory critique, which serves freedom, justice and truth." Thiselton (1992:10) reports that the hermeneutics of Schleiermacher is such that makes the offering of "a hermeneutic of understanding." Schleiermacher, "contrasts between the grammatical and psychological axes of hermeneutics anticipate Saussure's distinction between shared language as an inter-subjective system and language-uses in particular acts of communication" (Thiselton 1991:10). Schleiermacher utilised a dual role in his establishment, "between creative, intuitive, immediacy of interpersonal understanding, and comparative, objective, distanced, criticism still remains fundamental in hermeneutics" (Thiselton 1992:23).

Whereas Gadamer, in his philosophical hermeneutics is reported by Thiselton (1992:24-5) to be "more concerned with broader fundamental questions about the relation between the two major hermeneutical axes: the contingent, particular, historical axis of variable finite actualisations and textual performances, and the general linguistic axis of the universal ontological ground which these finite acts

presuppose." From the view of Thiselton (1992:31) hermeneutics is such that it involves an examination of the operative conditions as well as the processes of the transforming of texts and this, "in both senses of the phrase" as well as raising many questions are related concerning the interpretation models and goals as well as that which might be conceived to effect and presuppose. Thiselton (1992:31) states that the effects that are transforming the text are only ones that are potential and as such, "constitute nothing more than physical-spatial objects of visual (or tactile or aural) perception." The potential of this can only be actualised at the time that the community of readers or the reader gain the perception, "that the signs constitute an intelligible sub-system of some larger linguistic or semiotic code, and processes of interpretation begin" (Thiselton 1992:31). Thiselton (1992:31) states that at the time, "the necessary conditions for interpretation become operational, an event of communication takes place within the temporal flow of the reader's life and experience." Musical texts, "illustrate the relevance of this temporal axis as well. The potential of the physical-spatial shapes of crochets and quavers in a musical score become actualised only in the temporal flow of the performance, or when a skilled musician 'reads' the score in his or her head" (Thiselton 1992:31). It is held by Thiselton (1992) that hermeneutics has, due to the theorist's imposition of one specific paradigm of hermeneutics, in their attempt to use in the form of a model for explanation has suffered greatly. In relation to the *Speech-Act Theory* it is indicated by Thiselton (1992:32) that legal texts make an offering of a prime example of the texts operational significant in relation to which one, "constitutes speech-acts." Thiselton (1992:32) writes that there are parallels with these and texts of the Bible and that, "a text which constitutes a will that is valid and signed as well as witnessed works in bequeathing a legacy or an estate to the beneficiary that is named." Furthermore, where a will is misplaced or even forgotten for some period the moment the will is discovered "it becomes operative and the text thereby changes the life of the beneficiary, perhaps giving rise to new hopes, new attitudes and new actions" (Thiselton 1992:32). Writings in Biblical Texts are full of invitations, verdicts, blessings being pronounced, confessions, commands, love

declarations as well as naming (Thiselton 1992:32). Thiselton (1992:32) notes the statement of Markus Barth as follows:

> The unique power of the Bible flows from the fact that the biblical words are words or love…between God and man. The reading of the Bible therefore should be compared to reading love letters rather than the study and use of a law books.

The person who receives the letter of love does not generally have the response of a simple acknowledgement that they have received information but instead, in most cases, although not in all cases, the reading is such that becomes transactional and that involves "acceptance, sometimes commitment, and probably deeper bonding" (Thiselton 1992:32). Thiselton (1992) believes that the *Speech-Act Theory* fails to offer a paradigm that is comprehensive in nature for all texts contained in the Bible. This is because the text works in shaping and in transformation of those who read the text and that this does so in ways that are different. For example, "a narrative may draw the hearer into a projected-narrative world in which a flow of events and feelings are imaginatively experienced at a pre-reflective level" (Thiselton 1992:32). This means that the transaction is within the willingness of the reader, "to step into this world, and to let his or her feelings and imagination be directed by the world of the text" (Thiselton 1992:33). Given as an example is the book of Jonah in which the reader is invited "to travel in imagination with this self-important prophet. We hear him give his orthodox testimony to the sailors; we witness his prayers for death and his formalised thanksgiving for deliverance from death, carefully modelled like one of the psalms" (Thiselton 1992:33). The story goes on following the prophet to Nineveh and then,

> finally, to our horror, experience the shock of observing and feeling Joan's intense concern about the welfare of a castor-oil plant which forms part of his immediate 'world' against the background of his persistent unconcern about the welfare of Nineveh which never seriously becomes part of his own world of concerns (Thiselton 1992:33).

The time spent in the narrative world with Jonah that the text projects results in a transformation of attitudes and feelings about the world at a wider level and Thiselton (1992:33) says that this, "might not be reached by a theological sermon or treatise on mission or evangelism as the principles of life." The models of textual activity within the *Speech-Act Theory* or the world that is narrative and the understanding that is interpersonal do not work in exhausting the many ways that the texts in the Bible can have on transforming nature (Thiselton, 1992). The model utilised in the work of Hans Robert Jauss who was Gadamer's pupil is one that follows the work of Heidegger, Gadamer and Heidegger as well as others share his idea of:

> horizon, and in particular regards the central category of 'horizon of expectation' as his 'methodological center piece'. Every reader brings a horizon of expectation to the text. This is a mind-set, or system of references, which characterises the reader's finite viewpoint amidst his or her situatedness in time and history. Patterns of habituation in the reader's attitudes, experiences, reading practices and life, define and strengthen his or her horizon of expectation (Thiselton 1992:34).

However, as noted by Thiselton (1992:34) a text may contradict, or even surprise or may reverse this 'horizon of expectation' of the reader. The work of Viktor Shklovski a formalist writer in Russia examined this type of phenomenon and stated the argument, "that the effective actualisation of a work of creative literary art lay in its power to 'de-habitualise' the perceptions of readers" (Thiselton 1992:34). Thiselton (1992:35) notes that if texts have the power to bring about transformation in the readers then at the same time, "readers can and do transform texts". Hermeneutics traces paths by which this process occurs. Readers may do this in an unconscious manner or even in the form of self-deception and use texts that are harmless in nature to become "disturbing and call for change" (Thiselton 1992:35). The texts however, may become transformed through patterns that are habituated individually or corporately and which ultimately steal the power of the text in speaking as 'other' to the individual reading the text and

the examples stated is if, "biblical and other religious texts are to deliver us from self-centredness and to convey messages of judgment or of love, encounters with texts involve, as David Klemm insists, encounters with 'otherness'" (Thiselton 1992:35). Therefore, the reader's assumptions are such which are: "those which have been ingrained by individual or corporate habit, transform the text into a reflection of the readers' own local and domestic concerns the text's capacity to speak from within a horizon of otherness has evaporated" (Thiselton 1992:36). Therefore, "hermeneutics has suffered because many theorists seek to formulate general answers to this question, independently of the kind of text, or theory of texts, which is in view, and without specifying what theory of meaning each answer implies" (Thiselton 1992:36). The example stated is that there is insistence on the part of Gadamer in relation to "the development of traditions, and contexts within traditions, lead to changes of meaning, while Hirsch insists that what changes is not meaning but significance" (Thiselton 1992:36). Thiselton (1992:36) states that Wittgenstein "spoke of the 'mystical'…What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence" however, Russell declares that this needlessly confused religion and metaphysics are what he termed 'nonsense'. Thiselton (1992:36) questions whether this example relates to meaning change and being dependent on the context of the document being changed something that as claimed by Hirsch is, "simply an example of the restoration of a valid interpretation in the light of the author's own intention." The intention of the author is reported by Thiselton (1992:38) to have been attacked heavily and specifically from the "new criticism and then from theories of texts associated with reader-response theory and from post-structuralism or deconstructionism." The traditional view has not been supposed by Ricoeur or by Gadamer who insists that once the text is written that "it no longer 'belongs' to the horizon of the author" (Thiselton 1992:38). From the view of Hirsch however, "meaning is to be understood primarily in terms of the author's will or intention" and views a trend in philosophy that is both destructive and sinister in a movement that desires to situate meaning in the texts alone (Thiselton 1992:38).

There are six levels that are distinct in nature that the reader may use whether unconsciously or consciously that results in text being transformed and ultimately the meaning for ill or for good and that those levels include those of; (1) inter-textual; (2) situational or contingent temporally; (3) horizontal; (4) semiotic; (5) hermeneutical; and (6) in relation to textual theories (Thiselton 1992). There are two factors, although not just two that result in hermeneutics being a discipline that is quite radical (Thiselton 1992). It is specifically believed that hermeneutics is an embodiment of reflection upon certain conditions that render the understanding of texts which are read to be possible. Second "hermeneutics entails an evaluation of the range of possible hermeneutical models which may be operative, and entails and assessment of their respective value or validity in relation to particular kinds of texts" (Thiselton 1992:48) From this view, the relationship that hermeneutics has to interpretation is reported to be, "a meta-discipline. It employs meta-criticism, in the sense that it embodies reflection about the validity or operational conditions of the interpretive activity which is under examination" (Thiselton 1992:48). According to Thiselton (1992:48-9) the disagreements that are radical in nature about the meaning or message of any specific texts is such that it, "sometimes spring not from differences between two or more sets of exegetical conclusion, but from prior disagreements about the goals of interpretation." For example, there are texts that do not intend to provide answers for the reader but instead, "their primary function is to invite or provoke the reader to wrestle actively with the issues, in ways that involve adopting a series of comparative angles of vision" (Thiselton 1992:66). Thiselton (1992:66) writes that centric to all revelation theology and how it relates to the texts of the Bible is the affirmation that Jesus was Christ and was the Word who was made flesh. This is since through Christ, God's truth was clearly spoken and was embodied in flesh and alive and that which Jesus spoke to those with ears to listen, is communication of an interpersonal nature. (Thiselton 1992:66). Thiselton (1992:69) notes the statement of George Myerson and Dick Leighth, "Language is always addressed to someone else, even if that someone is not immediately present, or is actually unknown or imagined." Jesus, in his oral message

was an embodiment in his deeds and in his life and for this reason is written in text form and that can be independently applied to the presupposed context of life (Thiselton 1992:69). Thiselton (1992:69) notes the work of Kelber who reports on the association of words being alive when spoken in specific contexts that are social and that words are the voice which rises up within the individual and this means that the language spoken represents a speech-act. Ricoeur noted that the individual who reads the work is not present at the writing of those words and likewise the writer of the work is not present at its reading and that the result is a dynamic component being deactivated (Thiselton 1992:72). Ricoeur makes a distinction between five specific discourse modes in the texts of the Bible including: (1) prophetic; (2) narrative; (3) hymnic; (4) prescriptive; and (5) wisdom (Thiselton 1992:73). Ricoeur is reported to believe that the idea of, "interpersonal communication between God and man remains a 'personal ode' that needs to be 'qualified by divine transcendence and hiddenness'" (Thiselton 1992:73). The example given is that Ricoeur believes that when the prophet speaks it is not in his name that he speaks but rather he speaks in the name of God (Thiselton 1992:73). In this case, Thiselton (1992:73) writes that the result is that of a double author with one of speech and another of writing. In relation to separating the writer of the scripture from God in terms of speech-acts, Wisse (2002:161) states that this can be understood as deputised speech or the authorisation of a second party to speak on God's behalf and specifically in relation to the scripture as God's word. In relation to the double-agent locuter it is reported that there may be two or even more locuters interacting in a conversation through the utterances being performed as well as the performance of gestures (Moulin and Rousseau 2001). However, utterances are such that may be associated with illocutionary acts that are either incomplete or complete, but it is important to understand that the locuter is able to assess a specific mental model that works in the organisation of the individual's knowledge concerning their environment as well as the other involved locuters and themselves (Moulin and Rousseau 2001). Wisse (2002:159) critiques Wolterstorff's view of the entirety of the scripture being the Word of God yet holds to light a situation where an executive gives

his secretary leeway to write his letters because he understands that the secretary is privy to what the executive himself would write in those letters. The reason that Wisse (2002:166) feels a distinction needs to be made is because many times in scripture people are speaking to God rather than *vice-versa* and question the application of this speech as being God's speech. Yet, the idea of transitive discourse is applied by Wolterstorff where there is such a double agency in scripture.

Thiselton (1992:73) writes that in the case of "narrative, typically in the Pentateuch, the Synoptic gospels and Acts, the author often disappears, as if events recounted themselves; but the essential ingredient is the emphasis on founding events as the imprint mark, or trace of God's act." Discourse that is prescriptive, is stated by Thiselton (1992:73) to be such that "expresses the will of God". It represents a relationship of commanding and obeying within the framework which the term 'covenant' broadly conveys. Ricoeur is noted by Thiselton (1992:73) to have stated the argument that, "through experiences of solitude, anguish, suffering and death. Hebraic wisdom interprets these as signifying "the incomprehensibility of God – as the silence and absence of God."

The hermeneutics of a text that is embodied is reflective of a Christology that is incarnational and one where revelation is operational by the deed and word being interwoven (Thiselton 1992:74). This is consistent with the community's role and how their witness and actions lend credibility to work facilitation of the written and spoken word wherein, "the text is more than a docetic or disembodied system of signifiers" (Thiselton 1992:74).

Thiselton (1992:145) writes that there is a sharp divergence between pre- and postmodernism and this is because the Christian ecumenical world has pre-modern views of the practices and beliefs that are shared corporately to be a type of respected testimonies, revered creeds, conduct and faith that are traditional and must be guarded.

However, the world postmodern views are suspect, embedded in interests and myths that need explanation (Thiselton 1992:145). This results in the hermeneutical trust being replaced by one of suspicion that is radical (Thiselton 1992:145). The theories relating to interpretation that is pre-modern is reported by Thiselton (1992:92, 145) to be representative of "a hermeneutic of innocence." This is stated since Christian thinkers that were pre-modernist had the realisation of how much rests on the traditional context and the critical difference is in postmodernism traditional patterns re-occur and the traditional objects are held with great suspicion. This is believed to be power devices used to promote certain values such as those which are in the form of feudalism or a monarchy. However in the Christian ecumenical world that was pre-modern the framework is based on trust. This is because embodied is the community's testimony to the apostolic faith that is historic and which has a definite revealing in Christ (Thiselton 1992:145). Hermeneutics are reported to have been coined in the work of J.C. Dannhauer in his work in 1654 entitled *Hermeneutica Sacra* (Grondin 1997; Thiselton 1992:194). Bullinger, in 538 believed that anyone interpreting scripture should take under consideration factors that are contingent including periods of history, the writer of the passage as well as taking the scripture in context with other scriptures in the Bible (Thiselton 1992:194). The texts should be considered in terms of: (1) *causa*; (2) *locus*; (3) occasion; (4) *tempus*; (5) instrumentation; (6) *modus* as well as some other such considerations in relation to the writing of the passage and those conditions (Thiselton 1991:194). In relation to the Pauline texts there is no existing substitute for the, "painstaking exegesis of the flow of the texts, detail by detail" (Thiselton 1992:237). The use of 'keys' into Paul's theological mind is reported in the work of J. Christian Beker in the work entitled *Paul the Apostle* and in what is termed by Beker as, "the search for a doctrinal centre" (Thiselton 1992:238). However, the attempt to make every specific particularity in the Pauline centre that revolves around, "or from so firm an insistence on a contextual attention to particularities" results in scepticism as to whether there can genuinely be a theology of Paul (Thiselton 1992:238). The elder apostles were opponents of Paul as well as Barnabas resulting

in two gospels which never crossed the path of the other and at the time of the disappearance of the apostles nothing has been present except opposition and difference (Thiselton 1992). There are reported to be two examples in interpretation of Paul that serve to signify the way that exegetical detail interacts with attempts that are provisional in understanding, "the wholeness of Pauline thought. The first concerns with the eschatological approach to Paul" (Thiselton 1992:244). There are reported to be three accounts that are remarkable of Paul arising in this approach and it is reported in the work of Thiselton (1992) that each of these are one-sided and require serious questioning while at the same time containing perceptive observations that are exceptional in nature about the texts given and the place of Paul in Christian thought development. Jewish scholar, Albert Schweitzer as well as Martin Werner and Joachim Schoeps are reported to be representative of the approach that is eschatological (Thiselton 1992). Paul's teachings were not only strange in his day but in the generations to follow and Thiselton (1992) notes that Jesus was veritably, "raised as the first-fruits of the new community (1 Cor. 15: 20). Christian believers became capable of assuming the resurrection mode of existence before the general resurrection of the dead takes place" (Thiselton 1992:244). However, the historical continuity of Paul in relation to the gospels and Jesus lay within the conviction that all is dependent "upon the realisation of fellowship with Jesus" (Thiselton 1992:245). Paul's writings relate the Christian's partaking in the death and resurrection of Jesus as in Galatians 2:20 Paul writes, "I am crucified with Christ" and in Roman's 6:24 which relates that Christians have through baptism been buried with Christ and in Romans 6:8 that having been dead and buried with Christ that we will be resurrected to live with Christ (Thiselton 1992:245). The eschatological understanding is one that is lacking in understanding as well as being one-sided according to Thiselton (1992:245). Thiselton (1992:245) writes that the interpreter's task is one that must realise an understanding and one that views life from the experience of the writer by walking in the shoes of the other and doing so empathetically. Self-understanding is greatly dependent on introspection but additionally on acknowledgement of the differences as

well as that which is similar and the varying particulars all which are emerging during reflection and through social interaction and the individual's learning of sympathy and their development of imagination (Thiselton 1992:245). In addition, the reliving or transposition of that experience of other is greatly dependent upon the transposition of oneself into those circumstances that resulted in the expression of life that gives the invitation for one's understanding (Thiselton 1992:245). Another concern and one that is central to understanding as well as historical is the issue relating to objectification in social sciences and hermeneutics and specifically is the critique of Kant on pure reason made provision for a turning point, "for the history of ideas by establishing the boundaries and finitude of theoretical thought" (Thiselton 1992:246). It is reported that Dilthey believed that Kant's categories used for order and organisational principles was not applicable in relation to human life and its historical flow (Thiselton 1992:246) Dilthey believed that the entirety can only be truly understood by understanding all parts individually and specifically, which means a full understanding of the written work as well as of its author and any literature that is related to that work in writing. "Understanding of the whole and of the individual parts are interdependent" (Thiselton 1992:246).

Each expression that is human can only be understood in relation to the experiences and the situations that resulted in the expression's production (Thiselton 1992). Thiselton (1992:279) notes that for Heidegger hermeneutics is such that it stands for the human interpretive process and the understanding that arises from the orientation as well as being such that is transcendental in nature and a discipline that is meta-critical and further that desires an exploration of the foundation that makes understanding possible. Therefore, according to Heidegger interpretation is a business designated as a hermeneutic that, "also becomes a hermeneutic in the sense of working out the conditions on which the possibility of any ontological investigation depends" (Thiselton 1992:279). The first horizon needed for attaining understanding is reported to be that of time (Thiselton 1992). Because it is impossible to escape

questions related to the history or the manner in which the individual is interpreting upon the basis of their being conditioned historically (Thiselton 1992:279). Heidegger is reported to follow Dilthey in his drawing of a distinction that is sharp in relation to the scientifically used categories and the "existential characterizations of human life" and this results in objectification equalling that of depersonalisation (Thiselton 1992). Therefore, it is no surprise when one learns that a mere description will not serve justice to life particularities (Thiselton 1992). There is a need to move out from the object-subject type relationship (Thiselton 1992). Finally, "the giveness of our world is seen as the thrown-ness or facticity of our existence and our being born into a situation which is not of our making or thinking" (Thiselton 1992:279). Because of this, it is this situation that is constitutive of the person's particularity of their being (Thiselton 1992). Heidegger uses a term of 'being-there' to speak of an individual's existence of being in an abstract manner (Thiselton 1992). Thiselton (1992:317) writes that in hermeneutics no answer that is objective appears that stands independently of the interests and objective of those whom are involved. Robert Morgan is reported to state in the work entitled, *Biblical Interpretation* that nearly all involved in interpretation is formulated on the basis of the interpreter's decision to support their own interests and writes specifically that, "texts, like dead men and women have no rights, no aims, no interests. They can be used in whatever ways readers or interpreters choose" (Thiselton 1992:317).

To claim that the text themselves possess rights is quite simply a type of deception that is used for the concealment of the interests of someone (Thiselton 1992:317). Thiselton (1992:317) writes that hermeneutics as a discipline may be moved forward from its original stance of a method of study to one that adopts an attitude that is fundamental as well as being a, "forum for continuing conversation between those who share the same family of concerns, or who wish rationally or ethically to defend certain models of interpretation as operative paradigms." The role that inter-subjectivity plays within interpretive communities has resulted in some of the writers formulating criteria

that is socio-pragmatic alone concerning the interpretation purposes yet there are conclusions that differ such as in Wittgenstein and Habermas (Thiselton 1992:317). The "narrowest and least plausible option is for an interpreter to select any one given model of interpretation and to use it as a comprehensive key for the interpretation of every kind of text" a statement that speaks well in opposition to the use of *Speech-Act Theory* as a sole criteria for understanding texts contained in the Bible (Thiselton 1992:318). Thiselton (1992:327) writes that from the view of Gadamer, "History does not belong to us, but we belong to it" and before we can begin to have a self-understanding through using self-examination it is necessary that we have a self-understanding, "in a self-evident way in the family, society, and state in which we live." Understanding in a subjective manner is a distortion, and according to Thiselton (1992:327) in order to obtain truth, it is not the self-centred reflection that was rational and utilised in the enlightenment but instead truth can be obtained "through the inter-subjective community of both past and present generations." Using these two, or the past along with the present formulates the historical reality of the individual and while the rationalism of the enlightenment was such that it, "invoked critical reason to distinguish between legitimate and false prejudices. But in doing so it suggested an artificial, abstract, and destructive antithesis between reason and authority" (Thiselton 1992:327). This is because when authority is properly viewed there is no hint of reason being abdicated and the respect that is held for the authority is one that relies wholly on judgment that is rational, and that the individual has an awareness of their personal limitations and that there is rationality in accepting the fact that there are other individuals who hold understanding that is better (Thiselton 1992). Thiselton (1992:328) writes that it is not possible for understanding to be any more, "reproductive than a game can consist of exact duplications or repetitions of the same acts and events of play" [since] no game is ever played twice identically, and for all this variety it is still the one game." Thiselton (1992:368) states that the approach of Ricoeur to the texts of the Bible while being a theory that is complex is one with the primary point regarding the need of readers to enter into engagement with the potentials and that

this is only possible when interpretations are not in conflict with one another. Specifically stated is that, "truth is bound up with the self-knowledge conveyed through interpretation, through an indirect detour through texts which open up inter-subjective worlds of imagination by means of symbol, metaphor and narrative." The use of these would result in the reader moving beyond their own self (Thiselton 1992). However, the work of Kierkegaard believes that selfhood is quite central to understanding while Ricoeur is reported to hold higher, "the place to be assigned to the objective or explanatory modes of knowledge" (Thiselton 1992:368). Explanation is such that occurs along with understanding (Thiselton 1992). The work of Habermas is reported by Thiselton (1992:390) to be still a theory in hermeneutics and one in which, "he firmly takes account of hermeneutical understanding as a model of interpersonal communication, endorsing the positive hermeneutical implications offered by" those of Ricoeur, Dilthey as well as Apel and Wittgenstein. However, Habermas is reported to be a hermeneutic that is socio-critical "because along with the hermeneutical dimension of life world Habermas allows for a transcendental critique of understanding and social interaction in terms of social systems. This underlines the value of unmasking character as a socio-critical tool, but from a theological point of view leaves unanswered questions about the status which is claimed for social theory rather than for theology" (Thiselton 1992:391). The offering to hermeneutics by Habermas are reported to be, "a vigorous, socio-critical conceptual apparatus for meta-critical inquiry. He acknowledges the inevitability of meta-critical questions, and rightly explores the extra-linguistic presuppositions of language in shared worlds of human behaviour" (Thiselton 1992:393). Thiselton (1992:393) states that Habermas is right in his defence of "the principle of the need to search for a transcendental basis for hermeneutical criteria." Habermas is reported to in this area agree with the hermeneutics of Apel (Thiselton 1992). Thiselton (1992:393) writes that the "effects of this contrast between socio-critical and socio-pragmatic programmes can be seen to be on of key importance for evaluating their hermeneutical power and credibility." Thiselton (1992) reports on Apel and Richard Rorty and states that their philosophies along with their

philosophical traditions are similar. However, Apel and Rorty differ in relation to "the philosophical and socio-ethical consequences of their respective systems" (Thiselton 1992:394). In fact, Thiselton (1992:394) reports that these are representative of what are, "polar opposite answer to the question of whether any meta-critical evaluation can be offered of these norms presupposed by a community of interpretation that may be grounded in trans-contextual considerations outside the boundaries of the community itself." Both Apel and Rorty are reported to strongly support the work of Wittgenstein (Thiselton 1992). Apel is reported by Thiselton (1992) to reject a truth theory with the social pragmatism reductionism (Thiselton 1992). Apel is reported to have supported "a trichotomy of concepts: scientists, hermeneutics, and the critique of ideology" (Thiselton 1992:402). Thiselton (1992:410) states that there are common themes among those of "Latin American liberation hermeneutics, black hermeneutics, and feminist hermeneutics" and specifically that each of these build critiques of the interpretation framework and which are held to be "Western, thought-centers or bourgeois-capitalist; from which some black theologies, as androcentric or patriarchal." These frameworks convey pre-understandings and systems of symbols which further and support those dominant traditions ideologies (Thiselton 1992).

Thiselton (2006:38) states the argument that the attempt in formulation of a theological hermeneutic is distinctive in nature and can in no way avoid engagement for specific issues. The first issue stated by Thiselton (2006:38) is that of the role that theological claims play in relation to "the effect of human fallenness on the capacities of human reason, judgement, wisdom and understanding, in undertaking hermeneutical explorations or proposing hermeneutical advances." According to Thiselton (2006) in studies of the New Testament in the work of Stanley Stowers and G. Bornkamm specific to the evaluation of Paul on human reason makes the suggestion of attitudes that are positive in nature toward reason than is supposed by some theologians however, it is necessary to responsibly assess this question while giving

acknowledgement to the dimensions that are wider in relation to reason that is transcendental and wisdom that can be assigned to the understanding of humans.

Thiselton (2006:38) states that the second issue for consideration is related to the dialectic's role and specifically stated that the distinction that is made by Gadamer in relation to problems and the dialectic which serves to offer, "another important key to a way forward that may do justice to both sides of the dilemma." Problems are reported to be inhabiting a domain that is "more abstract, general and systematic" that is dialectic (Thiselton 2006:38). Dialectic is reported by Thiselton (2006:38) to be dynamic and to have its roots in the "contingent dialogue of hermeneutical understanding, without yielding to mere fragmentation or incoherence." Furthermore, dialectic is reported to proffer a resource that is primary for hermeneutics in theology that can avoid the collapse of "each side of the dilemma" (Thiselton 2006: 38).

Stated third by Thiselton (2006:39) is that, "the phenomena of actualisation in hermeneutics resonates closely with a dispositional account of belief in theology, and the two offer complementary resources for theological hermeneutics." It is not possible, according to Thiselton (2006:39) for hermeneutics to be "a closed nor an abstract system that remains unrelated to human life." Thiselton (2006:39) writes that in the epistles of Paul this is an approach that is related very closely "to the issue of bodily obedience." Casemann is reported to write "In the bodily obedience of the Christian, carried out as the service of God in the world of every day, the Lordship of Christ finds visible expression, and only when this visible expression takes personal shape does the whole thing become credible as gospel message" (Thiselton 2006:39). Investigations that take into a joint and full account of actualisation of hermeneutics and an account that is dispositional "of belief yield not an abstract, closed, belief-system, but regular patterns of the contingent linguistic and extra-linguistic action that motivate both critical reflection and self-involving language, stance and action within the public world of everyday human life" (Thiselton 2006:39).

Fourth, this resource is one that is relative to the text in terms of the history of reception that works in shaping theology and which in turn is "shaped by theology" and is an approach that is inclusive of tracking how the "readings and interpretations of specific biblical texts in 'motivating situations' are influenced by diverse understanding of the texts, and how in turn they exercise influence upon divergent traditions of understanding" (Thiselton 2006:39). The second reported aspect is required for hermeneutics and most particularly for theological hermeneutics (Thiselton 2006:40). Thiselton (2006:40) reports that the interpreter's perception of Gadamer who emphasises "multiple, contingent actualisations or performances…as a radically pluralist hermeneutics." There are no replications in "two actualisations of understanding and meaning" (Thiselton 2006:40). The work of Warnke is such that demonstrates, "that for Gadamer historical situatedness and radical historical finitude constitute only a part, *albeit* an important part of a wider picture" (Thiselton 2006:40). Those who interpret and who critique Gadamer are reported by Thiselton (2006:40) to be seeking for an emphasis on "the discontinuities and disruptions of traditions and history more strongly than Gadamer, arguably perhaps has done." Thiselton (2006:41) reports on Jauss and his "theory of aesthetic reception or reception history" in which is addressed various issues in biblical hermeneutics and in which Jauss is reported to make a distinction "between horizons of expectation brought to texts during his first reading, and the reshaped horizons of expectations generated by such readings and that engage in turn with the same texts on second, third, or subsequent readings." The expectations which are plural, and which undergo change serves to result in even more effects and exerts influences even further on the understanding as well as the action that follows and that every reader of the Bible deals with in terms of concern and for use in interpretation and hermeneutics and their associated strategies (Thiselton 2006).

Thiselton (2006:41) questions how it is that the Pharisee Parable and that of the Tax Collector or in fact, any of the parables may be read and "with the same 'effect' on a

second or third reading, or twenty centuries after they were spoken, as the effect made by their first reading, or by their first oral utterance," Thiselton (2006:42) reports the importance for hermeneutics that are biblical for the distinction made by Jauss, "between the effects and dynamics of success readings. He calls a 'first' horizon of expectation, that is, the horizon projected by the first reading, the horizon of aesthetic experience, or sometimes the horizon of literary expectation." Second, Jauss calls following horizons are those of experience which is lived and recalls "the notions of 'life-worlds' in Husserl and the 'life' and 'lived experience in Dilthey" (Thiselton 2006:42). The literary level of the aesthetic in relation to reading leaves questions relating to, "*genre,* about literary conventions of the day and about style and form" (Thiselton 2006:42). However, the earlier horizons of expectation had positive engagement "with the text, may not, through aesthetic distance, either stand in tension with the text or alternatively, may become renewed and revitalized" (Thiselton 2006: 42). The creative stories of texts or their values that are creative in nature across generations in the second and those subsequent readings, "move beyond the literary or aesthetic level of challenge, or to interact with the life-worlds of readers and the cultural and social worlds of their communities" (Thiselton 2006:42). There may be the arising of something more at the time when, "two sharply differing horizons of expectations engage with the text" (Thiselton 2006:42). Kalfriend Froelich held that the understanding of the texts contained in the Bible cannot simply halt with prehistory being elucidated but instead must necessarily have the author in focus since real understanding has to consider the history following the text as a dimension of the historicity of the text and the manner in which the text is able to function in a self-interpreting manner and contextual variety and with interpretations that are historical in nature work to shape life (Thiselton 2006). In the work of Raisanen entitled, *The New Testament in Theology* it is held that Christian doctrine cannot be formulated upon the basis of the New Testament since there are so many contradictions concerning future expectations and ideas concerning salvation resulting in the identification of a factor that is of a unifying nature resulting in failure (Thiselton 2006).

James Dunn is reported to state the conclusion that no path exists that is direct from study that is historical to application in the present day (Thiselton 2006:43). However, Thiselton (2006:44) holds that Jauss' work in opposition to the interpretation of Raisanen appears to him to be demonstrative of the fact that there may be what is a reverse specifically related to, "how a necessary plurality of the actualisations can be perceived not as 'theological contradictions' but as the multiple voices required for a polyphonic harmony build from complementary viewpoints." Thiselton (2006:44) states that prior to his engagement with the work of Raisanen he had argued that polyphonic voice analysis in the work of Mikhail Bakhtin proffered a reference frame that assisted in the appreciation of the meeting with "multiple of polyphonic voices" and that the importance of this is within the fact that voices multiplied have the power of communicating insights in theology that arise beyond the limitations of what any single school or writer might be able to convey. Thiselton (2006:44) additionally notes that a great many "of the Church Fathers took this basic dialectic of unity and plurality in their stride." This is because they understood that in going back and forth in the interpretation of the Bible that the varying traditions and individual readings of identical passages in different eras and generations and "against the backgrounds of different situations, horizons of expectation are not uniform" (Thiselton: 2006:44). However, the exceptional variations are in the process of being open to tradition and resulting in engagement with the texts being enhanced which ultimately expands the horizons of the individual and opens them to hearing (Thiselton 2006). From the view of Gadamer this may result in what he terms "a correction to self-deception". Each experience that is worth noting stands in the way of expectation, however such expectation may result, as the process occurs to have been deceptive and to have held the reader in captivity (Thiselton 2006). Being open to tradition is reported to be the same as being open to otherness and the acknowledgement that the individual must accept some things that are in essence against them although there is no force applied for them to do this (Thiselton 2006). What this means, in other words is that one is not in the captivity of dogma but instead is open to listen and to accept challenges and ultimately to be

changed and specifically the person who is willing to listen has a fundamental openness. This principle is reported to be constitutive of a key insight in hermeneutics (Thiselton 2006:45). Interpretation pluralities that arise in reception history cancel one another or are invitations for dismissal or merely contradictions but instead arise from situations, contexts and even pre-understandings that are different as well as horizons that are different (Thiselton 2006). Instead, in other words, reception history that is ongoing historically supports a frame that deepens views and in which reception, historically speaking, supports a framework for the deepening of views and the comparison of various assessments arise (Thiselton 2006). This highlights the need for respecting one another as well as the otherness regarding thought's contextual nature. (Thiselton 2006). Ricoeur stated that from his view hermeneutics appear to be given life by this double motivation and specifically the present willingness in relation to suspecting, listen, rigour commitment and the commitment to be obedient (Thiselton 2006). The first, or that of the nature of being willing to suspect that entailed is the "fullest use of critical faculties" while the individual being willing to listen results in a "post-critical second naiveté which serves as the meaning of hearing" (Thiselton 2006:48). There is a limitation in understanding because: an ontological structure that may exist that can reassemble those interpretations that are discordant on the level of linguistics, yet it must be understood that this view can be likened to Moses view of the promised land before he died and that there are still understandings that remain open and not yet interpreted (Thiselton 2006:48). According to Thiselton (2006:49) this provides the explanation as to why it is that, "the symbol gives rise to thought, rather than the other way around" since the symbol enables the enlargement of a horizon. Thiselton (2006:48) relates that in the work of Ricoeur entitled: *Oneself as Another* there is a contrast drawn between the 'cognito' or the "simplistic self-centredness and a hermeneutics of the self" and reported to be where the self is 'agent' and where a character that is narrative in nature "responds to the voice of 'another' in becoming aware of its identity as self." Ricoeur is also reported to draw on the ideas of Strawson and his idea of the person as a concept that is primitive in nature as well as drawing

upon Austin and Recanati's *Speech-Act Theory* (Thiselton 2006:48). It is within this context that selfhood and its stability is explored by Ricoeur as it related to an interactive language encounter (Thiselton 2006:48). Ricoeur goes on to engage with what is a "reductive view of the self" and to include Hume where the self demonstrates variability as well as sameness and "discontinuity in a dialectic that is profoundly hermeneutical" (Thiselton 2006:49). The otherness is not an addition from outside of the self but is derived from the level of meaning as well as the constitution which is ontological in nature and specifically of selfhood (Thiselton 2006:49).

Thiselton's (2006) publication includes a chapter entitled *An Initial Application and Caveat: The Supposed Power of Words in the Biblical Writings (1974)* which is an article that he published first in 1974 in the Journal of Theological Studies. Thiselton (2006) reports on the dynamic nature of Hebrew words in the Old Testament books of the Bible and relates that according to some scholars the words in the New Testament are also dynamic in the same way that those words in the Old Testament are dynamic. For example, Thiselton (2006:55) states that in the book of Hebrews 4:12 it is stated that God's word is, "living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword." Thiselton (2006) goes on to state that Jesus, within the gospels simply speaks only the word resulting in the healing of the servant of the centurion. Therefore, it stands to reason that since God's word is 'living and active' and the speaking of 'the word' has the power to heal that the New Testament word is just as dynamic as is the Old Testament word in the Bible. For example, in John 6:63 the words of God "are Spirit and life" (Thiselton 2006: 55). Schokel, Stauffer, and Bultmann have cited a connection that is theological in nature between these types of biblical passages and the attitude of the Old Testament (Thiselton 2006). Von Rad has suggested that the ideas of Israel concerning "the power of God's words were entirely her own…a quite unique theological achievement" (Thiselton 2006:55). This issue is one that is specifically centred on language and the manner in which language is interrelated Israel and the Near East neighbours to Israel in ancient times also shared those views (Thiselton

2006:55). James Barr's work in relation to the meaning of '*dabar*' means "both 'word' and 'thing'" and it is clear that in the mind of the Hebrew that there is not a distinction "between thought and action" (Thiselton 2006:56). In fact, Thiselton (2006:56) notes that "for the Israelites there is on the whole no difference whatever between the idea, the name, and the matter itself." According to von Rad, the primitive view of the Israelites offers a "positively richer view of language than found in the modern Western culture" (Thiselton 2006:57) According to von Rad, the question should be asked of "whether language has not become impoverished because it has lost functions which at an earlier cultural level had once belonged to it" (Thiselton 2006:57). The claim of Schokel is that the fault lay "with us and with our…impoverished experience of a word in culture which regards it as nothing more than a convention…'sign'" (Thiselton 2006:57). From the view of Saussure "the relation between words and things is certainly not 'by nature', but rests on use, social tradition, rules of convention" (Thiselton 2006:57). Thiselton (2006:59) writes that John Paterson has stated that in Hebrew "the word is a unit of energy charged with power which flies like a bullet to its billet." Thiselton (2006:59) relates that the language in Hebrew is quite economical in that there are only approximately 10,000 Hebrew words compared to the Greek language containing a total of 200,000. Therefore, in Hebrew one word was "to be expended carefully…The Hebrew knew there was power in words and that such power must not be used indiscriminately" (Thiselton 2006:59). In Isaiah 55:11 it is stated "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (KJV). This specific scripture emphasises the power of God's word. In Jeremiah 23:29 it is stated: "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (KJV). Thiselton (2006:56) notes both of these verses as examples of the power of God's word. Thiselton (2006:61) notes the work of WD Davies who holds that the Torah, in Judaism:

> was personified and endowed with a mystical life of its own which
> emanates from God, yet it is partly detached from him and that this is

such that has no more relationship to a particular view of words or language than parallel ideas about the face of God or the wisdom of God have to notions about faces or wisdom (Thiselton 2006:61).

Thiselton (2006:61) states that the failure to reach a consensus about word upon the foundation of specific paradigms in relation to God's spoken words or even those which gods spoke is true in relation to examples containing curses or blessings and which are pronouncements. Austin is reported to refer to cursing and blessing as being specific examples of language that is performative in nature (Thiselton 2006:61). Performative language is set out by Austin to be that in which "language-in-use" or the utterance effectively is such that performs some action (Thiselton 2006:62). However, Austin maintains that there are several necessary requirements in performative utterances believing that these must be in existence in a conventional and accepted manner with an effect that is conventional (Thiselton 2006:62). In other words, there must be the existence of a procedure that is conventional and one that is accepted and then individuals along with circumstances must be appropriate (Thiselton 2006). For example, the individual who names the ship must have the authority to pronounce the ship's name or those words will not be performative (Thiselton 2006). Performative utterances do provide a good example of words and their power such as the event and deed being the same but not upon the basis of some type of confusion that is primitive between objects and names (Thiselton 2006). Thiselton (2006:63) additionally writes that cursing and blessings are constitutive of examples specific to this principle and that, "acts of blessings in the Old Testament rest on accepted conventions, on procedures or institutions accepted within Israelite society, and usually involving conventionally accepted formulae." However, the effectiveness of these are dependent upon the person who is appropriate and in an appropriate situation. This meant that Isaac was unable to revoke the blessing of Jacob, which was not the power of the words *per se,* but instead the inability to withdraw that performative utterance was not possible because he could not appoint someone after another had already been appointed according to the conventions of the Israelites

(Thiselton 2006:63). In 1950, Sheldon Blank is reported to have written that there was an automatic or in other words, self-fulfilling effect of the curse operating in the form of a spell and believed that the words themselves were in possession of a reality as well as being in possession of the power that could effectuate the results that were desired (Thiselton 2006:63). Moreover, representatives of words once having been spoken of possessing and endurance was of a potent nature (Thiselton 2006). Thiselton (2006) notes that such a blessing involved God and because of this the pronouncing of such a blessing is constitutive of a blessing that is from God. In Mowvley's comments on the story that was ancient in relation to Balak and Balaam which is found in Numbers 22:6 revealed that a blessing is based entirely upon the prerogative of God and that there was no possession of magic power by Balaam and was completely upon God in terms of its dependence for the blessing being granted or being withheld (Thiselton 2006:64).

Thiselton (2006:65) examines the dynamic versus the dianoetic and states that von Rad and Procksch, "have artificially loaded the argument in favour of a dynamic view of words by wrongly polarising the discussion around two views of language which are portrayed as alternatives." The assumption made is that the dianoetic view is such that it fails to clearly express the attitudes of the Hebrews or the Christians about language (Thiselton 2006:65). However, these are not in reality two alternate ways to account for language but are "two of many possible ways of accounting for the uses of words" (Thiselton 2006:65). Moreover, it is not possible or reasonable to use only an ideology view of language. Dianoetic fails in language meaning and more importantly, "the whole phenomenon of performative language…is alone sufficient to show that many uses of language, fall into neither of the categories outlined by von Rad" (Thiselton 2006:66). Wittgenstein maintains that there is a requirement to take a break that is radical in nature away from the view that language must always perform the same function in all instances (Thiselton 2006:66). Words are functionally diverse and are compared by Thiselton (2006:66) to the various types of tools that exist for the

mechanic when performing his work. There is no singular language theory which can be adequate in understanding language and states that the needs exist to ask the question of, "what is language…in many ways" (Thiselton 2006:66). Proverbs 14:23 even notes the weakness of words when it states that, "All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty" (NIV). Even in the writings of the Old Testament it is clear that not every blessing or curse is of the nature that cannot be revoked (Thiselton 2006). In Matthew 12:36 it is stated that when words that are spoken are failing to be grounded in attitudes that are appropriate, are not related to talk that is small and in 1 Corinthians Paul writes, "I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but by their power. For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power" (1 Cor.4:19, 20) (Thiselton 2006:66). In 1 Thessalonians 1:5 it is stated, "Our gospel came to you not only in word, but also by power" (Thiselton 2006:66). This clearly sets out that there is more involved in the delivery of the biblical text than simply words and specifically that the power of the Holy Spirit is directly involved in its' interpretation. The scripture is divine and comprised by only one book and that being the one that is Christ and "because all of Divine scripture speaks of Christ…and is fulfilled in Christ" (Thiselton 2013:15).

Chapter 3 Methodology

The methodology of this study is qualitative in nature and will involve an extensive review of literature specific to Vanhoozer and Thiselton and their views, understanding and application of the *Speech-Act Theory*. The works of Vanhoozer and Thiselton will be analysed through a qualitative lens and specifically through analysing the content of the information contained in the writings of each whether that information is gained specifically from the direct works of Vanhoozer and Thiselton or whether the information is acquired from their students or even those whom they follow in their own studies, research and writing. The analysis will involve charting out the statements of Thiselton and Vanhoozer as well as a descriptive analysis that conducts a comparison of the views of each individual on the *Speech-Act Theory* in hermeneutics. Qualitative analysis is contextual in nature and does not seek generalisability (Samsi 2012). The results of qualitative research are not in the form of statistical processes or methods that are found in quantitative research (SBU 2016). Qualitative research is holistic with a flexible study design (SBU 2016). The primary instrument for research in qualitative research methodology is the researcher (SBU 2016). The data collected is in the form of worlds and analysis is non-statistical in nature with themes representing the analysed units (SBU 2016). The output of qualitative research is classification as well as understanding (SBU 2016). Qualitative analysis is descriptive and interpretive in nature. Articles chosen for inclusion were identified by their focus on the *Speech-Act Theory* and specifically the work of Thiselton, Vanhoozer and other philosophical and hermeneutical writers specific to the *Speech-Act Theory* and its relevance and application in understanding the linguistic understanding of scripture. The methodology of this study has been phenomenological in nature which is defined as "a set of philosophical doctrines loosely sharing: (a) assumptions as to what the world is like and how it can be known; and (b) strategies for the descriptive management of the mental entities relating to such a world" (Kafle 2011:182). Phenomenology is also

stated to be such an approach that works in understanding meanings which are hidden (Kafle 2011:182). This present study however was guided by hermeneutic phenomenology which was proposed by Heidegger and is one in which personal opinions are suspended and sought, "the interpretive narration to the description" (Kafle 2011:185). Hermeneutical phenomenology deems that all that is possessed are interpretations "and that description itself is an interpretive process" (Kafle 2011:187). In addition, it is reported that phenomenological research in hermeneutics is such that it "is a lived experience for researchers as they attune themselves for the ontological nature of phenomenon while learning to 'see' pre-reflective, taken-for-granted and essential understandings through the lens of their always already pre-understandings and prejudices" (Kafle 2011:188). The focus of hermeneutical phenomenology is reported to be on the illumination of details and to have a goal of meaning being created and gaining an understanding (Kafle 2011:188).

Chapter 4: Critical Content Analysis of the Views of Thiselton and Vanhoozer

As noted earlier in this study while Thiselton did not construct the *Speech-Act Theory*, he was successful in his accounting for the majority of the performance utterances and that Thiselton's development of this own approach was based on concentration of the conversational implications. Thiselton has been found to have developed several applications. Thiselton regards that the idea of the prerogative language is such that is constructed by opposing individuals. According to Thiselton, the *Speech-Act Theory* aims at placing the aspects of theology into various articles. Thiselton proves the fact that the language does have some propositions that act as the basic prerogative of languages. Thiselton, however, rejects opposing ideas of biblical intellectuals who have expressed the purposes of the biblical language. According to him, the Bible is a performative symbol that semantically conveys the contents. The primary purpose of every language is to refer. Thiselton applied this insight to the Bible in general as it seeks to contextualise the sophisticated evaluation of the modern and well as emphasising the self-evolving characteristics of biblical language. This only applies to the reading of the Bible for the learning process that is involved in the authors association with the subject matter. Thiselton's theological analysis according to the use of the *Speech-Act Theory* is such that concerns an evaluation of the details of the literature through use of the many *genres* of the Bible. The speech-acts that are contained within the Bible are in various forms including the form of a function with regard to its truth and authority. The work of Thiselton is greatly focused on others such as Austin. While Vanhoozer more closely aligns with Briggs who views hermeneutics as the art or science of interpreting. Thiselton approves the *Speech-Act Theory* as a framework for interpretation and considers that God speaks to humanity through the biblical texts in its context of the reformed epistemology which in its form has the purpose of being negative of the theories of epistemology as well as the

conception of religious beliefs with the belief that biblical locutions indicate that God speaks in the production of illocutionary acts. In the speech-act, all utterances are performative, with an original delineation in the wider perspective. Performance utterances entail a situation whereby something is issued when doing something. Those that do something according to a convention constitute and count what it might be. Thiselton gives examples of general speech like when warning an individual that the bus shall arrive at four, therefore one needs to eat lunch quickly. In this regard, there is no convention that makes the utterance a warning act. It highlights that there is an illocutionary force that is not properly instituted. Thiselton disentangles what he describes as the two cases, one that is based on convention that is original and performative and the explicit performative that has wrong timings as the special case. Thiselton alludes that it is not convention but it is the meaning of these sentences that creates a sentence to be like a warning. There is a linguistic meaning that is conventional. The different fragile applications applied in a conventional way is associated with the envisaged and is according to Thiselton an application of the original performative utterances. Despite the fact that Thiselton does not apply this terminology, there is a great distinction between the weak and strong application of the illocutionary forces. This operates in the dynamic strength spectrum. *The Speech-Act Theory*, then allows the problematic tendency that polarises or differentiates the extravagant that must be correct. Thiselton opines that there are two horizons such as was suggested by Porter and specifically that there are two horizons of understanding and those being the reader's personal horizon and the ancient text and author's horizon in terms of understanding. Specifically, it is held by Thiselton that the presuppositions and the assumptions related to the context of the contemporary world as compared to the ancient world interfere with the understanding of the reader in contemporary times. Vanhoozer made a distinction between two thinking types of postmodern, specifically the deconstructor and the user and held that this portrays a distrust between the two of the faith of the modernists in the objectivity of science and those who believe that natural systems do not exist.

Thiselton focuses on the significant nature of action that is communicative in the biblical texts and uses the *Speech-Act Theory* in his articulation of this and specifically on the clarification of the issues that are philosophical and which are involved in the pursuit of interpreting the Bible. Thiselton makes use of the *Speech-Act Theory* in bringing together what is separated in other hermeneutical models in relation to interpretation of the Bible. Vanhoozer focuses in his work by answering the question of how the many forms of literary types in the Bible impact the understanding of the truths in the Bible and argues that the more conservative biblical interpretations have been led down an erroneous path in relation to the role of propositions which resulted in heresy in its interpretation. Vanhoozer, however, holds that there is an existent correlation between the *genre* of the text or its literary form in addition to the illocutionary force and point of the text and that the content of the propositions were intended as something of importance in the communicative act.

In Vanhoozer's sermon *Is There Meaning in This Text* boldly expressed the problems with hermeneutical challenges that today's churches and Christians face in his argument that the methods of the postmodernist deconstruction which essentially undoes the texts, authors, knowledge and readers, will result in a great loss in meaning of the Bible if the Trinity as the Bible reveals goes unacknowledged. There is appreciation expressed by Vanhoozer for the various methods utilised by postmodernist critics in their forbidding of bowing to the idols of personal interpretation since those who read the Bible fall under the influence of power to hold over others and to ensure they are justified no matter what the cost. Yet, according to Vanhoozer, while there is to be a state of humility when approaching biblical text there should not be a humbling of the text itself and Christians if they are to be responsible and ethical in their interpretation should be in opposition to any reductions in the text's meaning away from the author. Vanhoozer has a great desire for the preservation of the text's transcendent meanings against cynics, the hermeticists and any views that are reductionist in nature. Vanhoozer is clearly reliant upon J.L. Austin and Searle and

their theory on speech-acts which determines that the locutionary is God himself and the world is active with the illocutionary being the Son of God and the word has an intention contained within it to do something. Vanhoozer also believes that for the reader in their reception of the word that it is the Holy Spirit who is the perlocutionary and who has the power to bring the reader into obedience and responsible listening to that world. Specifically, Vanhoozer holds that Christians of today in their approach to the Bible must state that they stand with God's help and their own conscience in captivity to God's world.

Thiselton noted in his 1974 word that the perception of the Hebrew is that the word in its appearance is a force that is not only material but that it is also present at all times and always at work. Thiselton views just as did Gerard von Rad that the work is, "an objective reality endowed with mysterious power" (Thiselton 1974:283) but Thiselton departs from Vanhoozer's view by maintaining that the support of the word as being power has more than just a focus on the power of God in his word moving on to the fact that in an everyday life some words have power that is inherent. It is held by Thiselton that language as such as a phenomenon with the composition of sounds and that these sounds are in possession of a power of creation all on their own to conjure up things. Essentially, it was rejected by Thiselton that it should be held that the *Speech-Act Theory* should be limited to discourse that was oral and was contained within acts such as transaction, was evidence of the *Speech-Act Theory*.

Thiselton goes on to consider that wills, letters of love and other promises that are legal and written have the power to function as effective acts and specifically, Thiselton maintains that, "in the case of biblical writings, the persistence of the terms Old and New 'Testament' serve to remind us of the covenantal context in which pledge and promise feature prominently. The biblical writings abound in promises, invitations, verdicts, confessions: pronouncement of blessings, commands, naming and declarations of love" (Lloyd 2007:14). Thiselton additionally deems that God is involved personally in his word and that readers are self-involved in speech-acts which

agrees with Vanhoozer's view that the Holy Spirit is actively involved in interpreting biblical texts for the reader. Thiselton views that there is self-involvement hermeneutically speaking by the reader of the biblical text and that it is a process in which the reader changes due to their actions upon the biblical speech-acts. The speech-act is regarded by Thiselton to be central to the importance of Christian theology. Thiselton does not state a denial that symbolism is contained in the scripture he views that the scripture is to be taken as being literal. According to Thiselton, there is a need to question what the smallest unit is that can be held as text. Thiselton is reliant on the work of John Lyons who in his work on utterance units thinks that there is a dependence on the context and that one cannot decide as to the text's meaning without considering the information that is related to the text and specifically the situational context.

The use of what are known as units of utterance from the view of Thiselton is controversial in nature not only in application but because the differences that exist between the text's nature, the theories and the textuality result of conception that is very different in a fundamental text in relation to how texts convey their meaning since the link may exist between the text of the author and the situational context that cannot be interpreted separate from each another. Thiselton deems that the most dominant textual analysis paradigm is that of the classical-humanist believing that texts are language that expresses thoughts or ideas and are actually the state of affairs that are not in the linguistic world. These texts have been held as mediators that are linguistic in interpersonal communication and relating biblical texts to the belief that God as well as his son and even the prophets are able to speak through these scriptures in a direct manner. According to Thiselton, theologically speak this fits comfortably with the idea that revelation is revealed in biblical texts and that this world is through Jesus Christ, God's word and embodied in the apostolic community's deeds and words and through Israel, God's chosen peoples, history. Yet, Vanhoozer opines that meaning is that which the author meant by the text. Also meaning is relative to the manner in which

the author attends to that text. Therefore, from the view of Vanhoozer there is no change in textual meaning although it is linked to the intentions of the author and their actions in times past. According to Vanhoozer a relevant concern is one in which the reading of the text calls for significance in relation to the meaning of the text and the context which is larger. It is suggested by Vanhoozer that meaning is linked to illocutions and significance to perlocutions and that a consequence of the meaning is that of significance and is therefore not a part of the act that is illocutionary. This is viewed by Vanhoozer to be illocutionary because the existence is not dependent on consequences that are extraneous.

Vanhoozer and Thiselton differ from one another in that the application of the research of Thiselton is focused on studies of biblical scripture whereas the theological hermeneutics of Vanhoozer has a focus on the development of anthropological teachings in relation to the reader of the text and constructed upon earlier scriptural doctrines. In other words, the claim of Vanhoozer is that the correct framework for general hermeneutics has been provided through theological hermeneutics and presumes that the biblical text is the testimony of God through various *genres* and actions of communication for the purpose of redeeming his people as well as formulating and the maintenance of those relationships with his people throughout history, throughout the context of the old covenant and the new covenant. However, it is maintained by Thiselton that the reason for many of the assumptions that are traditional have experienced collapse is due to the reassessment and reformulation of these due to hermeneutical innovations by: (1) literary theory movements; (2) deconstructionism and developments in the area of semiotics; and (3) a tradition of sociological development. According to Thiselton if these invasive effects upon hermeneutics is simply ignored then there is no problem in understanding why many interpreters of the Bible believe that these are attractive in nature. Thiselton questions the literary devices of: (1) ambiguity; (2) metaphor; (3) irony; (4) tension; and (5) paradox and opines that reliance on the author's meaning alone is to be questioned

and even a mistake since the text is such that has autonomy and speaking on terms of its own. Specifically, it is held by Thiselton that if there is a successful intention then the text and the intention are identical requiring no need to dig beneath the text and since the idea of digging beneath the text embodies intention and affects it negatively as romanticism. Vanhoozer agrees with Thiselton on this point. According to Vanhoozer the distance of the reader of the scripture whether culturally or historically does not serve to bring about invalidation of the ability of the reader in understanding a text and in fact it is the reader's 'otherness' that results in the texts fulfilling its potential. Vanhoozer regards that while some view the cultural, historical, personal and other individual differences as similarities to be disconnected from the text's author to present the reader with the opportunity of performing the text. The relationship between the reader and the text makes the assumption on the intent of the author being varied situationally according to Vanhoozer. Vanhoozer believes that God's word is the foundation of understanding in theology and also believes that reading is self-reflective in nature and that the reading of scripture is not just about establishing the assent of the reader to ideas that are isolated within the text but are encountering the dissent of the author, followed by a struggle with those differences. In the otherness condition the text is enabled to speak into the life of the reader and to do so transcendentally and ultimately results in an exercise that is self-fulfilling and self-replicating.

Vanhoozer expresses that the reader's response to the text in terms of its meaning and states that this is in part an interaction with the text's horizon and the text's formal structure but states that when the polarity of the author is eliminated the result is that the distinction disappears between the author's intention and the understanding of the reader of that text. According to Thiselton there is an idea that is controversial in nature, meaning is created by interpreters at the time that they interpret texts, however this is paradoxical and Thiselton questions to what extent the interpreter has the freedom to make a choice of what specific goals provide an effective definition for understanding

textuality in the texts of the Bible. Thiselton deems that questions should be asked and that it is important to do so in relation to whether the emerging considerations arising from Christian theology serve to add some factors that are fresh in textuality's nature in relation to the texts of the Bible and whether issues that are emergent in semiotic theory results in placing either constraints or freedoms of choice for the interpreters of biblical texts.

Thiselton states that in order for Arens to build a speech-act in the form of a theory on the parables then it is imperative that a search be conducted 'behind' the parable texts in the New Testament in order that an entirety of the speech-acts performed are properly examined. Thiselton leans heavily on du Plessis in that Thiselton opines that while accepting this state, argument that the speech-acts context goes further embracing a wider textuality in relation to the parables and their embedment in the text. According to Vanhoozer, the interpretation of the Bible is theology's soul and truth, is that which is ultimate in relation to interpretation and that the failures of Christian theologies success, is directly in relation to its capacity in rendering interpretations which are true in God's written word. There are two views reported to be held by Vanhoozer and the first of which is those who view evangelicalism in terms that are pietistic and view the Bible as a way to obtain spiritual sustenance and then others who view evangelical essence in terms that are doctrinal in nature and view the Bible mainly as a method of communication that is propositional. However, Vanhoozer takes neither side because he states that to do so would result in the reduction and distortion of doctrinal and biblical truth. According to Vanhoozer, some of the more contemporary approaches result in the loss of the author. Failure to acknowledge context according to Vanhoozer makes it impossible for textual meaning to be established and this is well acknowledged, however the reader's location or context has gained significance for interpretation of biblical text rather than the author's context. Postmodern individuals are reported in the work of Vanhoozer to view that interpretation is an act that is political in nature and reports that he himself has been accused by students of

oppression by way of claims on truth. The lesson of postmodernity is one that is held by Vanhoozer to be of a negative nature and one that the prophets of the Bible have already identified and being that individuals are limited, situated as well as being contingent have a tendency for idolatry. Vanhoozer states that an alternate path is that individuals use the available hermeneutical tools as pilgrims while praying that the Holy Spirit illuminates our thinking. Also praying for the necessary humility to know when we are in error and in a process, that involves a consultation with the learnings of those who have gone before and Christians globally in terms of their understanding. Thiselton leans on du Plessis in the parables in terms of their function in which Jesus is the parable narrator with the authority of himself and opines that du Plessis's arguments are not theologically based but one that deems that the parables are inherent in a communicative action process. Thiselton applies human beings as agents that exist in a world outside of linguistics as being necessary for the determination of the effects and operative nature of specific speech-acts and feels that the differences that exist between falsehood, historical narrative and fiction or report of history are highly relational to the presupposition of authorial agents on the commitments, stance, status and responsibilities rather than being dependent on the judgments made by reader communities concerning literary effects which are detached from the context of the world. The claim of Thiselton is that his work is a dialogue with Recanti and Searle and that there are parallel routes in relation to the operative function of biblical texts although they can be differentiated. However, from the view of Vanhoozer when a King makes a decree there should be no need to attempt to make a determination of what the King meant but instead to simply follow what the King has decreed. Vanhoozer argues for an activation method in hermeneutics and the text's matter is engaged. It is acknowledged by Vanhoozer that people in the context of the present read the Bible and have their own self-interest in textual interpretation and while truth may correspond to what one may say, at the same time this fails in its interpretation and discernment of what is meant by the text. According to Vanhoozer in order to undertake a study of language, then required is

the touching upon issues that include the necessity for a life view as well as a view of the world wholly. Christian theology, according to Vanhoozer, puts its faith in Christ Jesus as a revelation to the world and according to scripture is necessary in the adjudication of what is true and what is good. It is important to remember, according to Vanhoozer, that all people who come to Christ do so with their own framework of interpretation in place.

Vanhoozer relates that biblical interpretation in his view is aligned with the directing of attention to Christ Jesus in a manner that results in Christ becoming the ultimate clue for not only the entire creation but also for philosophy and theology. Communicative action from the view of Vanhoozer integrates the consideration of thought, word, deed and power since word and deeds include thought as the content of propositions and the illocutionary force or power. According to Vanhoozer, this action of communication is inclusive of the communication of God of himself and specifically as Father, Son and Spirit and this means that the communicative agent is that of God in the form of the Trinity and specifically that God the Father is the author, the communicative action is Christ Jesus and the Word with the result of the communication being the Holy Spirit as the recipient or agent of reception. According to Vanhoozer, human speech in the Bible makes it appropriate for the use of the *Speech-Act Theory* because the categories in the *Speech-Act Theory* are such that assist in the appreciation of the scripture of the Bible in terms of it being the Word of God. In addition, the *Speech-Act Theory* from the view of Vanhoozer helps to free the individual from their tendency for a reduction in meaning in terms of reference or the tendency to pay attention to the scripture's propositional context alone. Vanhoozer views that it is necessary to have a perspective of the texts in the Bible as being more than just a representative of the state of things because this effectively results in widening the potential for reading that is transformative in nature which the contemporary focus upon information has ultimately eclipsed. Vanhoozer believes that divisions are in existence between theorists of the speech-act but that general agreement is realised in terms language

and is used more than to simply illustrate the state of things. Since no one believes that words are merely symbolic in nature or used only as reference and there is general agreement on the rejection of the idea among those postmodern thinkers that indetermination is present in reference and meaning and on the point that the author is certainly not dead and not irrelevant in terms of interpretation. Finally, Vanhoozer notes that agreement exists as to there being action instead of representation that is the operative concept and that closely tied to this are specific responsibilities as well as rights on both the author and readers part. Vanhoozer states the belief that there is an incorrect association on the part of Thiselton in relation to a single and determinate meaning whereas Vanhoozer maintains being determinate is actually the entirety of the communicate act.

From the view of Vanhoozer the idea of a meaning that is single and determinate is simply a conception on the part of the intuition of the realist for the intention of the author but presumes that this cannot be simply changed by different interpreters in different times. This is because some speech-acts are in reality determinate in nature and the implications and presuppositions in such speech-acts bar the view of interpretation from being a content that is singularly propositional. Vanhoozer goes on to reject the idea of postmodernists that readers have freedom of manipulation and manufacturing of meaning in the text in order to be self-serving in their personal interests or objectives. With regard to where Thiselton differs with Vanhoozer, Vanhoozer maintains that there are two specific areas including that some believe that the analysis of speech-act is assistive in gaining and understanding of specific parts of scripture such as the parables of Jesus or the preaching of Paul. This is specifically related to the methods of Thiselton and others who make use of the theory of speech-act in order to revive the idea of the discourse of the author as well as opening the way for the Bible to be read as a discourse by the divine. According to Vanhoozer this discussion focuses on whether interpreters of the Bible should necessary develop certain strategies for scriptural readings rather than using

hermeneutics which are general in nature. Whereas, Thiselton who leans on the ideas of Ricoeur and Jauss believes that a literary work's meaning is reliant on the text's dialogue and how this relates to those in different ages in their reading of the text in relation to the time and mode of God speaking and whether God is speaking again and in newness in the readings of the scripture and whether what God says is the same in nature or if there is something different in terms of time and mode. According to Thiselton, the *Speech-Act Theory* works in sharpening the weight of the features that are extra-linguistic, which are found in the way that language operates in life but does not believe that the *Speech-Act Theory* works in carefully distinguishing what is spoken as being content that is propositional with the utterance's illocutionary force, resulting in an act being performed through that utterance being recorded in text. Thiselton opines that implications and presuppositions must be considered in order for the illocutionary force to be operative in a successful manner.

Thiselton follows J.L. Austin in holding that three speech-acts exist including those which are locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary and that locutionary acts are those which relate to the act which is physical in stating something and held to be separate from the intention or effect of the act, while perlocutionary acts are related to such acts that are performed by the speaker and upon the listener through the meaning of that utterance. Illocutionary is the effect of the communication of what is uttered. Thiselton views that words possess power and that certain worlds in the Bible have the power to convey reality instead of relating only ideas concerning reality. Thiselton believes that when curses are blessings uttered that these are fulfilled, and it is necessary to situate these curses and blessings in relation to the speech-acts that are illocutionary in nature where the performatives are not saying but rather doing. Thiselton believes that reliance is not on cause and the resulting effect but instead utterances that are illocutionary in nature are tied by the speech-act and the state of affairs that exist. The evidence utilised by Thiselton to make this point is that there was no way to revoke the blessing of Jacob, it was not a set convention for removing the

utterance which was performative in nature and meaning, the performative utterance that was original remained in its force. Thiselton maintains that the values and perceptions of people can be altered by perlocutions while worldviews can be altered by illocutions in their being uttered. For example, when a promise is made there are prerequisites for its validity and first being that the person receiving the promise and the promise to be operative, then the person making the promise must also be in the position for this to be fulfilled and promised to the person who is appropriate, the deeds must match the spoken words. Thiselton considers that during the time of Paul, certain speech-acts were in existence including those which commanded, blamed, reproached, admonished, congratulated, accused, authorised and provided thanks to those hearing what he had written. Thiselton also opines that for one to call on the Lord's name that this is a commissive speech-act that is self-involving and in the form an appeal in a faith act and therefore is not simply a neutral cry to God.

Vanhoozer views that the theory of speech-act is not the ruling method in hermeneutics since this deals with oral discourse alone and not with the literary. Vanhoozer believes that most of the theories that relate to communication that is linguistic in nature has been formulated by using a code model in which the code is language and the encoding as well as decoding is communication. Therefore, Vanhoozer believes that words are signs and representative of thoughts or thoughts that are encoded, however the primary issue of this model is the fact that it is not adequately descriptive since the information is not actually encoded and more is needed in the way of understanding than simply decoding the linguistic signals and finally that words perform more than to simply convey information. Therefore, the use of code theory lacks in explaining the gap that exists between meaning and code that the language is actually communicating and to mastery a system of signs does not in any way guarantee that understanding will be had. However, for Ricoeur and Thiselton who leans on his work, a distinction is made between semiotics and semantics where the entire language problem lies. Vanhoozer maintains that meaning in linguistics

alone is such where the sentence fails to express what the speaker is saying and that the identical sentence in different situations would have completely different applicatory meanings. From the view of Vanhoozer it is not nearly sufficient to simply decode the language because it is necessary to possess information relating to the circumstances of the discourse.

Vanhoozer regards that words by themselves contain only the potential of meaning and that languages of humans should not be held to be sign systems that are floating free with an existence that is autonomous from those using them. Vanhoozer also feels that that dictionaries report only on the usages that are common for any specific word and that the attempt to investigate a language in separation from the actions of use with the language is quite simply hopeless. Thiselton however makes use of different speech-acts in his differentiation between those prophet roles and teacher roles and particularly, the performance of acts by prophets including such as announcing, proclaiming, judging, challenging, comforting, supporting and encouraging. He believed these speech-acts are performed through their transmission, communication of explanations, textual interpretation, creed establishment and providing meaning or implying and communicative acts that are applied less temporally. For example, the application of Thiselton of the *Speech-Act Theory* relating to the text contained in Hebrews 10:10-39 notes the realisation of the illocutionary or 'I promise' and the propositional 'I will come tomorrow' cannot be discerned very easily. Therefore, Thiselton views that it is of critical importance that one examines the illocutionary force within the realm of the author's intent and which is located within the verbs and their specific mood in the sentence. Thiselton in the discussion of general words thinks that whether it be scripture or the letters of Paul that the actions for which a description is given are speech-acts that are illocutionary and that makes a requirement of a state of affairs that is institutionalised if these actions are to have validity. Yet, Thiselton lacks a method and the result is that those reading his work wonders if the *Speech-Act Theory* is at all worth pursuing. Furthermore, Thiselton depends greatly on the work of

J.L. Austin and it is important to note that Austin considers his own work a classification that is preliminary in nature, meaning that the work of Thiselton in this area is lacking in rigour. Whereas, Vanhoozer believes that communication is arbitrary in nature but instead that the language 'design plan' is for enabling understanding and communication. That design plan is held by Vanhoozer to be covenantal, and that language is endowed to human beings through the divine and that is God for use as a tool for communication not only with God but with other individuals and the world as a whole. According to Vanhoozer the Trinitarian doctrine is one aspect of communication among humans since God as a Trinity is a communication that is eternal and continuous between the three aspects of God. However, Vanhoozer states that his formulation is upon the economic Trinity which is a term that is technical in nature for the manner in which the Trinity of God reveals himself progressively throughout history and that the economic Trinity is communicative and that being action that is self-communicative and supports the idea that communicative action can be ascribed to the Trinity of God which is representative of the attempt of God to reach human beings in love and in truth. Vanhoozer states that this is well-expressed in John 17:18 because it reports that Jesus was sent to the world and had a mission with the disciples to relate God's words to them. This means that the 'word' being 'sent' is central to Christian theology according to Vanhoozer. Vanhoozer uses Isaiah 55:11 to support the speech-act philosophy because states that the Word of God pours forth from his mouth and will not return empty to him but will fulfil the purpose of it having been said and will help the one to whom the word was sent. Vanhoozer holds that God for his own purpose sent his son and later sent to earth the Holy Spirit was a great deal more than just the conveyance of information. God's word being sent to earth was not only informative but held within it transformation and that the Gnostics erred in their belief that the 'word' should be kept only as a form of information. Vanhoozer opines that words are utilised in first conveying the intentions of communication rather than the meanings semantically relating to words or causes that are unintentional and that may be underlying in their intentions. This means that human being's idea of

language is conditioned in a mutual way by the individual's idea of what constitutes being a human being. From the view of Christians, humans are not robots nor are they spirits running free but are agents that are embodied. Therefore, the author's intention is not merely psychological but instead is action and therefore since intentions are materially embodied then through the movement of the body is spoken action. Thiselton, however, questions the use of the *Speech-Act Theory* by Vanhoozer and whether this in reality assesses completely the ideas of the author of the biblical texts and considers that should Vanhoozer be more holistic in his approach that Vanhoozer would be more successful in his application of this theory.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

As already stated the objective of this work in writing has been to compare and contrast the approaches of Thiselton and Vanhoozer respectively on the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological hermeneutics. While both Thiselton and Vanhoozer rely on the *Speech-Act Theory* in biblical interpretation, each of them utilise the *Speech-Act Theory* differently therefore, this study has aimed to differentiate the use of the *Speech-Act Theory* of Thiselton and Vanhoozer. The research questions posed in this study included those asked as follows: (1) How do Thiselton and Vanhoozer differ on the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological hermeneutics? (2) How do Thiselton and Vanhoozer agree on the *Speech-Act Theory* in theological hermeneutics? (3) What scholarly influences have Thiselton and Vanhoozer had with their conception and ideas surrounding the *Speech-Act Theory*? The hypothesis stated in this study was one claiming that the views of Vanhoozer are based on time and place rather than on the author's meaning of the text in biblical Scriptures while Thiselton believes that there is an almost mysterious and timeless meaning contained in the scriptural text of the Bible. Thiselton additionally holds that God is involved personally in his word and that readers are self-involved in speech-acts which agrees with Vanhoozer's view that the Holy Spirit is actively involved in interpreting the biblical texts for the reader. Thiselton holds that there is self-involvement hermeneutically speaking by the reader of the biblical text and that it is a process in which the reader changes due to their actions upon biblical speech-acts. The speech-act is held by Thiselton to be central to the importance of Christian theology. It is clear that the *Speech-Act Theory* is still under development and that it is better understood as research continues. Thiselton and Vanhoozer agree with one another that the written Word of God is endowed with power and interpreted for the reader by the Holy Spirt while also agreeing that understanding the meanings and applications of Hebrew words and linguistics are also important to understanding God's word.

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