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**Speech Acts in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*: A  
Linguistic Study**

**By:**

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## Abstract

This study, entitled *Speech Acts in Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman: A Linguistic Study*, follows Searle's speech act theory (1976) for categorizing the utterances of the characters in the drama *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller in data analysis. The present study is an analysis of illocutionary speech acts performed in *Death of a Salesman's* dialogues. This study aims to describe the types of illocutionary speech acts. It uses qualitative and quantitative methods employing descriptive analysis design. The data analysis of this study is collected by the choosing samples of texts randomly. Furthermore, this study also reports the most and the least used illocutionary speech acts performed in the drama.

This study investigates the role of speech acts in *Death of a Salesman* to get access to the themes of the play and the intentions of the characters through their dialogues. The crux of the study is to look into how linguistic analysis can help in understanding literary works and to answer the following questions: 1) What types of speech acts are found and commonly used in the drama? 2) What are the intended messages of the author by using these types of Speech Acts? 3) How can the analysis of speech acts help in understanding its course?

This thesis is composed of six chapters besides the abstract. The first chapter includes a brief introduction to linguistics, pragmatics and the Speech Act Theory. It tells the reasons of choosing *Death of a Salesman* in particular. It also presents the statement of the study problem, questions of the study, objectives of the study and significance of the study.

The second chapter is a review of theoretical background of the study in the relevant fields in addition to the previous studies of the speech acts in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* in the relevant fields.

The third chapter illuminates the methodology used in this thesis. This study adopts Searle's theory of Speech Acts. It reports the design of the research, scope of the study, the procedures and the structure of the research.

The fourth chapter is divided into seven parts. They are introduction, bibliographical Sketch of Arthur Miller, major works of Arthur Miller, the themes of *Death of a Salesman*, major characters, minor characters and characters map.

The fifth chapter analyzes the dialogues in *Death of a Salesman*. In this chapter, some texts of Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman* are analyzed to investigate what types of speech acts are found. The researcher randomly selected some texts from the beginning, middle and end as the play event started and the actions gradually developed, and then the table concludes the frequencies and the percentage of these expressions in the selected texts.

The sixth chapter contains the findings, which is the main part of the whole thesis, conclusions, and recommendations.

Based on the findings of the analysis and the result of the data analysis, it can be concluded that there are four speech acts used in the drama and these are representative, directive, commissive and expressive and the most dominant was directive speech act type. In many statements in the drama *Death of a Salesman*, the main characters intend to use directives more than other speech act types and this can best be seen from the words they utter.

Out of the five illocutionary speech act types, namely representative, directive, commissive, expressive, and declarations, only four types of speech acts are found in *Death of a Salesman*.

Declarations was the only type not found. According to Searle (30), declarations are different from other types of actions because they reveal unique characteristics:

- 1- Someone with particular authority makes the declaration.

2- The declaration is not based on the idea of politeness.

The researcher recommends English teachers to teach English from contexts and situations so that students will get deeper understanding of English. The researcher also advocates English lecturers to assert the importance of finding the meaning of utterances to their students to be more aware of contexts when they use English on writing or speaking.

Finally, for the next researcher it is suggested to do the research to use another theory to analyze more deeply, because this drama *Death of a Salesman* has many aspects that can be analyzed.

## ملخص الرسالة

تهدف هذه الرسالة المعنونة بـ " أفعال الكلام في مسرحية موت البائع للكاتب آرثر ميلر: دراسة لغوية" إلى تحليل لأفعال الكلام بناء على نظرية سيرل (1976).  
الغرض من هذا التحليل هو فهم ما يقصده الكاتب والرسالة التي يديده أن يوصلها القارئ وذلك من خلال إيجاد الأفعال الموجودة والغير موجودة من أفعال الكلام.  
يحتوي الشكل التكويني للرسالة على ستة فصول، يحتوي الفصل الأول على ملخص الرسالة، مقدمة عن اللغويات، علم التداول وأفعال الكلام. يستعرض الفصل الثاني أهم النظريات والمفاهيم والمصطلحات المتعلقة بموضوع الدراسة إضافة إلى أهم الدراسات السابقة. وتطرق الفصل الثالث لمنهجية البحث. كما تحدث الفصل الرابع عن كاتب المسرحية والمواضيع التي ناقشتها المسرحية. ناقش الفصل الخامس أفعال الكلام المستخدمة في المسرحية وحاول الباحث ربط نسبة استخدام الأفعال مع المواضيع التي تضمنتها المسرحية. لخص الفصل السادس أهم نتائج الدراسة والتوصيات وتبين استخدام الكاتب لأربعة أنواع من أفعال الكلام وكان أكثرها استخداماً في المسرحية هي الأفعال التوجيهية.  
اختتمت الرسالة بقائمة المراجع التي استخدمها الباحث في دراسته.