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Conversation Analysis: Speech Acts in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*

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Abstract

Conservation analysis has become the focus of investigative interest in recent years among discourse analysts. There is shift towards the investigation of characters in literature through their conversation seen as speech acts. The main goal of this paper is to analyse the use of the locutionary and illocutionary meanings in an extract from Ibsen's *A Doll's House in* order to investigate its impact on the characters' actions and reactions. An examination has been made of the interplay between the direct and indirect speech acts which steer the plot to its inevitable conclusion. Using these speech acts as tool an analysis has been made of the imperative final conversation between Nora and Helmer, which not only forces Helmer to reconsider his attitude but also changes the course of literature written about women in the 19th century.

Keywords: Speech Acts, Conversation Analysis, Illocutionary Acts, Ibsen

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Introduction

Austin developed the speech act theory from the basic notion that language is used to do things. For a long time, philosophers believed that the task of a "statement" was only to describe some state of affairs or assess facts, either truly or falsely. They also believed that unless a sentence could be verified (i.e. tested for its truth or falsity) it was, strictly speaking, meaningless. This general notion was the crux of Logical Positivism. It was in this same period, when the Logical Positivism was pervasive in the philosophical circles that Austin propounded his Theory of Speech Act in a set of lectures published in *How to*

Do Things with Words (1962). He rejected the view of language that would consider truth conditions as central to language understanding. "The term speech act does not refer simply to the act of speaking, but to the whole communicative situation, including the context of the utterance…the concern is not so much whether or not an utterance is grammatically correct, but whether or not the speaker achieves her communicative purpose…" (Black; 2006:17).

Austin (1962) proposes that in producing an utterance a speaker performs three acts simultaneously: a locutionary, an illocutionary, and a perlocutionary act. The locutionary act refers to a certain sentence of a language with a definite "sense and reference" (the literal meaning or propositional content). The illocutionary act is the act performed in uttering a sentence in a context. It is the contextual meaning or implicative force of an utterance. Illocutionary acts are the actual statements with performative verbs. According to Levinson the illocutionary act is concerned with "…the making of a statement, offer, promise etc. in uttering a sentence, by the virtue of the conventional *force* associated with it…" (1983:236). Finally, the perlocutionary act is the cause of change or the creation of an effect in the mind of the hearer as a result of producing an utterance which Austin describes as "securing uptake".

Conversation analysis (CA) has taken up the theory of speech acts to decipher the interplay of language and the action within a conversation. "In CA, speech acts are viewed as actions constituted in and through interaction and understood as such by the participants of the interaction" (Lloret, 2001:60). The case for this extension has been argued as "Speech acts are not isolated moves in communication: they appear in more global units of communication, defined as conversation or discourses" (Moeschiler, 2002:240).

Narrative and dramatic literature is peopled with characters that engage in conversation most of the time as the text world unfolds. "If there is one feature that is the hallmark of literature . . . it is the use of *characters*. Literary works tell us about the lives, words, and actions of these individuals…we are not only told about what characters say and do, but actually hear them speak" (Sandler, 2012: 1).

This paper takes an in-depth look into Nora and Helmer's last conversation, after which Nora leaves her home for good in *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen. Using the speech act theory as described in *How to Do Things with Words* by Austin (1962) and *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (1969) by Searle as an investigative tool we will analyse the crucial conversation between the two characters especially Nora's utterances where she uses direct speech acts, and what she reserves by using indirect speech acts. We will also

examine the importance of illocutionary speech acts and relate it to Helmer's helpless position at the end of the story. We will try to prove that the responsibility of the play's drastic end lies in Helmer's prejudice as reflected through the dichotomy in his words. Why is it so, and how does Ibsen convey this to his readers? In short, the two main queries to be answered here are; how does the last scene build up linguistically and what speech acts are being used to create the effect successfully?

Method

The primary source in this paper is *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen (1966). Each separate speech act in Act III will be analysed to determine how direct or indirect speech acts, as well as, illocutionary speech acts are used by Ibsen in the play. In addition, the characters' interpretation, response and reaction to each other by the means of these speech acts will be investigated. The interplay of words between Nora and Helmer will be closely observed for understanding the effect of the speech acts on their actions and reactions.

Ibsen's *A Doll's House* is one of the most well-known plays of the modern times; it very effectively drives home the fact that interpretation of what one hears is vital to one's choice of action. The direct and above all the indirect speech acts in the characters' speech determine their selected course of action

A Brief Summary of *A Doll's House*

Nora Helmer is apparently happily married to Torvald Helmer, a lawyer who is about to take over the post of director of the Joint Stock Bank. They have three small children. Nora has a secret to keep, however. Early in their marriage Torvald became seriously ill, and the doctors advised a stay in a more southerly climate. Nora had to get hold of the money for the journey in secrecy and so borrowed it from Krogstad, a lawyer who had been a fellow-student of Torvald`s. As security for the loan she forged her dying father`s signature. Ever since then she has saved some of the housekeeping money in order to pay back the loan with interest, and she has taken on small jobs to earn some money herself. When the play opens, an old friend of Nora`s, Mrs. Linde, has arrived in town to look for work, and Nora sees to it that Torvald gives her a post at the bank. But this means that Krogstad is dismissed from his post at the bank, and in desperation he goes to Nora and threatens to tell Torvald about the loan and the forgery unless he is allowed to keep his post. Nora is in despair but at the same time convinced that in his love for her, Torvald will sacrifice himself and take full responsibility for what she has done, if he learns the truth. Nora considers asking Dr. Rank, an old friend of the family, for the

money, but when he declares his love for her, she finds it impossible to ask him. Torvald finds out what has happened, and reacts with rage and revulsion, without any sign of being willing to accept responsibility for the forgery. Mrs. Linde, who was in love with Krogstad in the past, gets him to change his mind and withdraw his threats. But Nora has begun to understand that her marriage is not what she thought it was, and in the course of a dramatic conversation with Torvald she decides that her most important and only task is to go out into the world on her own to "bring herself up", and she leaves her husband and children. (McFarlane, 1961)

Analysis of *A Doll's House*, Act III

In the analysis the scene has been divided into smaller parts, which will be examined separately. To make it easier for the reader to follow, the lines are given before the analysis comes. All the lines in this analysis are taken from Act 1, scene III, page.66-72, of *A Doll's House*, published in 1966 by Airmont Publications. The analysis starts where Helmer receives Krogstad's second letter in which he assures him that their secret will not be revealed and ends where Nora finally leaves her home.

NORA: I have fought a hard fight these three days.

HELMER: And suffered agonies, and seen no way out but—. No, we won't call any of the horrors to mind. We will only shout with joy, and keep saying, "It's all over! It's all over!" Listen to me, Nora. You don't seem to realize that it is all over. What is this?—such a cold, set face! My poor little Nora, I quite understand; you don't feel as if you could believe that I have forgiven you. But it is true, Nora, I swear it; I have forgiven you everything. I know that what you did, you did out of love for me. (Ibsen, 1966: 65-66)

The response given by Helmer performs the assertive role of speech. Nora chooses the pronoun 'I' to describe her agony in suffering alone for keeping the secret of Krogstad's letter. Helmer in response tries to hide his guilt by using 'we', as if he felt the pain which Nora went through. Again he stresses that she did not seem to realize what he had been through following the assertive role of language. The illocutionary meaning of Helmer's speech is to convince Nora that his act of forgiveness covers up the gravity of his previous speech. But unexpectedly the perlocutionary effect of the speech is quite the opposite of Helmer's expectations. Finally, he ends the dialogue with an expressive where he condescendingly refers to her sacrifice and his apparent acknowledgement of the sacrifice.

NORA: That is true.

HELMER: You have loved me as a wife ought to love her husband. Only you had not sufficient knowledge to judge of the means you used. But do you suppose you are any the less dear to me, because you don't understand how to act on your own responsibility? No, no; only lean on me; I will advise you and direct you. I should not be a man if this womanly helplessness did not just give you a double attractiveness in my eyes. You must not think any more about the hard things I said in my first moment of consternation, when I thought everything was going to overwhelm me. I have forgiven you, Nora; I swear to you I have forgiven you. (Ibsen, 1966:66)

The "that is true" of Nora is a sarcastic remark which Helmer miscomprehends. At the same time, it is a remark of Nora's repulsion of her own naivety in serving Helmer selflessly and blindly. Helmer uses a directive in choosing the words "ought to" when he should have been more 'expressive' in accepting his early tirade. He further carries on in indirect speech by telling her to lean on him, and puts all the responsibility of what she did on her alone. He is the centre of the speech he is delivering and easily condones what was completely unbearable. The illocutionary meaning of the dialogues above shows Helmer's attempt at winning back his wife, who has finally seen his real man behind the mask of self-complacency. He carefully avoids the word aggression or blind-fold abuse and calls his violent behaviour a 'moment of consternation.' The immediate perlocutionary effect of the dialogue is that Nora goes to change her dress in order to take charge of her new life.

NORA: Thank you for your forgiveness. [She goes out through the door to the right.]

HELMER: No, don't go —. [Looks in.] What are you doing in there?

NORA: [from within].Taking off my fancy dress.

HELMER: [standing at the open door]. Yes, do. Try and calm yourself, and make your mind easy again, my frightened little singing-bird. Be at rest, and feel secure; I have broad wings to shelter you under. [Walks up and down by the door.] How warm and cosy our home is, Nora. Here is shelter for you; here I will protect you like a hunted dove that I have saved from a hawk's claws; I will bring peace to your poor beating heart. It will come, little by little, Nora, believe me. Tomorrow morning you will look upon it all quite differently; soon everything will be just as it was before. Very soon

> you won't need me to assure you that I have forgiven you; you will yourself feel the certainty that I have done so. Can you suppose I should ever think of such a thing as repudiating you, or even reproaching you? You have no idea what a true man's heart is like, Nora. There is something so indescribably sweet and satisfying, to a man, in the knowledge that he has forgiven his wife—forgiven her freely, and with all his heart. It seems as if that had made her, as it were, doubly his own; he has given her a new life, so to speak; and she has in a way become both wife and child to him. So you shall be for me after this, my little scared, helpless darling. Have no anxiety about anything, Nora; only be frank and open with me, and I will serve as will and conscience both to you—. What is this? Not gone to bed? Have you changed your things? (Ibsen, 1966: 66)

The expression of gratitude in the dialogue is in indirect speech act which Nora chooses in order to escape Helmer's outright lies. But her leaving the room shows she did not mean it. Referring to the 'fancy dress' is also an indirect speech act which she uses to assert her refusal to act as an 'actor' anymore. The many commissives that Helmer use play the role of directives as he indirectly suggests to Nora not to think of his reproachful attitude and rather think of his generosity in forgiving her. He also promises her to provide her with a safe home where she would not need to fear anyone. He uses many declaratives which are indeed quite opposed to his earlier behavior. Instead of using any direct speech in admitting his aggressive behavior he, implicitly, tries to manipulate with Nora's mind. At the end, when he sees Nora in a different dress he uses an interrogative only to show his surprise at her lack of response to his speech and her noncompliance with his wishes. The perlocutionary result of Helmer's speech does not go in accordance to his wishes as his words imply one thing but his intentions are the opposite.

NORA: [in everyday dress]. Yes, Torvald, I have changed my things now.

HELMER: But what for?—so late as this.

NORA: I shall not sleep to-night.

HELMER: But, my dear Nora—

NORA: [looking at her watch]. It is not so very late. Sit down here, Torvald. You and I have much to say to one another. [She sits down at one side of the table.]

HELMER: Nora—what is this?—this cold, set face?

NORA: Sit down. It will take some time; I have a lot to talk over with you.

HELMER: [sits down at the opposite side of the table]. You alarm me, Nora!—and I don't understand you. (Ibsen, 1966: 66-67)

Though Helmer could see Nora in a plain everyday dress, he expresses his concern at Nora's changed attire. Nora simply affirms to his surprised query but she indirectly suggests to Helmer that it is not too late to for any step that she might take after changing her dress or after deciding not to do what he always wished. She uses assertive speech when she says they need to talk but the effect of the words is that of a directive as never before had Nora insisted on anything so firmly. Helmer tries to intimidate her when he refers to her cold face, but Nora keeps her cool and unlike Helmer, she uses a direct speech in order to have one last conversation with him. Helmer's alarm at Nora's behavior is shown in the expressive dialogue he utters which for the first time shows his concern at the seriousness of the situation at hand.

NORA: No, that is just it. You don't understand me, and I have never understood you either—before to-night. No, you mustn't interrupt me. You must simply listen to what I say. Torvald, this is a settling of accounts.

HELMER: What do you mean by that?

NORA: [after a short silence]. Isn't there one thing that strikes you as strange in our sitting here like this?

HELMER: What is that?

NORA: We have been married now eight years. Does it not occur to you that this is the first time we two, you and I, husband and wife, have had a serious conversation? (Ibsen, 1966: 67)

Nora in reply to Helmer simply agrees with him and further asserts that they never understood each other. She also for the first time uses a directive in stopping him to interrupt her as she is up to settle her account with Helmer. Again Helmer demands an explanation and it is Nora who is in charge of the conversation and takes it further by being 'expressive' in not having a single serious conversation in the eight years of their marriage. The interrogation at the end of the dialogue is more of a complaint than a question that needs a reply in the affirmative. In contrast to Helmer, Nora is ore clear in her speech and no more is there any discrepancy between what she says and what she does.

HELMER: What do you mean by serious?

NORA: In all these eight years—longer than that—from the very beginning of our acquaintance, we have never exchanged a word on any serious subject.

HELMER: Was it likely that I would be continually and for ever telling you about worries that you could not help me to bear?

NORA: I am not speaking about business matters. I say that we have never sat down in earnest together to try and get at the bottom of anything.

HELMER: But, dearest Nora, would it have been any good to you?

NORA: That is just it; you have never understood me. I have been greatly wronged, Torvald—first by papa and then by you.

HELMER: What! By us two—by us two, who have loved you better than anyone else in the world?

NORA: [shaking her head]. You have never loved me. You have only thought it pleasant to be in love with me.

HELMER: Nora, what do I hear you saying? (Ibsen, 1966: 67)

The dialogues above are examples of expressives by Nora. She complains to him that they never had a serious conversation ever in the life that they spent together. Though, he uses interrogative in order to justify his case, he is actually, indirectly, suggesting to Nora, it would not have been of any use to her being a part of any serious conversation. Nora, by this time, has gained the courage to choose to use direct speech and complains openly of how Helmer and her father had in the guise of love wronged her most. She even asserts that his love was only a fancy to keep him entertained with. Helmer in the last dialogue finds it hard to believe and though he quite understands what she says, he shows his ignorance of the words she speaks. A little later in the scene we find Nora who takes a decision to educate herself and find her own way in life.

NORA: Indeed, you were perfectly right. I am not fit for the task. There is another task I must undertake first. I must try and educate myself—you are not the man to help me in that. I must do that for myself. And that is why I am going to leave you now.

HELMER: [springing up]. What do you say?

NORA: I must stand quite alone, if I am to understand myself and everything about me. It is for that reason that I cannot remain with you any longer.

HELMER: Nora, Nora!

NORA: I am going away from here now, at once. I am sure Christine will take me in for the night—

HELMER: You are out of your mind! I won't allow it! I forbid you!

NORA: It is no use forbidding me anything any longer. I will take with me what belongs to myself. I will take nothing from you, either now or later.

HELMER: What sort of madness is this!

NORA: To-morrow I shall go home — I mean, to my old home. It will be easiest for me to find something to do there.

HELMER: You blind, foolish woman!

NORA: I must try and get some sense, Torvald.

HELMER: To desert your home, your husband and your children! And you don't consider what people will say!

NORA: I cannot consider that at all. I only know that it is necessary for me. (Ibsen, 1966: 68-69)

The dialogues above show a different Nora, whose most utterances are in direct speech and straight declaratives and assertives. She takes the decision of no more living a life of passive subservience in which she only had to take directives from Helmer. Helmer uses traditional tools of subjugating Nora by threatening her about society and religion, but only to save his own social position. But Nora once and for all decides to direct her life in the way she deems best.

HELMER: It's shocking. This is how you would neglect your most sacred duties.

NORA: What do you consider my most sacred duties?

HELMER: Do I need to tell you that? Are they not your duties to your husband and your children?

NORA: I have other duties just as sacred.

HELMER: That you have not. What duties could those be?

NORA. Duties to myself.

HELMER: Before all else, you are a wife and a mother.

NORA: I don't believe that any longer. I believe that before all else I am a reasonable human being, just as you are—or, at all events, that I must try and become one. I know quite well, Torvald, that most people would think you right, and that views of that kind are to be found in books; but I can no longer content myself with what most people say, or with what is found in books. I must think over things for myself and get to understand them.

HELMER: Can you not understand your place in your own home? Have you not a reliable guide in such matters as that?—have you no religion?

NORA: I am afraid, Torvald, I do not exactly know what religion is.

HELMER: What are you saying?

NORA: I know nothing but what the clergyman said, when I went to be confirmed. He told us that religion was this, and that, and the other. When I am away from all this, and am alone, I will look into that matter too. I will see if what the clergyman said is true, or at all events if it is true for me. (Ibsen, 1966: 69)

The final few dialogues show Nora's use of declaratives and assertives as representation of her newly realized self. Helmer turns more towards commissives when he threatens Nora in the name of religion and sacred duty. Apparently, he uses directives in questioning her about religion and her sacred duties but they actually play the role of commissives to force Nora into staying at her home. Helmer's locutionary utterances and illocutionary meanings have a wide gap between them. But in contrast to Nora's pleadings and expressives used at the beginning of their final conversation, she prefers to uses more declaratives and assertive. She puts into question religion which she blindly follows. She declares her will in questioning all that she had believed in till that time. It can be said that the perlocutionary effect of Helmer's words was quite the opposite of what he expected. No more can he use his speech in sabotaging his wife who is no more a care taker of his and his children.

A little later in the act Helmer continues to convince Nora to take her words back and says:

HELMER: And can you tell me what I have done to forfeit your love?

NORA: Yes, indeed I can. It was to-night, when the wonderful thing did not happen; then I saw you were not the man I had thought you were.

HELMER: Explain yourself better. I don't understand you.

NORA: I have waited so patiently for eight years; for, goodness knows, I knew very well that wonderful things don't happen every day. Then this horrible misfortune came upon me; and then I felt quite certain that the wonderful thing was going to happen at last. When Krogstad's letter was lying out there, never for a moment did I imagine that you would consent to accept this man's conditions. I was so absolutely certain that you would say to him: Publish the thing to the whole world. And when that was done—

HELMER: Yes, what then?—when I had exposed my wife to shame and disgrace?

NORA: When that was done, I was so absolutely certain, you would come forward and take everything upon yourself, and say: I am the guilty one.

HELMER: Nora—!

NORA: You mean that I would never have accepted such a sacrifice on your part? No, of course not. But what would my assurances have been worth against yours? That was the wonderful thing which I hoped for and feared; and it was to prevent that, that I wanted to kill myself.

HELMER: I would gladly work night and day for you, Nora—bear sorrow and want for your sake. But no man would sacrifice his honour for the one he loves.

NORA: It is a thing hundreds of thousands of women have done.

HELMER: Oh, you think and talk like a heedless child.

NORA: Maybe. But you neither think nor talk like the man I could bind myself to. As soon as your fear was over—and it was not fear for what threatened me, but for what might happen to you—when the whole thing was past, as far as you were concerned it was exactly as if nothing at all had happened. Exactly as before, I was your little skylark, your doll, which you would in future treat with doubly gentle care, because it was so brittle and fragile. [Getting up] Torvald—it was then it dawned upon me that for eight years I had been living here with a strange man, and had borne him three

children—. Oh, I can't bear to think of it! I could tear myself into little bits!

HELMER: Nora, Nora, not now! Wait till to-morrow. (Ibsen, 1966:70-71)

The dialogues above show Nora's complain and report on what so drastically changed her outlook on life. When Helmer tries to baffle her with his questions, Nora clearly reveals to him all that she would never think of discussing before. He often uses directives in order to threaten or warn her but Nora carries on with her complain and her disappointment with Helmer at a time when she most needed him. Her speech forces him to assert him position and state that he could not sacrifice his honor for her sake. Later, we see Helmer's utterances are only to evade reality and put things back in the way he wanted to but Nora's speech and its perlocutionary effect is more forceful in finally making Helmer realize the meanness of his character. When Nora expresses her disgust at the thought of bearing him three children and living with a complete stranger, Helmer switches his commissive mode of speech to expressive in begging and pleading her to stay and not to leave him alone.

NORA: [putting on her cloak]. I cannot spend the night in a strange man's room.

HELMER: But can't we live here like brother and sister—?

NORA: [putting on her hat]. You know very well that would not last long. [Puts the shawl round her.] Good-bye, Torvald. I won't see the little ones. I know they are in better hands than mine. As I am now, I can be of no use to them.

HELMER: But some day, Nora—some day?

NORA: How can I tell? I have no idea what is going to become of me.

HELMER: But you are my wife, whatever becomes of you.

NORA: Listen, Torvald. I have heard that when a wife deserts her husband's house, as I am doing now, he is legally freed from all obligations towards her. In any case, I set you free from all your obligations. You are not to feel yourself bound in the slightest way, any more than I shall. There must be perfect freedom on both sides. See, here is your ring back. Give me mine.

HELMER: That too?

NORA: That too.

HELMER: Here it is.

NORA: That's right. Now it is all over. I have put the keys here. The maids know all about everything in the house—better than I do. To-morrow, after I have left her, Christine will come here and pack up my own things that I brought with me from home. I will have them sent after me. (Ibsen, 1966: 71-72)

This part of conversation is almost the penultimate point of Helmer and Nora's relationship. The expressive and commissives in the form of apologies and vows that Helmer offers only fall on deaf ears. The illocutionary implications of his speech throughout are based on bad faith. Maybe that is the reason that the perlocution of the speech brings on completely contrasting results. Nora leaves her children and tells Helmer that they are in better hands as he had declared her incapable of taking care of them. She also returns his ring as a result of his words that were enough to shatter her world. Finally, Nora directs Helmer with regards to her things at home, she asks him that she would have her things sent after her, in order to show she was not going to leave home empty handed. The shift in the use of directives and expressive for the use of declaratives and assertive shows the shift of power from Helmer to Nora. At the same time the perlocutionary effect of Nora's dialogues become stronger as compared to Helmer's.

HELMER: All over! All over!—Nora, shall you never think of me again?

NORA: I know I shall often think of you and the children and this house.

HELMER: May I write to you, Nora?

NORA: No—never. You must not do that.

HELMER: But at least let me send you—

NORA: Nothing—nothing—

HELMER: Let me help you if you are in want.

NORA: No. I can receive nothing from a stranger.

HELMER: Nora—can I never be anything more than a stranger to you?

NORA: [taking her bag]. Ah, Torvald, the most wonderful thing of all would have to happen.

HELMER: Tell me what that would be!

NORA: Both you and I would have to be so changed that—. Oh, Torvald, I don't believe any longer in wonderful things happening.

HELMER: But I will believe in it. Tell me? So changed that—?

NORA: That our life together would be a real wedlock. Good-bye. [She goes out through the hall.]

HELMER: [sinks down on a chair at the door and buries his face in his hands]. Nora! Nora! [Looks round, and rises.] Empty. She is gone. [A hope flashes across his mind.] The most wonderful thing of all—?

[The sound of a door shutting is heard from below.] (Ibsen, 1966:72)

The final action shows the complete shift of control from Helmer to Nora. The expressive pleadings and threatening finally fail to convince Nora to change her decision about her life. Her final act is the strongest of the perlocutionary acts which took place in the play. It not only shook Helmer's life but it made a mark throughout history for the determination of a woman who takes charge of her life. Helmer's *'All over! All over!'* reflects the helplessness which Nora felt at the beginning of the third act of the play. The interrogatives in the dialogues above show Helmer's genuine concern at Nora's leaving as opposed to his sarcasm a little while earlier. Nora recognizes the importance of language that was used throughout her life in order to manipulate and control her life. She does not hide her feelings for once in the final conversation that she has at her home. She is not afraid to express her feelings, either directly or indirectly. Perhaps Nora's long time silence was the very reason that kept the relation between the two so claustrophobic but the moment she sees the doom in their relationship, she does not fail to recognize that her freedom of speech and expression was and is verily *the most wonderful thing* she had been looking for all her life.

Discussion

The analysis of the text shows the shift that takes place in the power and control of the situations in the play. The locutionary words and their illocutionary meanings often do not correspond with one another. As a result, the perlocutionary effect of the utterances also varies. At the beginning of the conversation we see Helmer more in control as he accuses Nora of being involved in a fraudulent activity. He makes her feel guilty for what she had done. He uses more assertives in his dialogues as he believes whatever he says, he can justify it. Nora, on the other hand, is more defensive, apologetic and uses more expressives in her dialogues. Helmer uses directives in order to be

sarcastic with Nora and suggestive of how she should be dependent on Helmer for anything she does in her life. He also takes commissives as his option to threaten Nora to take back her decision of leaving home. At the same time, we find that Helmer's speech is driven by his selfishness and that is why he says one thing but means quite the other. That must be the reason that the effect of Helmer's speech fall on deaf ears and they remain as unconvincing as they were at the beginning. Nora, on the other hand, is more stable in her use of language. She adopts more assertive tone in order to make herself clear to her husband. She prefers to talk in a language which is not fashioned to evade the matter at hand but to make clear for her the path she intends to move on. We also rarely find any discrepancy between the locutionary and illocutionary meanings of Nora's utterances. It can also be noted that the perlocutionary power of Nora's speech is stronger than Helmer's as it makes Helmer ponder over his helplessness without Nora. It is this precise power which changes Helmer's commanding and accusing tone to a pleading and apologizing one. Nora's departure at the end speaks more loudly about her relationship with Helmer and she requires no more words to explain her belief in miracles, because she herself performs the most wonderful thing of all, that she was searching for all her life.

It can be concluded from the analysis that the motivation of the speakers decides whether they use direct or indirect speech. The various speech acts provide the speakers an opportunity to obliquely communicate multiple meanings without actually stating them. They help not only to camouflage the speakers' intentions but are also used to reinforce the perlocutionary effects on the hearer. In order to understand fully appreciate and comprehend drama it is very important to understand not only the literary and figurative language and images used but equally important is the deciphering of the speech acts as they reveal more about the characters than what can be discerned on the surface.

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