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The Act of Creation: Speech Acts and Contextual Relevance

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1.1 Method and Analysis: Classification

In one of the most intense moments of Arthur Miller's <u>Death of a Salesman,</u> a broken down salesman, Willy Loman, is at his wit's end trying to convince his son of an impossible falsehood. Their lives stand to be altered forever as Willy *commands,* "Now stop crying and do as I say. I gave you an order. Biff, I gave you an order! Is that what you do when I give you an order? How dare you cry!" (A. Miller 120) The playwright's stage directions even insist that Willy Loman is "*assuming command*"; it seems to be a directive, an order, with layers of meaning and emotion, but can it really be? To truly be a command it must necessarily be a "speech act," a thing "done with words"; However, J. L. Austin, the innovator who first defined the theory of speech acts in the seminal work on the subject, <u>How to Do Things with Words</u>, set up a conundrum: "a performative utterance will [...] be *in a peculiar way* hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in a soliloquy" (Austin 22; emphasis original). The questions must be cleared up as to whether or not a character in literature can indeed indulge in speech acts and, if so, what role those speech acts play in literature. I argue that the importance of speech acts performed by literary characters is that they are not only real and possible, but necessary and supremely relevant within the bounds of their context.

To analyze literary speech acts, I use a system innovated by Austin himself which was later refined by Searle, a philosopher and a noted pioneer in linguistics. Austin provided a tentative list of general classes of speech acts. He believed that his list was not exhaustive and that some speech acts may fit in multiple classes. His main interest was that his class system be useful (Austin 149-50). The general classes that Austin identified were *verdictives, exercitives, commissives, behabitives,* and *expositives*. Austin defined these classes by listing a few examples and devoting a paragraph to the way his examples were related to the labels (Austin 150-162). As Austin had expected, others have gone on to create more inclusive, better defined classes for use with speech act theory.

In revising the classifications, Searle disagreed with Austin on

several points. Where Austin saw an infinite range of possibilities for speech acts, Searle supposed that "No one […] would say that there are countless kinds of economic systems or marital arrangements or sorts of political parties; why should language be more taxonomically recalcitrant than any other aspect of human social life?" (Searle vii) Instead, he believed that there must be a finite body of possible ways to use language, and that body could be divided thoroughly into the parts it comprises: "There are not […] an infinite or indefinite number of language games or uses of language. Rather, the illusion of limitless uses of language is engendered by an enormous unclarity about what constitutes the criteria for delimiting one language game or use of language from another" (Searle 29). This assessment led him to an efficient summary of the "things we do" with language; namely, we "tell people how things are (Assertives), we try to get them to do things (Directives), we commit ourselves to doing things (Commissives), we express our feelings and attitudes (Expressives), and we bring about changes in the world through our utterances (Declarations)" (Searle viii). Since I have not been able to find a speech act that Searle's list does not accommodate, I will use his labels when I find it necessary to characterize a speech act to point out what is being done with words.

1.2 Method and Analysis: Constative-Performative Implied Acts
Austin starts his lectures off with a curious hedge, saying, "What I shall have to say here is neither difficult nor contentious; the only merit I should like to claim for it is that of being true, at least in parts" (Austin 1). That final phrase in particular, "at least in parts," inspires inquiry; it implies that what he has to say may be *false* in parts. He could have meant to say something else entirely. Maybe it is only a hedging modesty, but it could imply something greatly more important: that some of what he says can be classified neither as true or false, but instead as felicitous or infelicitous, which, as I will discuss in detail later, is the most eminent defining characteristic of a speech act.

J.H. Miller, an active modern linguistics scholar, examined Austin's opening as well and concluded, "Austin claims that he has at least in parts spoken the truth about the distinction between performatives and constatives. He invites the reader to measure the worth of the book by its truth value and perhaps dares the reader to tell the true from the false" (J. H. Miller 22). But if Austin is really only inviting the reader to tell the true from the felicitous, and not the false at all, then he may be pointing out that he sees that there is a mix of performative and constative in his work, especially given all of the *examples* of performatives in it. Furthermore, the book performs something as a whole; it reveals, calls attention, names things, etc. Austin suggested that:
at least in some ways there is danger of our initial and tentative distinc-

tion between constative and performative breaking down.

We may, however, fortify ourselves in the conviction that the distinction is a final one by reverting to the old idea that the constative utterance is true or false and the performative is happy or unhappy. (54)

Nonetheless, important caveats of the issue remain unexplored in <u>How to Do Things with Words</u>. Phrases exist that seem only to describe a situation, at the logical form, but which indeed have a force of action in a performative sense. Such phrases can be found in <u>Death of a Salesman</u>:
(1) CHARLEY: It was my ace (A. Miller 46)
When Charley says sentence (1) at a contentious moment during a card game with Willy, he is logically only describing the situation as he understands it. He adds, for emphasis, "for God's sake!" which does nothing to alter the logical meaning. But there is a speech act embedded in (1). It is an assertive-directive challenge; Charley wants Willy to admit his transgression of the rules of the game. Example (1) has both constative and the performative faces. A constative is either true or false, and a performative is either successful or unsuccessful. Example (1) fits both descriptions since either the ace was Charley's or it was not, true or false, but Charley is definitely trying to solicit a reaction from Willy. By stating how things are (an assertive) he is telling Willy to relent (a directive). And that attempt shall either be successful or unsuccessful. As it turns out, Willy does not relent; however, even though Charley is unsuccessful in his attempt, the fact that (1) can be measured in terms of success shows that it is, at least in part, performative, much as Austin's book is, at least in part, true.

Perhaps the issue regarding literary speech act analysis arose because literature is not fully understood in many ways and therefore ineligible, in some eyes, for scientific study. As Sandy Petrey, a pioneer in literary speech acts analysis, concluded, "theory and theorist disagree over what literature is and does. The imperative to socialize that erases the dividing line between constative and performative also erases that between literary and performative" (Petrey 50-51). In <u>Speech Acts and Literary Theory</u>, Petrey broadens the discussion of the constative performative glide, saying, "the constative/performative distinction dies because both its terms encompass language and society at once. Identifying the constative as a performative proclaims language's social identity perhaps more spectacularly than discovering the performative in the first place" (42). To Petrey, the distinction dies because societal pressure destroys it; social interactions cannot be purely constative, true or false. The purity of a true or false statement can't survive the social pressure to derive action. She argues that the speech acts analyst must broaden her perspective to include apparently constative utterances since "form alone

cannot establish linguistic force. Society must come in when force is at issue, and with literature it certainly is" (Petrey 51). (1) above is just one of a multitude of possible examples of the constative sheep's clothing that a performative can don. An example of a more successful performative is:

> (2) BIFF: He wouldn't listen to you (A. Miller 120).

This statement is both assertive and expressive, and assertives always have the overlay of a constative because they "tell people how things are" (Searle viii). It asserts that the math teacher would not listen to Willy, and in Biff's eyes that is true—how the world has become. However, it furthermore expresses Biff's profound disappointment with Willy. What it *does* is to reveal the forever-changed view Biff holds of Willy. While it doesn't seem like such a pivotal action on the surface, it is actually the first time in Biff's life that he has lost faith in his dad. And that change, that realization and disappointment, characterizes Biff's relationship with Willy until the day Willy dies.

Earlier in his life, Willy was the source of Biff's confidence:

> WILLY: You nervous, Biff, about the game?
> BIFF: Not if you're gonna be there. (A. Miller 31)

Biff drew confidence from Willy's presence before. He "missed" Willy "every minute" that he was gone (A. Miller 30). And Willy's philosophy rolled from Biff's tongue in respectful imitation:

WILLY: Charley is not—liked. He's liked, but he's not—well liked. (A. Miller 30).
WILLY: Bernard is not well liked, is he?
BIFF: He's liked, but he's not well liked. (A. Miller 33)

From the time Biff states (2) until the day Willy dies, the change in Biff first represented in (2) sets him on a restless course to wander without happiness, confidence, or a sense of meaning in his life, constantly trying to redefine himself on his own terms, or trying to, as his mother Linda puts it, "find himself," (A. Miller 16). (2) redefines both father and son. Finally, I will put the constative/performative distinction to rest because the study of utterances that are constative on the surface can be studied for their performative capacity *productively*. Valuable surmises can be drawn from the analysis of mixed constative-performatives, just as valuable and informative results can be derived, for example, through Newtonian physics, though it has been supplanted by Einsteinian physics. And when Einsteinian physics give way to something that describes the universe more thoroughly, Einstein's model will likely still be used to demonstrate points that the new theory convolutes. The theory that constative and performative are mixed is *productive*, and that is merit enough by itself. Not only do I see the distinction to be quite blurry, but

there is also much to be gained by analysis of constative-performative utterances.

1.2 Method and Analysis: Context

As an author Arthur Miller wields an incredible power through his words. He is a creator of worlds. Miller does something very real, in the Lomans' world, without even a word uttered on stage. The German philosopher Max Picard once wrote "Speech came out of silence, out of the fullness of silence. The fullness of silence would have exploded if it had not been able to flow out into speech. . . . There is something silent in every word, as an abiding token of the origin of speech. And in every silence there is something of the spoken word, as an abiding token of the power of silence to create speech" (Picard qtd. in Clair 3). In creating the world of <u>Death of a Salesman</u>, Arthur Miller was demonstrating the latent power in the "fullness of silence"; the play opens with a long set of stage directions. Without them, there is no setting, no person of Willy Loman, no space for the actions to take place in. Miller writes, "*A melody is heard, played upon a flute. It is small and fine, telling of grass and trees and the horizon*" (A. Miller 11). With that, the silence breaks into music. For nearly two full pages nothing will be *said* at all. "*Before us is the Salesman's house. We are aware of towering, angular shapes behind it, surrounding it on all sides,*" Miller's stage directions continue, "*Only the blue light of the sky falls upon the house and forestage; the surrounding area shows an angry orange*" (A. Miller 11). On and on, things appear. Miller is doing something with words: creating a world, peopling it, giving context to his story. In that way, silence begets speech. Miller is creating *context*.

In the real world, context for discourse requires no one's special act of creation. In fact it is, as Searle notes, impossible to remove all context:

I argue against the theory that the literal meaning of a sentence can be construed as the meaning that it has apart from any context whatever, the meaning that it has in the so called 'null context'. Against this view I contend that the notion of literal meaning only has application against a background of assumptions and practices which are not themselves represented as part of literal meaning. (Searle xi)

He notes that context is made of assumptions and practices. The speaker, hearer, and audience unconsciously hold many of those assumptions as part of their individual representations of the world. Context comes to bear pragmatically, reaching outside of the restraints of the discourse itself and its language. As noted linguist Diane Blakemore explains, "the fundamental ability in communication is not linguistic encoding and decoding, but the ability to derive inferences which result in assumptions

which are entertained as metarepresentations of other people's thoughts, desires and intentions" (Blakemore 71). In <u>Death of a Salesman</u>, Arthur Miller does not attempt only to create a dialogue that explains his characters, their motivations, and their relationships; he creates an entire situational context. The audience is intended to extrapolate the meaning not only through the dialogue, but also through the circumstances that have led to the activities the characters indulge in. All of these smaller acts add up to a main theme. The play is, overall, a tragedy that investigates the depression and suicide of a common man. All of the instances that I undertake to examine in this essay are related to that main theme in some way and form an interactive context with it.

Every great literary work is a mystery, whether the mystery is who committed a crime or, less blatantly, what makes the characters tick. The circumstances of the mystery in <u>Death of a Salesman</u> come together to create a pivotal moment that takes place in Boston. There are references to Willy Loman's trips to Boston throughout the play, and the tension between Biff and Willy has its roots there. Biff's admiration of his father is well established in his youth. He imitates Willy and takes on his philosophies, as shown above with "well liked" (30-3). Biff lives to make his father proud and thrives on his attention, which is shown in his need for Willy's support at the upcoming football game (31). But all of that changes when Biff, having failed his math class, races to Boston to solicit his father's help in asking the teacher to change the grade (116-121). Arthur Miller demonstrates this scene to the audience as Willy's dream-like memory. Willy remembers being with a woman in his hotel room when Biff arrived. As the action unfolds, Biff finds that she has been hiding in the bathroom, and he is crushed. That context is the impetus for the strain in their father-son relationship and drives all of the actions, including speech acts, that transpire between them from then forward.

The analyst (and perhaps the audience) must understand the way the utterances relate the actions in the play to the theme that comprises them. But the characters must "comprehend"[1]* in a different way; they must relate the dialogue to their "lives"* and personal "experiences."* The characters need not "feel"* that a theme is being pursued, in a literary sense; they need only understand the relevance of each passing utterance and action to their current situation. Blakemore explained this idea, saying, "the inferential process involved in utterance interpretation may involve assumptions about temporal or causal relationships between events in the world or about relationships between the speaker and hearer. However, within a relevance theoretic framework, these assumptions are not construed as assumptions about relationships in the discourse or the

1   * I bracket *comprehend, lives, experience(s),* etc. with quotes since characters don't technically *have* lives, experiences or comprehensions but only *represent* them through the lens of authorship.

text itself" (157). Assumptions that come to bear on the discourse may reach far beyond the actual discourse itself into the characters' "experience." These assumptions are brought to attention, in general, by the process of "*Ostensive-inferential communication:* the communicator produces a stimulus which makes it mutually manifest to communicator and audience that the communicator intends, by means of this stimulus, to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions {*I*}" (Sperber & Wilson 63). *Audience* here means the character receiving the communication, not the audience of a play, since this theory generally applies to natural language, not literature. However, a playwright must use stage directions to incorporate this type of communication into a situation in a script since the stimulus is often an action rather than dialogue. Not only must the characters "understand" ostensive communication, but the audience must also be able to understand it for their own comprehension and be able to understand the relevance of the ostensive communication to the characters' comprehension. In <u>Dreath of a Salesman</u>, Biff accomplishes this kind of communication when he cries (120). The fact that he cries has all of the hallmarks of a speech act, except for the first, a locution. It has a perlocution, an effect on Willy, who reacts, "How dare you cry!" and then softens, puts his arm around Biff, and attempts to tell him that his infidelity is not as important as it seems (120). It has illocution in that Biff intends his father to know his feelings, but the locutionary act is neither truly a locution, only an action, nor voluntary. Context in this form not only lends meaning to the speech acts surrounding it, but borders on becoming a speech act or something like it in itself.

A playwright can use ostensive communication to manipulate the audience's cognitive environment as well. The writer can either show the audience what she believes to be relevant for the audience's understanding, or she can withhold information from the audience to alter the audience's cognitive environment by controlling what ideas are manifest to her audience: "What is manifest in Sperber and Wilson's terms, is what to an individual is situationally recognizable, comprising the actual and potential impingements of the physical environment on their cognitive environment (the latter will include knowledge and memory)" (Toolan 184). Miller plays with character knowledge and memory by hiding the incident in Boston and all that it manifests until page 116, though the incident happened several years before the time frame of the play and Willy's daydream which reveals it. In it, the presence of The Woman, the new stockings, and Biff's tears, among other things, will add to the audience's cognitive environment, which is precisely what Miller exploits, by hiding it until late in the play, to create the mystery. Had Miller told the story in a more linear fashion, showing Biff's younger days in the earli-

est scenes, followed hard upon by the incident in Boston, the mystery would have been far less significant; the audience would only be waiting to see how the characters reacted to it rather than involved in trying to understand the relationship between Biff and Willy and wondering how it could have gotten to its dilapidated state.

In order to alter the audience's cognitive environment, the author must have what Schultz calls the "capacity for entertaining a multiplicity of views of the world (and of ourselves), without thereby suffering irreparable mental breakdown," which is "at the root of the versatility, flexibility, adaptability that makes us human beings, rather than automata" (Schultz 117). The ability to comprehend in this way is not unique to authors, but it is a tool that authors must use in a different way than ordinary language users. Whereas humans must ordinarily be able to understand the way that others perceive their world to understand another person's perspective, authors must create the world and invent the different perspectives that the characters experience. An author uses this understanding of multiple perspectives in order to create conflict. Toolan argues that cognitive effect theory can be useful without assuming a *shared* cognitive environment (184). Characters may have independent cognitive environments which only share certain things in common, not an entire shared environment. If Biff's assumptions perfectly matched Willy's, there would be no loss of respect and no real conflict. This is the situation Willy is hoping for when he tells Biff "Now look, Biff, when you grow up you'll understand about these things. You mustn't—you mustn't overemphasize a thing like this" (A. Miller 120). It is the violation of Biff's expectations, embodied in his assumptions about Willy prior to the Boston incident (his belief in Willy as a father and a husband to his mother) that drives the intrigue.

In the scene mentioned above, much of the interpretation relies on the context surrounding (2), "He wouldn't listen to you" (A. Miller 120), which all by itself, says nothing of the serious inferences that I have drawn from it. Context gives meaning to speech acts—especially indirect speech acts. Searle asserts that indirection can be used to perform a speech act unrelated to the direct meaning of a phrase (Searle 33); instead of directly rejecting an invitation to dinner, a person can reply that she has to wash her hair. Though the statement is in no way directly related to the invitation, the hearer will almost infallibly understand the implication. Drawing heavily on Grice, Blakemore shows that non-truth conditional meaning can be derived from implicature (13). Furthermore, she makes a case for "a theory of pragmatic competence whose domain includes the role of context and general pragmatic principles in the interpretation of utterances and for a theory of linguistic pragmatic competence whose domain includes the role that certain [...] expressions play in

the interpretation of the utterances that contain them" (Blakemore 14). Her theory relates context to linguistic meaning, which is just why the playwright must create the circumstances surrounding Biff's emotional departure to demonstrate the impetus for his emotional disjunction from Willy.

In that scene discussed, Biff is not reacting to something said, but to something that he learns about his father by seeing and experiencing it. He learns, by The Woman's presence in Willy's hotel room, that his father is a "liar" and a "fake" (A. Miller 121). This realization results from ostensive, not linguistic, input:

Willy laughs and The Woman joins in offstage.
WILLY, *without hesitation*: Hurry downstairs and—
BIFF: Somebody in there?
WILLY: No, that was next door.
The Woman laughs offstage. (A. Miller 118)

Biff's suspicions arise from hearing The Woman's laughter and from what he senses in Willy's reaction to the laughter. But he has not yet as-similated the information:

BIFF: Somebody got into your bathroom!
WILLY: No, it's the next room, there's a party—
THE WOMAN, *enters, laughing* [...]: Can I come in? There's something in the bathtub, Willy, and it's moving!
Willy looks at Biff, who is staring open-mouthed and horrified at The Woman.(A. Miller 119)

In this scene, none of the spoken words reveal anything to Biff to make him "*horrified.*" His life has been changed by what he sees, the context that leads to Willy's resulting speech acts, a series of lies.

Willy's first lie is already out, "No, it's in the next room, there's a party," an assertive speech act meant to change Biff's cognitive environ-ment. Willy is attempting to change the way Biff uses the information he is gaining. He follows that lie with "Ah—you better go back to your room. They must be finished painting by now. They're painting her room so I let her take a shower here. Go back, go back..." (119) Of this string of utter-ances, only one is an outright assertive lie: "They're painting her room so I let her take a shower here." There are examples of directives as well, in "you better go back to your room," and "Go back, go back." The Woman cannot go back to her room; she probably has no other place in the hotel to go. Tragically, for Willy, she either does not pick up on his desire for her to take part in his lies, or she does not care to help him to lie. She refuses the role that Willy thrusts upon her. He forms that role for her not with a specific speech act but with the collection of performatives

and constatives he uses. The rest of Willy's utterances are more heavily constative in form, though they are false. These constative-performatives falsely describe the world as Willy wants Biff to see it. Willy's performatives attempt to make others conform to the roles he has chosen for them in the false world he is describing.

Performatives by themselves are only part of the story. In the scene above, Willy has used constative-formed utterances to attempt to form a false context and to form an overall implied speech act: to assert a lie to Biff which would alter Biff's view of the world in a way that would save Willy from the repercussions of his infidelity. Willy's attempt to create a new contextual environment for his speech acts shows that context is indeed integral to speech acts, as Searle suggests, and that literary works incorporate and rely on this fact to portray a model of reality. The context is a part of the performative, not just a part of its description.

1.3 Method and Analysis: Felicity

More importantly than *providing* context for the play's themes, the character's dialogue and speech acts *rely* on context for relevance. Each character holds assumptions that make up his or her personal context, or personal view of the world, and Sperber and Wilson assert that "An assumption is relevant if and only if it has some contextual effect in that context" (122). They later relate their theory directly to speech acts, saying, "There are [...] a variety of ways in which a description [...] can be relevant; some will have the effect of an ordinary assertion, others the effect of a report of speech or thought, others the effect of an irony or dissociation, others the effect of a speech-act classification and so on" (Sperber & Wilson 249). They list three ways that an assumption can have no contextual effects at all, including, "the assumption is inconsistent with the context and is too weak to upset it" (121). Willy's lies do not work on Biff. They are infelicitous because the new assumptions presented by Willy are inconsistent with the assumptions that Biff already holds and are too weak to upset the existing context.

Furthermore, Biff sees Willy's intention more lucidly than the false context Willy attempts to create. Blakemore's explanation of relevance seeking may explain this kind of phenomenon: "A hearer [...] adopts a strategy which does not involve meta-representing the speakers thoughts:" in other words it does not involve creating a personal mental representation of what the listener believes the speaker's thoughts to be; "[S]he simply looks for an interpretation that is relevant enough, and on finding it assumes that it is the intended one" (Blakemore 70). Although Blakemore is attempting to describe how successful communication works, her theory applies because it describes the same process that allows Biff to see through Willy's lies. Biff can see that his father's assertions are

relevant in that their intended effect is to obscure his contextual under-standing, not to elucidate it. Willy's speech acts, his lies, throughout his interaction with Biff in this scene are infelicitous because he cannot make the false context more relevant than the real one. Biff's assumptions are too strong.

Willy is a seducer of sorts as well. He even gives his son this philosophy on relationships: "Just wanna be careful with those girls, Biff, that's all. Don't make any promises. No promises of any kind. Because a girl, y'know, they always believe what you tell 'em" (A. Miller 27). He has duped a mistress in Boston, and he entices his wife and children by tell-ing them what he believes they want to hear, always attempting to modify the context to suit his own ends. In this way, his speech compares with Felman's analysis of Molière's Don Juan's speech:

Saying, for him, is in no case tantamount to knowing, but rather to *do-ing: acting* on the interlocutor, modifying the situation and the interplay of forces within it. Language, for Don Juan, is performative and not in-formative; it is a field of enjoyment, not of knowledge. As such, it cannot be qualified as true or false, but rather quite specifically as *felicitous* or *infelicitous,* successful or unsuccessful. (Felman 27)

Where Don Juan enjoys success, Willy Loman fails. Willy's speech acts are constantly failing due to their reliance on the false context he at-tempts to build for them.

Throughout the play Willy attempts to sell himself with lies. Starting with Willy's earliest dreamlike memory in the play, he attempts to inspire confidence in himself and his boys, saying, "Tell you a secret, boys. Don't breathe it to a soul. Someday I'll have my own business, and I'll never have to leave home any more" (30). If those were Willy's plans, then the play never shows him trying to follow them. He goes on to exaggerate his successes, "America is full of beautiful towns and fine, upstanding people. And they know me, boys, they know me up and down New England. The finest people. [. . . .] I have friends. I can park my car in any street in New England, and the cops protect it like their own" (31). He also tells his wife that he's doing very well in business, saying, "I did five hundred gross in Providence and seven hundred gross in Boston" (35). Over the next few pages of dialogue Willy's confidence breaks down and the truth emerges when, in her excitement at the professed success, Linda produces a pencil and begins to figure their profit. Willy then says, more realistically, "Well, I—I did about a hundred eighty gross in Providence. Well, no—it came to—roughly two hundred gross on the whole trip" (35). Reality comes crashing in on him, and he begins to contradict the lies that he told to the boys as well, saying, "You know, the trouble is, Linda, people don't seem to take to me," and, "I know it when I walk in. They seem to laugh

at me. [. . . .] I don't know the reason for it, but they just pass me by. I'm not noticed" (36). Willy's lies, his assertive speech acts, break down into admissions, his expressive speech acts. He flies back and forth between self-confidence and defeated depression, the defeat resulting from his infelicitous lies. Felicity depends upon "the total speech-act in the total speech-situation" (Austin 148). Willy Loman attempts to create, with his words, a certain speech situation, a relevant context including a successful version of himself. But he cannot make it real. When reality intrudes incongruously with his locutionary inventions, Willy is defeated. His lies become infelicitous. He ultimately fails because the context he attempts to build gives way to the real context.

2.1 Conclusions

Context comes from both the text and the reader. A reader's context is her entire life experience up to and including the moment of any given utterance, but a text's context is only what is presented in the text, along with a finite number of specific references within the text to the real world. Those references are only parasitic on the real world, though, and are restricted in relevance in that the characters to whom they apply are themselves limited to their representation in the text. Literary context is restricted, then, in the sense that its referents are mainly accessible within the text itself and that the text is finite. Instances of any real-world referents are also finite, in number at least, since a given literary work represents only what is said within its own confines; it represents only the real-world referents that are included in or alluded to in that text, whereas natural language has no restriction on referents, its context being the real world and the entire experience of all participants. Also, natural language is created in real time, making the context open-ended since possible referents during discourse creation are limitless. The advantages of this can be seen in that, in natural language analysis, it is customary to record in some way the utterances to be analyzed thereby rendering them more similar to literature so that they can be thoroughly studied. In literary analysis, the context can be studied to the most thorough degree possible. Only the context of the audience's experience and personal reaction to speech acts is beyond the scope of analysis. What speech acts accomplish in the characters' world, evaluated through their context, elucidates the perlocutionary effect that the speech acts have, including emotional responses not only for characters, but for the audience as well. These are derived through context first because context is a part of the performative, not just a part of its description. Austin said, when speech act theory began, that felicity depended upon "the total speech-act in the total speech-situation" (Austin 148); however, I have shown that "the total speech-situation" requires a great deal more than the simple felicity conditions this is often taken to describe. "The

total speech-situation" is not simply a set of roles to be played under the appropriate circumstances. It is every relevant action and every relevant thing that is seen, heard, or otherwise sensed by the participants in a dialogue. "The total speech-situation" is the history and attitudes of every participant as well. Context is not just part of the description of a speech act; it is much of the driving force behind a speech act.

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