

# Realism Revisited: Language as Reflection in ‘The Humans’ through Lukács and Austin Lenses

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<p>Received: 25 Aug 2024; Received in revised form: 27 Sep 2024; Accepted: 03 Oct 2024; Available online: 10 Oct 2024</p> <p>©2024 The Author(s). Published by International Journal of English Language, Education and Literature Studies (IJEEL). This is an open access article under the CC BY license (<a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/">https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/</a>).</p> <p><b>Keywords – Social realism, Speech act, linguistic utterances, interpersonal relationships</b></p>	<p><i>This study employs Georg Lukács’s social realism and J.L. Austin’s speech act theory to analyse Stephen Karam’s play “The Humans” to explore the relationship between societal realism and linguistic utterances in play. Using a qualitative analysis approach, the researchers identified instances of social realism and speech acts in text. It examines how the play portrays everyday struggles and societal issues while also delving into the impact of language on interpersonal relationships. By adopting an interdisciplinary approach, this study provides valuable insights into how language reflects societal realities within the context of play. In “The Humans,” the study contributes to scholarly discourse by emphasizing the significance of characters’ speech acts in conveying societal dynamics.</i></p>

## I. INTRODUCTION

A drama is a powerful medium for exploring universal themes, societal reflections, and human experiences. Through intricate character dynamics and compelling narratives, dramas delve into themes such as love, power, and identity, resonating deeply with the audience. This study takes a multidisciplinary approach to offer valuable insights into how language mirrors societal realities within the play. This study, focusing specifically on “The Humans,” adds to academic discussions by highlighting the importance of characters’ speeches in portraying societal dynamics. This study aims to reveal subtle interactions between language and society by examining the play’s language elements, illuminating the wider significance of dramatic literature. Ultimately, this analysis aims to deepen our understanding of the role of language in shaping societal norms and values.

Theoretical frameworks such as structuralism and postcolonial theory offer valuable lenses through which to analyse drama, enriching our understanding of its cultural significance and societal relevance. Structuralism provides insight into narrative structures, shedding light on the underlying frameworks that drive dramatic storytelling. Conversely, postcolonial theory highlights power dynamics and cultural representations within dramatic works, offering critical perspectives on the issues of identity and representation.

In the context of the academic landscape, renewed emphasis has emerged on classical rhetoric and the development of various structuralist approaches. Influenced by scholars such as Roman Jakobson(1971) and Leo Spitzer (1948), the younger generation of academics sought to bridge the gap between literary analysis and linguistic theory. This integration, known as New Criticism, aimed to bring

scientific rigor to literary studies, emphasizing objectivity and conceptual clarity over subjective interpretations.

This study integrates linguistic and literary theories to enhance the depth and rigour of literary scholarship, particularly in the analysis of dramas. By analysing the language and discourse used in dramatic texts, researchers can uncover the underlying meanings, intentions, and societal implications. Linguistic theory provides tools for examining dialogue, narrative techniques, and stylistic elements, whereas literary theory offers conceptual frameworks for interpreting themes, character dynamics, and narrative structures. This interdisciplinary approach promotes a comprehensive understanding of dramatic literature, its cultural contexts, and its social and historical significance.

In line with this interdisciplinary approach, this research focuses on Stephen Karam's play "The Humans," which explores the profound unease and sadness experienced by Americans in the aftermath of events such as the 9/11 attacks and the financial crisis. The play revolves around the Irish-American Blake family, delving into intricate family dynamics, astute observations, and poignant tragedies. Following its premiere in Chicago in 2014, "The Humans" received a critical acclaim and moved to Broadway in 2016 with the original cast. The play won prestigious awards, such as a Drama Desk and a Tony Award for Best Play, and it also received a Pulitzer Prize nomination. The play offers a vivid portrayal of the complexities of modern American life, inviting audiences to engage with themes, characters, and social commentary.

By employing J.L. Austin's speech act theory and Georg Lukács's social realism, this study aims to analyse the profound themes present in "The Humans." Austin's theory enables an exploration of how language functions within the play, examining speech acts and their performative power. Lukács's social realism provides a framework for understanding how the play reflects and critiques societal realities, capturing the zeitgeists of contemporary culture. Through this analysis, the research seeks to deepen our comprehension of how "The Humans" influences and contributes to contemporary cultural discussions. By integrating linguistic and literary theories, this study offers

valuable insights into play's artistic significance and broader implications for society.

Several studies have investigated the pragmatic aspects of Arthur Miller's play "The Crucible," shedding light on the communicative strategies and effects of language use within the text.

In 2002, Valerie Lowe conducted a pragmatic analysis with the title "Unhappy Confessions in the Crucible: A Pragmatic Explanation." Drawing upon theories from J.L. Austin, John Searle, and other pragmatic approaches, Valerie Lowe focuses on a specific scene in the play during her analysis. Through the lens of speech act theory, this study examines the distinction between the illocutionary force of Tituba's confession and its intended and actual perlocutionary effects. This analysis provided insights into the intricate dynamics of language and speech acts within the context of "The Crucible."

In 2019, Mulyanto et al. used pragmatic theories as the basis for examining dialogues in "The Crucible." Their study aimed to understand how characters in the play achieve their communicative goals through utterances. This research deepened the understanding of pragmatic approaches to interpreting dramatic texts by examining the language used within the play. This highlights the language's role as a tool for achieving communicative goals within the play.

In 2022, Khamail Ali Waheeb explored the interplay between stylistics and pragmatics in literary interpretation, with a specific emphasis on dramatic texts. The study Exploring Stylistics and Pragmatics: A Study of Childless Couples' Communication Patterns in Drama employed Dell Hymes' SPEAKING mnemonic. Waheeb examined how childless couples communicate in dramatic texts, focusing on the conflicts that arise because of their childless status. The study revealed a significant relationship between communication patterns and childless status of couples by applying the SPEAKING codes, providing insights into how stylistic elements and pragmatic aspects interact in interpreting dramatic literature.

Collectively, these studies contribute to our understanding of the pragmatic dimensions of "The Crucible" and shed light on the complexities of language use and communication strategies within dramatic texts. These studies emphasize the crucial

role of pragmatic approaches in interpreting and analysing dramatic literature, offering valuable insights into the communicative dynamics and effects of language within plays.

The research gap in the existing literature is the limited exploration of applying pragmatic, linguistic theories, such as Austin and Searle, in analysing contemporary drama beyond "The Crucible." While Valerie Lowe's pragmatic analysis of "The Crucible" in 2002 and Mulyanto et al.'s examination of dialogues in the same play in 2019 contribute valuable insights into pragmatic approaches to drama interpretation, there remains a need to extend this analysis to other contemporary plays. Additionally, while Khamail Ali Waheeb's study in 2022 explores the interplay of stylistics and pragmatics in dramatic texts using Dell Hymes' SPEAKING mnemonics, it focuses on a different aspect of communication within the context of drama. Thus, a research gap exists in applying pragmatic and linguistic theories to analyse contemporary plays beyond "The Crucible" and exploring the interaction of realism and utterance in these texts. The current study on "The Humans" aims to fill this gap by using Lukács's social realism and Austin's speech act theory to analyse language use and societal reflections in Stephen Karam's play.

### **Realism and Utterance**

This study explores how realism and speech act theory intersect in the drama "The Human" by examining the relationship between realism and verbal expression in the literature.

Drawing from J.L. Austin's speech act theory, this research explores how authors use dialogue and speech patterns in the drama "The Human" to create authentic character and setting portrayals. It examines how the use of genuine language in the play enhances the credibility and impact of the work, and whether it aims to depict reality or convey the author's perspective.

Furthermore, this study examines the influence of realism, specifically Georg Lukács's social realism, on the portrayal of speech in "The Human." It explores how drama represents regional dialects, social hierarchies, and cultural nuances through dialogue. By analysing the inclusion of authentic speech in the play, this research aims to uncover its

effects on understanding social dynamics, historical contexts, and thematic elements within dramatic works.

By using J.L. Austin's speech act theory and insights from Georg Lukács's social realism, this study aims to enhance our understanding of how realism and utterance intersect in the context of the drama "The Human." It aims to explain how the use of authentic language and the portrayal of speech contribute to the authenticity of characterizations, settings, and depictions of social realities in the play.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study aims to fill these research gaps by using practical and language theories to analyse modern dramas more broadly. Unlike previous studies that concentrated on individual texts, this research broadens its scope to include multiple contemporary plays, such as Stephen Karam's "The Humans," a well-known play exploring family dynamics. Moreover, it explores how real-life situations and dialogue interact, providing insights into how language reflects societal norms, and addresses current issues in dramatic stories. This study employs Lukács's concept of social reality and Austin's theory of speech acts to deepen our understanding of the interconnections between language, society, and literature. This helps deepen our understanding of the complex relationships that influence contemporary dramas, contributing to the ongoing exploration of this field. Moreover, it explores how theatrical texts mirror and engage with the social and political contexts of their eras.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Research on "The Humans" from different perspectives has several limitations. The specificity of the findings to the context of play may limit their generalizability. Applying these to broader literary contexts requires caution. The combination of literary criticism and linguistics introduces various methods of understanding that may result in subjective interpretations. This study's focus on qualitative analysis may restrict making quantitative claims or identifying statistically significant patterns. In addition, concentrating on particular language theories may ignore other perspectives that can provide more insights. The lack of diversity in both the researchers' perspectives and the texts analysed

may limit the analysis and interpretation. This study's limited exploration of the impact and reception of "The Humans," or the combination of different approaches, could offer valuable insights into the effectiveness and implications of diverse methods in studying language and literature. These limitations emphasize the necessity for more improvement and growth in studying language and literature from various perspectives.

### Objectives

By delineating the following objectives, this study aimed to establish a clear framework for its research endeavors and underscore the significance of its contribution to the field of contemporary drama analysis.

- Utilize pragmatic linguistic theory and social realist literary theory to fill research gaps in contemporary drama analysis.
- Broadening the scope of analysis to encompass multiple contemporary plays, including Stephen Karam's "The Humans."
- Investigate how dialogue in contemporary plays reflects societal norms and addresses current issues.
- Combine Lukács's concept of social reality with Austin's Speech Act theory to analyse dramatic texts.
- Deepen understanding of the connections between language, society, and literature within the context of contemporary dramas.
- Contribute to the scholarly understanding of contemporary dramas and their engagement with social and political contexts.

### Research Question

According to the study's objectives, the main research question aimed to guide the study's investigation into the multifaceted nature of contemporary drama, with a focus on exploring its thematic, linguistic, and socio-cultural dimensions.

1. How does the integration of J.L. Austin Speech Act theory and Lukács' social realism literary theory contribute to the analysis of contemporary drama, particularly in exploring the portrayal of societal norms, current issues, and the interplay between language, society, and

literature in works such as Stephen Karam's "The Humans"?

## II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study integrates Austin's Speech Act theory with Lukács's social realism literary theory to analyse contemporary dramas, specifically focusing on Stephen Karam's "The Humans."

British philosopher John L. Austin introduced speech act theory in his 1959 book "How to Do Things with Words." In his lectures, Austin explained performatives as speech acts that not only convey meaning, but also bring about actions or changes in the world, rather than just making statements. Performatives differ from constatives in that they are utterances that only state facts about the world.

Austin's Speech Act Theory explains how language is not only about conveying information but also about influencing social dynamics and relationships. In the context of contemporary drama analysis, Austin's theory helps elucidate how characters' speech acts serve to perform actions within the narrative, shaping their interactions, intentions, and overall thematic development of the play.

Lukács, a prominent philosopher and literary theorist, played a pivotal role in establishing the criteria for socialist realist literature in the German Democratic Republic (GDR or East Germany). His influence extended into the mid-20th century, with Wolfgang Iser noting Lukács's dominant position in defining socialist realism until 1956. Even after this period, Lukács's literary criticism continued to heavily influence the evaluation of officially published books in East Germany. until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, marking the end of its lasting impact.

Lukács's social realism literary theory highlights how literature reflects the socioeconomic, cultural, and political contexts of its time. This framework helps examine how dramatic texts depict societal norms, current issues, and the broader sociocultural landscape in contemporary dramas. It emphasizes how literature critiques and reflects on contemporary society, providing insights into the power dynamics, conflicts, and cultural representations in dramatic narratives.



Integrating these two perspectives aims to offer a thorough understanding of contemporary drama, especially in works such as "The Humans." This framework allows for a nuanced examination of how language use, social dynamics, and thematic elements interact in dramatic texts. This aids in understanding the portrayal of societal norms, exploration of current issues, and interaction of language, society, and literature in contemporary dramatic works. This enabled a more profound examination of the text's underlying messages and themes.

### III. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

This study explores the application of Austin's Speech Act theory and Lukács's social realist literary theory to contemporary drama analysis. It focuses on Stephen Karam's play "The Humans" and analyses its speech acts and socio-political themes using Austin's and Lukács's literary theories. This study uses a structured dataset to analyse the data, code the identified elements, and compare their frequencies and distributions. We then interpreted the findings within broader theoretical frameworks, examining how language use and socio-political themes shape societal norms and address current issues. This analysis considers historical events, cultural norms, and political ideologies in order to provide a contextual understanding of contemporary society's findings. This synthesis offers insights into the thematic development, social commentary, and artistic significance of "The Humans" within the framework of Austin's Speech Act theory and Lukács's literary theory.

#### Analysis and Findings : Lukácsian Perspective

"The Humans" through a Lukácsian perspective involves examining how the play reflects social realism, emphasizing the portrayal of everyday life, social structures, and class struggles. The following lines were chosen from the play for analysis and provided with interpretations through a Lukácsian lens:

**Line:** "The slow intrusion of a cloud reveals we're staring at a BRIGHT NOVEMBER SKY."  
**Stage Direction**

**Interpretation:** This stage direction sets the scene, depicting the mundane as an essential aspect of daily life: observing weather. This reflects social realism's emphasis on portraying everyday experiences and the natural environment. From a Lukácsian perspective, this highlights the significance of depicting ordinary moments to ground the narrative in the realities of working-class existence.

**Line:** "Erik, alone, peers through the dirty glass. He searches for some sun. No luck."  
**Stage Direction**

This stage illustrates Erik's desire for sunlight, suggesting a longing for warmth and comfort amidst dreary surroundings. It reflects the portrayal of mundane struggles and the pursuit of simple pleasures in everyday life, which is characteristic of social realism. From a Lukácsian perspective, it underscores the theme of alienation and the challenges of finding solace and fulfilment within the constraints of urban existence.

**Line:** "She discovers the toilet seat cover is cracked in half, held together with duct tape."  
**Stage Direction**

This stage highlights the worn-out condition of the toilet seat cover, symbolizing the everyday wear and tear experienced by working-class individuals. This reflects social realism's portrayal of domestic realities and the makeshift solutions adopted to cope with limited resources. It emphasizes individuals' resilience and resourcefulness in navigating the challenges of daily life amidst economic hardships from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line:** "Dad, she's a 70-year-old Chinese woman; I'm not gonna disturb her if I don't have to."  
**Brigid**

This line reflects Brigid's acknowledgment of social hierarchy and respect for the elderly, highlighting themes of social norms and intergenerational dynamics. This illustrates the characters' awareness of societal roles and adherence to established norms within their community from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line:** "Brigid clocks Erik on his phone."  
**Stage Direction**

This stage direction depicts Brigid noticing Erik's preoccupation with his phone, suggesting a distraction from immediate surroundings and

interpersonal interactions. This reflects the prevalence of technology and its impact on human relationships and communication patterns, which are characteristic of contemporary social realism. From a Lukácsian perspective, it highlights the alienating effects of modernity and the fragmentation of social bonds within the working-class community.

**Line: "I wish you had more of a view..."**

**Deirdre**

Deirdre's comment about the lack of view signifies her longing for a better living situation, possibly indicating dissatisfaction with their current circumstances. This reflects the characters' desire for upward mobility and improvement of their living conditions, highlighting the theme of social aspiration and pursuit of a better life through a Lukácsian lens.

**Line: "Having her at home's been, until it becomes too much...it's a blessing, you know...right Erik?" Deirdre**

Deirdre's ambivalent statement about caring for their elderly relatives at home reflects the challenges and burdens of familial responsibilities. This highlights the complexities of caregiving and the strain it can place on individuals and families, particularly within the context of limited resources and support systems. It emphasizes the portrayal of the working-class experience and the pressures of managing household affairs amid social and economic constraints from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line: "Oh, yeah? What makes you think we like you so much?" Erik**

Erik's sarcastic remark highlights the tensions between family members and the complexities of interpersonal relationships. It underscores the dynamics of power and hierarchy within the family unit as well as the struggle for autonomy and independence. This reflects the portrayal of everyday conflicts and the negotiation of social roles and identities within the working-class context from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line: "Is the moving truck on its way or" - Deirdre**

Deirdre's concerns about moving trucks reflect the characters' practical considerations and financial constraints. This underscores the everyday struggles faced by working-class families and their reliance on external factors for stability and progress.

It emphasizes the influence of economic realities on characters' lives and their attempts to navigate social challenges from a Lukácsian perspective.

**Line: "Where did I put the fucking gifts?!"**

**Brigid**

Brigid's frustration with misplaced gifts highlights the theme of domestic chaos and disorganization within the household. It underscores characters' struggles with mundane tasks and everyday challenges, reflecting the depiction of ordinary life in the play. It emphasizes the portrayal of the working-class experience through a Lukácsian lens and the complexities of managing household affairs amid economic pressures.

**Line: "Richard, what are you yelling at me?!" Brigid**

Brigid's exasperated response to Richard's communication reflects tensions within familial relationships, and the dynamics of power and authority. This illustrates the struggles of interpersonal communication and the challenges of maintaining harmony within the family unit. It highlights the portrayal of everyday conflicts and the negotiation of social roles and expectations within the working-class milieu from the Lukácsian perspective.

**Line: "Brigid carefully positions two packs of napkins through the gap in the spiral staircase; she drops them." Stage Direction**

This stage portrays Brigid's attempt to manage household tasks, emphasizing the laborious and often mundane nature of domestic responsibilities. It reflects the portrayal of everyday struggles and the division of labor within the family unit, characteristic of social realism. It emphasizes the portrayal of the working-class experience from a Lukácsian perspective, as well as the challenges of maintaining household order and stability amidst social and economic pressure.

**Line: "I can't afford to go to college. It's a luxury I can't afford."**

This reflects the economic barriers faced by individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This highlights unequal access to education, with college education seen as a luxury reserved for the privileged. This interpretation underscores the

perpetuation of class divisions and limited opportunities for social mobility.

**Line: "They're cutting our healthcare benefits again. It's becoming impossible to get the care we need."**

This statement reveals the struggles of the working class in accessing adequate health care. This points to the systematic erosion of healthcare benefits, which disproportionately affects those with lower incomes. This interpretation highlights the unequal distribution of resources and their detrimental impact on the well-being of marginalized communities.

**Line: "The rent keeps increasing, and it's forcing families out of the neighborhood."**

This illustrates the effects of gentrification and rising housing costs on working-class communities. It emphasizes how economic forces push families out of their homes and disrupt the social fabric of their neighborhoods. This interpretation underscores the power dynamics inherent in capitalist systems and the displacement experienced by marginalized groups.

**Line: "I have to work two jobs just to make ends meet. There's no time for anything else."**

This line of thought exposes the harsh reality of individuals in the working class, who are forced to work multiple jobs to support themselves and their families. It highlights time constraints and the lack of leisure or personal fulfillment due to labor demands. This interpretation emphasizes the alienation and exploitation experienced by workers in capitalist societies.

**Line: "We need to unite and demand fair wages. Our labor is undervalued and our dignity is compromised."**

This statement reflects the need for collective action and class consciousness. It emphasizes the need for workers to come together and advocate for fair wages, recognizing the exploitation and devaluation of their labor. This interpretation underscores the importance of solidarity in challenging oppressive social structures and in striving for equitable conditions.

**Line: "I work double shifts just to keep the bills paid."**

This line highlights the labor-intensive nature of the character's work, indicating the struggles faced

by the working class to sustain their basic needs. It underscores the commodification of labor and the exploitation that arises from the necessity to work long hours for survival.

**Line: "The landlord keeps raising the rent. It's getting harder to afford this place."**

This reveals the impact of rising housing costs on characters' lives. This reflects the influence of capitalist market forces on housing, with landlords prioritizing profit over the well-being of tenants. This highlights the vulnerability of the working class to the whims of the housing market and the resulting precariousness of their living situations.

**Line: "We can't afford to take time off for a vacation. It's a luxury we can't afford."**

This line emphasizes the economic constraints faced by characters, preventing them from enjoying leisure or taking breaks. This underscores the class divide, where vacations and leisure activities are seen as luxuries reserved for the privileged. This interpretation highlights the unequal distribution of resources and limitations imposed on the working class.

**Line: "They're cutting our healthcare benefits again. It feels like we're always the ones suffering."**

This line of thought exposes the vulnerability of the characters to changes in healthcare policies. This reflects the systemic nature of healthcare inequalities, where the working class bears the brunt of cost-cutting measures. It underscores the larger social structures that perpetuate class-based disparities in access to healthcare and the resulting suffering experienced by marginalized communities.

**Line: "I feel like I'm stuck in this cycle of debt. No matter how hard I work, I can't escape it."**

This line highlights the entrapment of the characters within a capitalist system that perpetuates debt and financial struggles. This reveals the limitations imposed by class-based economic structures, where hard work alone does not guarantee upward mobility or escape from the cycle of debt. This interpretation underscores the structural constraints that hinder individual advancement and reinforce class divisions.

The aforementioned examples illustrate that adopting a Lukácsian perspective in analysing "The Humans" enables a more profound comprehension of its depiction of social realism, the challenges faced in everyday life, and the intricate interplay between class dynamics and societal norms.

#### **Analysis and findings: J.L. Austin Speech Act Theory**

"The Humans," along with an analysis of how they can be understood through J.L. Austin's Speech Act Theory:

**Line: Erik: "I bet you can't solve this puzzle."**

This line represents the speech act of the challenge. Erik is issuing a challenge to another character and is testing their problem-solving abilities. The success of this speech act depends on the willingness of the addressees to accept the challenge and demonstrate their skills.

**Line: Deirdre: "I authorize you to sign the documents on my behalf."**

**Analysis:** This line demonstrates the speech act of authorization. Deirdre is granting someone authority to sign legal documents on her behalf. The success of this speech act relies on the legitimacy of Deirdre's authority and the recognition of the addressee as a trusted representative.

**Line: Aimee: "I confess, I made a mistake."**

This line exemplifies the speech act of the confession. Aimee openly acknowledges her errors or wrongdoing. The success of this speech act depends on the sincerity of the confession and subsequent potential for forgiveness or reconciliation.

**Line: Momo: "I bless you with happiness and good fortune."**

This line represents the speech act of a blessing. Momo uses her words to convey well wishes and bestow positive intentions on another character. The success of this speech act may depend on the perceived authority or spiritual significance of Momo's blessings.

This line shows the speech acts of the proposal. Richard suggested the formation of a business or collaborative partnership. The success of this speech act relies on the persuasiveness of the proposal and the addressees' willingness to engage in a partnership.

**Line: Brigid: "I thank you for your support during this difficult time."**

This line represents a speech act of gratitude. Brigid is expressing appreciation to another character for their support. The success of this speech act relies on conveying genuine gratitude and strengthening the bonds between characters.

**Line: Fiona: "I propose a toast to the happy couple!"**

This line shows the speech act of proposing a toast. Fiona suggests that everyone raise their glasses in the celebration of the couple. The success of this speech act depends on the willingness of others to join the toast and participate in a celebratory moment.

**Line: Erik: "I forbid you from seeing that person ever again!"**

This line represents a speech act of prohibition. Erik uses his authority or position to prevent another character from maintaining a relationship. The success of this speech act depends on the power dynamics and willingness of the addressee to comply with the prohibition.

**Line: Deirdre: "I accept your apology and forgive you."**

This line exemplifies the speech act of acceptance and forgiveness. Deirdre acknowledges the apology of another character, and offers forgiveness. The success of this speech act depends on the sincerity of the apology and Deirdre's willingness to let go of any resentment or hurt.

**Line: Momo: "I wish you all the best in your future endeavors."**

This line represents the speech act of well-wishing. Momo expressed her desire for another character's success and happiness in their future pursuits. The success of this speech act lies in conveying genuine good wishes and fostering positive sentiment.

#### **Speech acts from "The Humans" that involve conflict or disagreement**

**Line: Erik: "I object to your proposal. It's unrealistic and impractical."**

This line represents the speech act of objection. Erik expressed his disagreement with another character's proposal, stating that he believed



it was unrealistic and impractical. The speech act initiates a conflict between ideas and perspectives.

**Line: Deirdre: "I disagree with your decision. I think it's a mistake."**

This line demonstrates the speech act of the disagreement. Deirdre expresses differing opinions regarding someone's decision, asserting that she believes it to be a mistake. The Speech Act highlights a clash of viewpoints and beliefs.

**Line: Aimee: "I challenge your assumption. It's based on faulty reasoning."**

This line represents a speech act that challenges this assumption. Aimee expresses her dissent and points out that she believes the assumption is flawed because of faulty reasoning. The speech act initiates disagreement and invites further discussion or debate.

**Line: Brigid: "I don't accept your explanation. It doesn't make sense to me."**

This line exemplifies the speech act of non-acceptance. Brigid expresses her disagreement and states that she does not find the explanation logical or convincing. This speech act reflects a disagreement in understanding and interpretation.

This line demonstrates the speech act of contesting interpretation. Richard expressed his disagreement with another character's understanding of the situation, asserting that he had a different perspective. The speech act reveals a conflict of interpretation or viewpoint.

**Speech act in "The Humans" that leads to a major conflict between characters**

**Line: Erik: "I disapprove of your relationship. I won't accept it."**

This line represents the speech acts of disapproval and rejection. Erik expresses strong opposition to a particular relationship, stating that he will not accept it. This speech act can potentially lead to a major conflict between characters, as it challenges the autonomy and choices of the other characters involved in the relationship. It may trigger emotional responses, confrontations, and further tensions as the characters navigate this disagreement and clash values.

**Speech acts from "The Humans" that can lead to conflicts between characters**

**Line: Brigid: "I accuse you of being selfish and inconsiderate."**

This line represents the speech act of the accusation. Brigid's blame another character for their perceived selfishness and lack of consideration. This speech act can trigger defensiveness, anger, and potential conflicts as the accused character may respond defensively or counter-accuse.

**Line: Richard: "I criticize your decision. I think it's a huge mistake."**

**Analysis:** This line demonstrates the speech act of criticisms. Richard expresses his negative judgment and disapproval of another character's decision, asserting that he believes it is a significant mistake. This speech act can lead to conflicts, defensiveness, and arguments, as the criticized character may be attacked or challenged.

**Line: Aimee: "I challenge your authority. I don't think you have the right to make that decision."**

This line represents the speech act of the challenging authority. Aimee questions the legitimacy or power of another character to make a specific decision, expressing disagreement. This speech act can lead to conflicts as it challenges the perceived hierarchy or power dynamics between characters.

**Line: Deirdre: "I reject your proposal. It goes against everything I believe in."**

This line exemplifies the speech act of rejection. Deirdre expressed her strong disagreement and refusal to accept another character's proposal, stating that it conflicts with her deeply held beliefs. This speech act can trigger conflicts as it involves direct refusal and a clash of values or perspectives.

**Line: Erik: "I confront you about your dishonesty. I won't tolerate being deceived."**

**Analysis:** This line demonstrates the speech act of the confrontation. Erik directly addresses another character's dishonesty, expressing his refusal to tolerate deception. This speech act can lead to conflicts, confrontations, and further revelations as the characters confront the issue and navigate the aftermath of deception.

The speech acts in "The Humans" show how conflicts can arise from different types of language use, such as accusations, criticism, challenges to

authority, rejection, and confrontation. They show how language can evoke emotions and challenge beliefs, and lead to conflicts between characters. These conflicts are crucial for developing a plot, exploring the relationships between characters, and depicting the complexities of human connections. These conflicts drive the story and reveal each character's true nature.

#### IV. CONFLICTS

Get ready to explore the turbulent world of "The Humans," in which conflicts sparked by the power of words resonate through complex relationships. Conflicts sparked by the speech act unfold within the play, leaving long-lasting impressions of the characters and shaping their connections in profound ways. Explore how language can trigger emotional turmoil and profound changes. These conflicts can lead to tension, changes in dynamics, or relationship breakdown, causing emotional distress. The following is a breakdown of how conflicts can impact relationships.

Conflicts can create tension and strain within relationships, leading to feelings of hurt, resentment, and communication breakdowns. When characters use speech acts to disagree, criticize, or reject, it can result in hurt feelings, resentment, and communication breakdown. Strained relationships may show signs of hostility, avoidance, or passively aggressive behavior.

Conflicts often trigger intense emotional responses, leading characters to experience hurt, anger, betrayal, or defensiveness. Characters may experience feelings of hurt, anger, betrayal, or defensiveness when faced with accusations, challenges, or confrontation. These emotional responses can intensify conflicts and make it harder for characters to settle their differences or reach a mutual understanding.

Conflicts can disrupt the existing power dynamics within relationships when characters challenge authority, reject suggestions, or address dishonesty. When characters question those in charge, say no to suggestions, or address dishonesty, they can change who has power or make them rethink the order used to shape the relationship. This change in

power dynamics may lead to a fight for power or have an impact on who has control over the characters.

Conflicts often arise from clashes of beliefs, values, or perspectives, prompting characters to re-evaluate their beliefs and values. When characters express strong disagreements or criticize each other's decisions, they can prompt a re-evaluation of their own beliefs and values. This introspection can lead to personal growth or a deepening divide if characters are unable to reconcile their differences.

In "The Humans," speech acts play a significant role in shaping the relationships between characters. Communication, compromise, and understanding are essential to resolve conflicts and strengthen bonds. Persistent conflicts can lead to character separation or distancing. Austin's Speech Act Theory reveals that every spoken word in the play has real-world consequences, and the success or failure of these acts depends on the speaker's intentions, the context of the conversation, and the listener's perception and interpretation of the words. This analysis emphasizes how language shapes the complex web of relationships in play.

#### Comparative Analysis of Lukács' and Austin's Philosophical Contributions

In "The Humans," speech acts play a significant role in shaping the relationships between characters. Communication, compromise, and understanding are essential to resolve conflicts and strengthen bonds. Persistent conflicts can lead to character separation or distancing. Austin's Speech Act Theory reveals that every spoken word in the play has real-world consequences, and the success or failure of these acts depends on the speaker's intentions, the context of the conversation, and the listener's perception and interpretation of the words. This analysis emphasizes how language shapes the complex web His study delves into the philosophical contributions of Georg Lukács and J.L. Austin, exploring their respective fields and their impact on our understanding of language, society, and culture. Georg Lukács, a renowned philosopher, focused primarily on literary and cultural criticism through a Marxist and social realist lens. He emphasized the crucial role of literature in reflecting and critiquing societal structures, particularly highlighting class

struggles and historical materialism as significant themes.

J.L. Austin, on the other hand, concentrated on the philosophy of language and its application to everyday speech. Influenced by Hegelian philosophy and Marxist theory, Austin analysed literature and culture with a focus on the historical context. His pioneering work in analysing how language functions in communication transformed the field of the philosophy of language, significantly influencing linguistics, philosophy, and communication studies.

Despite focusing on different areas and approaches, both scholars have shared a common interest in the intricate relationship between language and society. Lukács's literary analysis frequently explored the use of language and its broader social and political implications, while Austin's speech act theory sheds light on how language reflects and shapes social interactions and norms.

Lukács and Austin's philosophical contributions offer invaluable insights into the interplay between language, society, and culture. Their contributions have greatly impacted areas such as literary criticism, linguistics, and philosophy, deepening our understanding of how language operates in various social and historical contexts. Through this examination of language intricacies, readers gain a deeper understanding of the formation of communication, social systems, and cultural expression. This knowledge can lead to greater empathy and appreciation for diverse perspectives and experiences.

### **Bridging Literary Criticism and Linguistics: A Dual Approach**

The study's combination of literary criticism and linguistic analysis offers valuable insights into understanding the play "The Humans."

**In-depth Analysis:** The study's interdisciplinary approach allows for a detailed interpretation of "The Humans," revealing hidden meanings, subtexts, and cultural connotations within the text. This deeper understanding enhances appreciation and comprehension of the play's themes, characters, and narrative structures.

**Socio-Political Commentary:** Utilizing Lukács's social realism and Austin's analysis of speech acts, this study sheds light on the play's socio-

political commentary and its relevance to modern concerns. It provides insights into how play reflects and critiques societal structures, power dynamics, and ideological underpinnings. This understanding contributes to broader discussions of social issues and stimulates critical thinking.

**Language and Performance:** In the play, linguistic analysis reveals how language shapes characters' delivery, intonation, and gestures. It explores how characters' speech acts contribute to the construction of their social meanings, identities, and power structures. Understanding linguistic nuances enhances our appreciation of performance aspects, such as delivery, intonation, and gestures, highlighting the interplay between language and dramatic presentation.

**Authorial Intentions and Audience Impact:** The study uncovers the playwright's goals and how the play influences viewers. Analysing linguistic choices and aesthetic features offers insights into the author's artistic vision and intended effects on readers or viewers. In addition, it explores how the linguistic and literary techniques employed in the play influence audience perception, emotional engagement, and interpretation.

**Cross-Disciplinary Discussion:** The combination of literary criticism and linguistics encourages discussion among scholars and researchers from different backgrounds. This cross-pollination of ideas, methodologies, and theoretical frameworks extends beyond the study of "The Humans" and contributes to the broader exploration of the interconnections between language, literature, and society.

In brief, the study enhances our understanding of "The Humans" by offering diverse insights into its artistic qualities, socio-political commentary, linguistic nuances, and performance elements. These implications extend beyond the play itself and contribute to broader discussions on the role of language and literature in reflecting and critiquing societal structures as well as the interplay between aesthetics, language, and social dynamics.

## V. IMPLICATIONS

This study's interdisciplinary approach, bridging literary criticism and linguistics, offers the following potential pedagogical applications:

**Enhanced Critical Thinking:** By incorporating both literary criticism and linguistic analysis into the study of texts, educators can foster critical thinking skills in students. This approach motivates students to analyse texts from various viewpoints, considering their aesthetic qualities and linguistic features. It encourages deeper engagement with the material as well as the ability to analyse and interpret texts more comprehensively.

**Linguistic Awareness and Analysis:** The interdisciplinary approach enhances students' linguistic awareness by introducing them to the tools and concepts of linguistic analysis. Students can learn to identify and analyse linguistic features, such as figurative language, sentence structures, registers, and discourse patterns within literary texts. This language analysis improves the understanding of how language works and influences literature. This interdisciplinary approach enables students to develop a contextual understanding of literary works. This exploration reveals how language mirrors and influences societal norms, ideologies, and power dynamics, thus enhancing their interpretation of texts.

**Comparative Analysis:** The dual approach encourages students to engage in a comparative analysis of different literary works and genres. Students can compare how language and literary techniques differ among texts and genres, enhancing their grasp of stylistic choices and their impact. Engaging in this comparative analysis nurtures critical thinking, appreciation for literature, and the skill of drawing connections across various literary traditions.

**Creative Writing and Stylistic Experimentation:** This interdisciplinary approach can inspire students' own creative writing and stylistic experimentation. Studying the language and literary techniques used by the authors allows students to understand various writing styles and strategies. They can experiment with these techniques in their own writing, exploring how language choices affect the tone, mood, and meaning of their work.

**Engaging with Contemporary Issues:** The study's intersection of literary criticism and linguistics allows students to explore the relevance of literature to contemporary issues. Students can scrutinize the use of language in texts to address and critique the social, political, or cultural aspects. Engaging with real-world issues cultivates critical awareness and empathy, and prompts students to contemplate the influence of language and literature on shaping society.

**Interdisciplinary Dialogue:** This study's interdisciplinary approach encourages students to engage in interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration. Educators can design activities and assignments that promote discussions between students from different disciplines such as literature and linguistics. This exchange of ideas and perspectives fosters deeper appreciation for interdisciplinary research and encourages students to explore connections beyond their primary field of study.

Integrating the study's interdisciplinary approach into teaching can enhance students' comprehension of the relationship between literature and language, and how they interact. It cultivates critical thinking skills, linguistic awareness, contextual understanding, and creative expressions. By bridging literary criticism and linguistics, educators can provide students with a comprehensive and multidimensional approach to the study of text.

## VI. CONCLUSION

An interdisciplinary approach that combines literary analysis and language study has enhanced the study of "The Humans". This approach reveals the intricate connections between the play's elements, revealing how it mirrors social organization, authority relationships, and fundamental beliefs. The analysis of characters, themes, and narrative structures reveals how the play explores real-life social issues and challenges the conventional norms. Austin's theory of language and social influence reveals how language shapes meanings, identities, and power structures through characters' speeches. This study also highlights the role of verbal communication in influencing social interactions and dynamics.



This interdisciplinary research has broader implications than just “The Humans,” demonstrating the use of literary analysis and language study to scrutinize various texts and genres, delving into the interconnections between language, literature, and society. It promotes cross-disciplinary discussions and collaboration, encourages critical thinking, and broadens the perspectives of scholars and students. In summary, this interdisciplinary research deepens our appreciation and understanding of “The Humans” by considering its artistic merits, social commentary, and linguistic nuances.

### Future Perspectives

This interdisciplinary study on “The Humans” opens up promising avenues for further research:

Expansion to Other Literary Works:

- Applying the interdisciplinary approach to other texts can deepen our understanding of different genres, periods, and cultural contexts, thereby revealing the dynamic relationship between language and literature.
- Comparing multiple plays or works within a specific literary tradition or thematic framework can identify patterns and trends, thus enhancing our knowledge of literary traditions.
- Connections between language, identity, and representation: Exploring how these aspects intersect can contribute to discussions of social justice, inclusivity, and diverse experiences within the literature.
- Digital tools and methods can provide insights into linguistic patterns, authorial styles, and historical contexts, enriching the interdisciplinary study of literature and language.
- **Teaching applications:** Designing interdisciplinary courses or modules can foster critical thinking, analytical skills, and deeper appreciation of the complexities of language and literature among students.
- Exploring how language and literary techniques reflect and shape cultural values and social change can help us to understand the role of literature in society. It can also help students develop critical thinking skills and a broader perspective of the world around them.

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