CHAPTER TWO

Speech Acts

2.0 Preliminaries

The first chapter gave an introduction to pragmatics and dealt with the related literature in general. It also stated the aims, and objectives and the methodology of the study, the foundation on which the following chapters are built. The study will bring out the entire process of how the intentions of the playwrights and the characters are being conveyed to the readers as well as to the characters. The illocutionary force of the utterances of the characters which become speech acts bring out the intentions of both the characters and the playwrights. This chapter focuses on the speech acts which are present in the two plays mentioned for the study. The model of the speech act theory is drawn from Searle’s (1969) taxonomy, in which he has divided the speech acts into five categories. They are assertives, commissives, directives, expressives and declaratives. The instances of speech acts that are highlighted in the two plays are categorized under these five headings.

2.1 An Overview

Based on the model of speech act theory, propounded by Austin (1962) in his William James lectures, Searle distinguishes between five major speech acts. In some speech acts certain
conditions overlap and this led Searle to question whether there are some basic illocutionary acts to which all or most of the others are reducible. When a comparison between a request and command is taken, it is revealed that the conditions for the performance of those two acts are the same, except that the command has the additional preparatory rule that the speaker must be in position of authority over the hearer. Searle believed that there are some illocutionary acts which could be usefully regarded as special cases of other illocutionary acts. For instance, asking a question is a special case of requesting. This can explain how an utterance of the request from “Tell me the name of the first president of the United States” is equivalent in force to an utterance of the question from “What is the name of the first president of the United States”? In fact, the two utterances have the same illocutionary point, in that both are attempts to elicit an answer from the hearer. Searle therefore considers illocutionary point as the basic criterion in his clarification of speech acts. He observes:

“If we observe illocutionary point as the basic notion on which to classify uses of languages, then there are a rather limited number of basic things we do with language; we tell people how things are; we try to get them to do things, we commit ourselves to doing things, we express our feelings and attitudes and we bring about changes through our utterances. Often we do more than one of these at once in the same utterance” (1975:369).
Thus Searle distinguishes between five major speech acts; each constituting a host of other sub-acts which could be distinguished from each other by their felicity conditions. They are the assertives, commissives, directives, expressives and declaratives. Assertives are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker believes to be the case or not. Statements of facts, assertions, conclusions and descriptions are examples of the speaker representing the world as he or she believes it is. e.g: The earth is flat. Expressives are those kinds of speech acts that state what the speaker feels. They express the psychological states and can be statements of pleasure, pain, likes, dislikes, joy or sorrow. They can be caused by something the speaker does or the hearer does, but they are about the speaker’s experience. e.g: I’m really sorry! Directives are those kinds of speech acts used to get someone else to do something. They express what the speaker wants. They are commands, orders, requests, suggestions etc, they can be positive or negative. Commissives are those kinds of speech acts that speakers use, to commit themselves to some future action. They express what the speaker intends. They are promises, threats, refusals, pledges etc, they can be performed by the speaker alone, or by the speaker as a member of the group. Declaratives are those kinds of speech acts that change the world via their utterances. The speaker has to have a special institutional role, in a specific context in order to form a declaration appropriately.

This classification of speech acts is the most influential one ever proposed. But the categories are not mutually exclusive.
It is possible to place these speech acts under more than one heading. For instance, threats of this type, ‘If I ever see you with my sister again, I’ll kill you’, which are at the same time directive and commissive. But even then a synoptic view of the classification of speech acts can be taken. The emphasis on Searle’s taxonomy is essential here, as this chapter entirely focuses on the five different types of speech acts that are present in the two plays mentioned for study.

As mentioned in the first chapter, literature and pragmatics do share a relationship and the concept of speech acts is not an exception. As Nozar Niazi (2004:49) puts “literary work as a whole is an assertive speech act where the author presents a state of affairs on which he makes extensive elaborations”. The author through written codes intends to communicate with the reader his experience, feelings and his convictions. And like any other communicational activity, literary works are context dependent and as any other utterance, the production and understanding of literary works depend heavily on unspoken, culturally-shared knowledge of the rules, conventions and expectations. Many viewpoints have evolved on how speech acts maybe relevant in linguistic analysis of literature (Searle, 1973; Ohman, 1971, 1981; Van Dijk, 1976; Levin, 1976; Pratt, 1976). These revelations of speech act theory open up new possibilities to look at utterances in a fictional work in terms of the context in which they are made, that is, in terms of intentions, attitudes, and expectations of the characters, their relationships, and generally, the unspoken rules and conventions that are understood to take
place when an utterance is made and received. One of the striking characteristics of a speech act approach to literature is that it offers the same model as we employ in our daily communicative activities. As Pratt (1977:88) puts it, “it offers the important possibility of integrating literary discourse into the same basic model of language as all the other communicative activities”. This approach becomes more appropriate when the literary work is in the form of drama, as the dramatic action takes place through conversations between the characters. The nexus between speech acts and drama is dealt with in the following paragraph.

2.2 Speech acts and Drama

The speech event is the chief interaction in drama. The action of the play is carried by the intersubjective force of discourse. The characters interact with each other and make their intentions known to others through dialogic exchanges. It is here, where the theory of speech acts is relevant. The characters, who are the speakers in plays, make use of speech acts to convey their messages, thereby performing illocutionary acts which lead to perlocutionary acts. Dramatic discourse is a network of complementary and conflicting illocutions and perlocutions: In a play, linguistic interaction is not so much descriptive as performative. As Richard Ohmann(1973:83) puts it, “In a play, the action rides on a train of illocutions... movement of the characters and changes in their relations to one another within the social world of the play appear most clearly in their illocutionary acts”
What differentiates a novel from a play, where speech acts are concerned is the dialogue interaction. The dialogues in drama are immediate ‘spoken action’ rather than reference to, or representation of action, so that the central personal, political and moral oppositions which structure the drama are seen and heard to be acted out in the communicational exchange and not described in a narrative mode. Hence an explicit performance of speech acts can be seen in drama. They bring about changes in the world of the characters by their illocutionary force thereby pushing the plot towards a definite end. “Illocutionary acts move the play along” (Ohmann 1973:89).

There are also various other factors that help in the understanding of the play, such as stress, intonation, kinesic markers and facial expressions. With the help of these indicators the actor is able to suggest the intentions, purposes, motivations involved. But as the present study is focused on the written form rather than the performance of the plays, *Nagamandala* and *Silence! The Court Is in Session*, these illocutionary force indicators are given by the stage directions and not by the actors. Apart from setting the background for the play, the stage directions also reveal the intentions of the playwrights, to the readers. Hence one can see that speech acts, with their illocutionary force and also the illocutionary indicators can help in the interpretation of the two plays.

It is never possible to determine finally and absolutely from the written texts, all the illocutions performed in a play although such factors as the use of explicit performative verbs (1
beg you) and the reactions of the interlocutors will often assist the process of interpretation, allowing a speech act analysis of drama to be analysed. For such purpose, however one requires an adequate classification of act types and in particular of illocutionary acts. Various typologies of illocutionary acts have been devised some like Austin’s, on the basis of English verbs, and others like Searle’s, on more analytical grounds. It is Searle’s taxonomy which is perhaps most directly useful for the purposes of dramatic analysis. As mentioned earlier, Searle classifies the speech acts into five major categories. The plays under consideration could be analysed by using the framework of these major speech acts.

2.3 Assertive Speech Acts

Assertive speech acts state, suggest what the speaker believes in and how the world is according to that person. The characters, by the means of assertive speech acts bring out their beliefs, their intentions in asserting what they believe, which in turn will result in the action of the plays. In Nagamandala, the play opens with a man who claims to be a dramatist.

Man: I may be dead within the next few hours.

(Long pause)

I am not talking of ‘acting dead’. Actually dead. I might die right in front of your eyes. (Pause)
A mendicant told me ‘You must keep awake at least one whole night this month. If you can do that, you’ll live. If not, you will die on the last day of the month...

I asked the mendicant what I had done to deserve this fate. And he said: “You have written plays. You have staged them. You have caused so many good people, who came trusting you, to fall asleep twisted in miserable chairs that all that abused mass of sleep has turned against you and become the Curse of Death”… [Act One: 1-2].

The character of the ‘dramatist’ sets the background of the play, with his assertion of death. He speaks to the audience stating that he would die, that night and death is the punishment for his boring plays. Here he is stating a fact that is going to take place. He accepts that his plays have made many good people fall asleep in the miserable chairs. This kind of opening, using an assertive statement is Karmad’s tool in capturing the attention of the audience and to keep the interest going. When the readers begin reading the play, they are taken aback by the statement of death. The curiosity of the people as to why such a thing should happen, and the ways to rectify such a calamity, gets their attention. Shakespeare uses this kind of tactic to get the audience engrossed in his plays. The famous opening scene in Macbeth, in which the three witches make three predictions about Macbeth’s life, is an example.

Likewise, if not with the same intensity, Tendulkar also creates such an assertion in the first scene in his Silence! The
Court Is In Session. The protagonist, Benare is seen making assertions about her opinions in a sudden outburst, while conversing with Samant.

Benare: “... Who are these people to say what I can or can’t do? My life is my own. I haven’t sold it to anyone for a job! My will is my own. My wishes are my own. No one can kill those- no one! I’ll do what I like with myself and my life! I’ll decide... [Act One: 5].

This fierce statement about her own decisions in life reveals the desire to portray herself as a strong willed independent woman. Samant being new to the drama troupe that she is in is not acquainted with Benare. Hence her effort to impress Samant, is shown in the illocutionary force of her assertion. It also arouses the interest in the readers to know the mystery behind the sudden outburst of Benare. It also gives a reading of Benare’s character. The main critical reviews that this play has achieved are about the protagonist being a victim of suppression. This sudden outburst gives an introduction to the new age woman, who airs her views so openly, but is dominated at the end of the play.

Assertions are usually expressed by speakers through declarative forms. Utterances like ‘I state’, ‘I assert’ in speech situations, which are explicit performatives, indicate the kind of illocutionary act which is being performed. Often in actual speech situations, the context will make clear what the illocutionary force of the utterance is. Mostly these utterances are
used by people who are older and more experienced in life. There are characters like Kurudava, Mrs and Mr. Kashikar who make their beliefs known to other characters and are quite convinced that they are true in every word. In Nagamandala, Kurudava is seen stating her identity, and providing information to Rani, about her relationship with Appanna.

Kurudava: “Don’t be afraid. I am called Kurudava, because I am blind. Your mother-in-law and I were like sisters. I helped when your husband was born. Don’t be frightened. Appanna is like a son to me. Is he not in?” [Act One: 10].

Kurudava, by asserting her close relationship with Appanna, is trying to win the confidence of Rani, the new bride of Appanna. Rani is in a very vulnerable position. Being a newly wed, her husband locks her in the house and goes to his mistress. He does this, so that, no one can visit Rani. Kurudava knows the situation and comes forward to help her out. Hence she affirms that she can be trusted. By assuring Rani that she is indeed like a mother to Appanna, Kurudava shows her solidarity to Rani. Every character uses the speech act to fulfill their intentions.

In Silence! The Court Is In Session, the two experienced characters that they claim to be, are Mrs and Mr. Kashikar. They make statements about the society in general, and express their personal views, unnecessarily.

Kashikar: “What I say is, our society should revive the old custom of child marriage. Marry off the girls before
puberty. All this promiscuity will come to a full stop. If anyone has ruined the society, it’s Agarkar and Dhondo Kesav Karve. That’s my frank opinion, Sukhatme, my frank opinion” [Act Three: 52].

In another instance, he says;

“A sinful canker on the body of society- that’s my honest opinion of these grown up unmarried girls” [Act Three: 67-68].

These utterances of Kashikar, about the status of unmarried girls in the society and his exclamations that girls should be married before puberty reveal his convictions about women. He belongs to the conservative society and shuns all kinds of modernity in the society. He is rigid in his beliefs and is frank about his opinion about unmarried girls. He believes that the old age customs and rituals will stop all kinds of promiscuity. He wants to impose his views, and makes general statements about women as though his beliefs will rectify the morality in the society.

Mrs. Kashikar also follows her husband’s footsteps. She also states her views about unmarried women and their behavior in the society.

Mrs.Kashikar: “Should there be no limit to how freely a woman can behave with a man? An unmarried woman? No matter how well she knows him? Look how loudly she laughs! How she sings, dances, cracks jokes! and wandering alone with how
many men, day in and day out! [Act Three: 54-55].

Being a woman, Mrs. Kashikar should sympathize with Benare. But instead she goes against her gender and accuses her of having a ‘loose character’. She also makes such sweeping statements about the behaviour of Benare wandering alone with many men, which is common in a group performing together. In modern times, when such boundaries between man and woman are being erased, Mrs. Kashikar still believes that a woman and a man should draw the lines of restriction between themselves. The above mentioned illustrations reveal the superiority of the older characters and their convictions that their beliefs hold good all the time.

Assertives can take imperative and interrogative forms. Rhetorical questions are examples for this kind of dual nature. In plays, one can find a multitude of false questions that have assertive functions. Rhetorical questions function as assertions because they are intended “to providing information” (Schmidt-Radefeld: 1977:377). In *Nagamandala* as well as in *Silence! The Court Is In Session*, the two women lead characters make use of the following interrogatives that have assertive functions.

Rani: Why should she suffer like this? Would sight have helped? Do desires really reach out from some world beyond right into our beds? [Act Three: 39].

Rani asks assertively, as to why Kurudava should suffer in this manner. Even though Kurudava’s insane condition prompts her
to ask questions, she relates to her misery in the second sentence. The fates of Kurudava and Rani are the same. The older woman has lost her son, and she has no one to depend on. The younger woman is tortured by her husband. She states as to how fulfilled desires reach out to her, from faraway lands and come right into her bed. Here she refers to Naga’s visits in the night, which saves her from loneliness. She is unaware of the transformation of Naga, and she is confused by the varying moods of her husband. In the following lines, she states her misery to the Story,

Rani: (To the story) “Why should I let you push me around? Isn’t it better to accept the kiss of the Cobra and the dark silence of the anthill?

[Act Three: 39].

Here Rani states that it is better to die rather than live, being called as a disloyal wife. She accepts her plight and prepares to die by the poison of the cobra. There are no answers for these types of questions. Even though the form is interrogative; the words have the characteristic of an assertive.

There are instances in Silence! The Court Is In Session, where the woman protagonist, Leela Benare undergoes the same trauma. She is victimized by the society and she states that it is better to die. She blurts out as to why she should suffer like this, and what life and society has done to her. In the following illustration, Benare uses interrogative as well as declarative forms which have assertive functions to describe her condition to the court.
Benare: “Life must be hanged. Life is not worthy of life. Hold an enquiry against life. Sack it from its job! But why? Why? Was I slack in my work? ... For what sin are they robbing me of my job, my only comfort? ... [Act Three: 73].

Here Benare questions the injustice that life has done to her. Her life is ruined by her lover, Prof. Damle, and she is stripped off her livelihood just because she has become pregnant without entering wedlock. She asks these questions, she knows the answers to them, and her rhetorical questions are pointed at the readers to make their own judgments about her condition.

The peculiarity of these questions is that, they are not asked in order to request information or to invite a reply, but to achieve an expressive force different from and usually more effective than a direct assertion. If the woman characters had used direct assertions, in describing their condition, the perlocutionary effect would not have been so effective. The playwrights use these kinds of methods to persuade the readers to recognize the former’s intentions and respond to them.

As Searle [1971:45] has stated, “When I make an assertion, I attempt to communicate to and convince my hearer of the truth of a certain proposition; and the means I employ to do this are to utter certain sounds, which I employ to do this are to utter certain sounds, which utterance I intend to produce in him the desired effect by means of recognition of my intention to produce just that effect”. It is this recognition, which is clearly
seen in the above quoted illustrations. Whether it is Rani, Benare, Kurudava, or Mr and Mrs. Kashikar, all of them have driven the illocutionary force across to achieve what ever they intend to say.

The three principal kinds of conditions of Searle, which must be met in order to fulfill non-defective speech acts are also present in the plays. Rani and Benare, do not know why it is happening to them, and are totally innocent when they ask the rhetorical questions, hence fulfilling the preparatory conditions. Regarding the sincerity principle, they mean what they say. They genuinely want an answer to their questions but know that they will not get one. They know that injustice has been done to them, thereby asserting particular beliefs that the society is unfair to them. Because of their age, they believe that they are authorized to state their beliefs and convictions hence fulfilling the essential condition. They believe that their advice is beneficial to the listener, and that they are committed to a particular belief- ie the utterance counts as a particular kind of social commitment or undertaking. The utterances of Kurudava, Mrs and Mr, Kashikar, fulfill the three conditions.

2.4 Commissive Speech acts

These acts play prominent roles in the plays under study. The class includes promises, vows, pledges, guarantee etc. This category of speech acts marks important events in the progress of the play. In Nagamandala, every commissive speech act that the characters perform propels the play towards culmination. In the
prologue, the dramatist, in a sequence of promises tells the audience that he would forsake playacting and story telling.

Man: “... I swear by this absent God, if I survive this night I shall have nothing more to do with themes, plots and stories. I abjure all kinds of story telling and all play acting” [Prologue: 2].

The dramatist in the play issues this utterance to the readers. He swears by God, that if he survives that night, he will have nothing to do with play acting. His decision to quit story telling and the desire to live is what has brought him to the ruined temple. His promise, but is not fulfilled. To survive, he needs to break his former promise and makes another promise to the Story.

Man: “What does it matter who I am, I'll listen to you. Isn’t that enough? I promise you, I'll listen to you...” [Prologue: 4].

And then when the Man puts his condition to the Story, the latter promises to do so.

Story: “As a self respecting story, that is the least I can promise” [Prologue: 5].

The promises taken by the characters, the Man and the Story, unravel the second story of Rani and Naga. The promises become pivotal in the proceedings of the play.

A promise is a pledge to do something for someone. The intensity of relationships is reflected by the commissive speech acts between the addressee and addressor. Naga’s relationship
with Rani is an example of this kind of speech acts. Naga’s visits at night, relieves Rani of her loneliness. When she asks Naga in a doubtful manner, whether he would come every night, Naga assures that he would.

Naga: “Yes, I shall come home every night from now on” [Act Two: 18].

This promise makes her happy. The promise that Naga gives her is a future action which will be fulfilled and which has a positive effect on Rani. The speech act shows the intensity of love that Naga has for Rani.

At the same time, threats are also kinds of commissive speech acts. The distinction between a promise and a threat is that, though both refer to future action, the latter is a pledge to do something to someone which is not beneficial to that someone. The relationship between Rani and Appanna belongs to the second part of the category. In the play, he curses and raves about the infidelity of Rani. He swears to God, that he will ruin Rani’s life as she is pregnant, with some other man’s child. The conversational exchange between Rani and Appanna in the last act of the play is a series of pledges (positive and negative) taken by both of them. When Appanna questions her about her unborn child, she vows that she hasn’t done anything wrong.

Rani: “I swear to you, I haven’t done anything wrong [Act Three: 33].

But Appanna does not relent and promises her punishment for her crime, in a series of utterances.
Appanna: "I swear to you I am not my father’s son, if I don’t abort that Bastard! Smash it into dust! Right now……. Alright then, I’ll show you. I will go to the Village Elders. If they don’t throw that child into boiling oil and you along with it, my name is not Appanna… [Act Three: 33].

The threats are issued in a fit of anger. He promises her that he will destroy her child. He even promises her to take her to the village court to convict her of the crime. The threats make Rani’s life miserable. The distinction between a threat and a promise is marked clearly by the commissive speech acts uttered by both Naga and Appanna. Eventhough they belong to the same category, they have different functions.

In *Silence! The Court is in Session*, the commissive speech acts don a different mantle. Here the speech acts are uttered with no particular intention in general. They just mirror the attitude of the characters as it does tell something about the speaker. Though an utterance cannot give a detailed description of the characters, the commissive speech acts in the play go beyond the action of doing something for someone or to someone. For instance Kashikar, in Act One tells Sukhatme about his opinion of theatrical performances and how one should view such performances.

Kashikar: “How can I not worry? We owe something to the people.

Sukhatme. A performance is no laughing matter” [Act One: 17].

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Here the utterance is a promise made by Kashikar regarding play acting in general. Unlike the other instances marked in Nagamandala, the promise here is not made to anyone specifically. Though the addressee and addressor are Sukhatme and Kashikar, it is not a promise which favours Sukhatme, but a promise that favours the public in general. This shows the unasked dedication and commitment of Kashikar to the people. It reveals the humanitarian side of Mr. Kashikar.

Sukhatme, the lawyer in the play, promises to take the responsibility of tutoring Samant on the techniques of playacting. The troupe members have assembled in the hall, except for Prof.Damle, and they need some one to take up his role in the play. Since Samant, a local was helping out with the arrangements of the play, all of them decide to take him in the place of Prof.Damle. Being new to playacting, Sukhatme offers to help in explaining the methods, to Samant.

Sukhatme: “Mrs.Kashikar, Karnik, Ponkshe, don’t worry! I'll take the responsibility. Nothing to it! I'll prepare him” [Act One: 18].

By the commissive speech act, he guarantees that he would make Samant as perfect as any other professional actor. It is an obligation taken by Sukhatme on his own, without any persuasion from others. This explicit promise comes from his selfless attitude.

Tendulkar’s play revolves around a court trial. In India, the usual court proceedings of a case require the witnesses to
swear by the religious texts, and the witness is expected to tell the truth once the oath is taken. As the play is all about the accused, witnesses etc, the swearing in ritual is also enacted here. Here the characters Ponkshe, Samant take their oaths to speak the truth as they give their testimonies to the court.

Ponkshe: (glancing at the first page of the volume, and placing his hand on It says gravely) I, G. N. Ponkshe, placing my hand on the Oxford dictionary, to hereby solemnly swear that I shall tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth”[Act Two: 31].

Ponkshe pledges to say the truth regarding the trial of Benare. He makes an explicit promise to no one in particular. Even though, a number of people are assembled in the court, the promise to say the truth is not beneficial to any one. Samant also takes the oath in a similar manner.

Samant: “... I, Raghunath Bhikaji Samant, do hereby swear to tell the truth, The whole truth, and nothing but the truth...”[Act Two:41].

Eventhough commissive speech acts express what the speaker intends to do in the future, the above examples do not carry the intentions of the speaker. These characters take the pledges just because the custom demands of them. The irony of the oath taking in the play is that, it is just a mock trial, and the characters are fully aware of this. They take the oath by placing their hands on the dictionary, and they are not bound to speak the truth, unlike the real court proceedings.
Threats are also being used by the characters in *Silence: The Court Is In Session*. The functions of the threats are to intimidate the addressee, in issuing them. In two separate circumstances, two characters warn the others with dire consequences, if they acted against them. In Act Two, Rokde warns Benare to stop making fun of him. When Sukhatme questions Ponkshe about any information regarding Benare’s relationships with men, Benare interrupts and says that she has close relationships with Ponkshe, Balu and Karnik. This comment irritates Rokde and he bursts out in anger.

Rokde: “Miss Benare, I’m warning you, there’ll be trouble [Act Two: 33].

Later on, Benare is in a similar position. When the playacting becomes serious, Benare realizes that things are getting out of control, and her secrets would be known to everyone. She threatens everyone that she would leave the place, if anyone said a word about her.

Benare: “If anyone says one word after this, I’ll go away!

Sukhatme: Mr. Samant...

Benare: I’ll smash up all this! I’ll smash it all into bits- into little bit.” [Act Two: 46].

Benare does not allow Samant to say anything further. The hypothetical story that Samant tells the court is close to her real life, which frightens Benare. As the proverb goes, ‘Fear is the root of anger’, her fear becomes the root for her tantrums. The
fear that her relationship with Prof. Damle, and their unborn child would come into the open, forces her to warn Samant and the others to stop the mock trial.

The illocutionary force behind the commissive speech acts in the respective plays, leads to different kinds of perlocutionary effects, and in some situations, it does not have any effects. In Nagamandala, the promise that Naga gives to Rani keeps her happy, whereas the threats of Appanna, pushes her into misery and sorrow. The intentions of both the male characters are achieved in two different situations. The intentions of the Story and the Man are also fulfilled by their promises to each other of repeating the story to the audience. In fact, the Man breaks his promise to the audience, when he realizes that he cannot survive until he repeats the story. In Silence! The Court Is in Session, the intentions of the characters are negligible as the illocutionary force of the utterance such as the promise to speak the truth does not have any perlocutionary effect. The threats that Benare and Rokde issue are indeed their intentions but they do not have any effect on their listeners.

This is where the three conditions of Searle come in. The reason behind the defective speech acts in Tendulkar’s play is due to the violation of the conditions needed for the performance of speech acts. In both the instances, the oath-taking and also the threats of Benare and Rokde become defective, as the preparatory as well as the sincerity conditions are not fulfilled. The characters when they take their oath in the court do not mean what they say. The readers and the characters themselves know that it is a mock
trial and hence do not believe it. The preparatory conditions are unfulfilled, when Benare and Rokde warn the others. Both of them do not have the authority to issue those threats. Rokde being brought up on the charity of Mrs. Kashikar, gets no attention from others, especially Benare. Benare is shown as a woman who has secrets about her life. Her gender puts her in an insignificant position in a male oriented society and hence her warnings go unheeded. The essential conditions are however fulfilled by the characters as they are committed to undertake the action indicated; but because the other two sets of conditions are unfulfilled, the essential conditions are of no use.

In *Nagamandala*, the conditions are being fulfilled and the speech acts become successful as the speaker gets the listener to recognize his illocutionary intentions. Naga and Appanna have the capability to perform the actions, they mean what they say and they are committed to undertake the action indicated, thereby fulfilling the preparatory, sincerity, and the essential conditions.

### 2.5 Directive Speech Acts

The class includes requests, questions, orders, commands, suggestions, etc. Directives attempt to get the listener to do something, or simply provide information. In a dramatic discourse, there is more scope for directive speech acts. The conversationalists are either asking for information, or giving commands, orders etc. The plays under study are also inundated with directive speech acts. Therefore, only a few instances are highlighted.
The relationship between Appanna and Rani is restricted to only monosyllables. In the place of an ordinary conversation, Appanna only gives orders to Rani. There is no other kind of verbal communication between the couple. The male dominated attitude in the Indian society is depicted in the play, *Nagamandala*. Till the end of the play, Appanna uses only orders, commands, threats and accusations to convey his messages to Rani.

Appanna: “Well then I’ll be back tomorrow noon. Keep my lunch ready. I shall eat and go” [Act One: 6].

In another instance, Appanna says; “Do as you are told, you understand?” [Act One: 7].

The above instances point out that Appanna needs only food from Rani. He orders her to do things for him. His commands intimidate Rani, and she acts according to them.

Appanna: “Where have you been? I said where have you been? Rani! Answer me! [Act One: 17].

Kamad has effectively used the directive speech acts to establish the dominance of husbands over the wives, especially in the Indian society. The language used by Appanna shows the rural background from where he comes from, where the husbands consider their wives as instruments to cook and clean. Apart from these curt orders, Appanna does not converse with Rani, thereby portraying the oppression of Indian women. Women are considered to be people with no authority to speak but to listen passively to their husbands. Appanna’s instructions are
recognized by Rani, who is seen as a silent and a suffering wife, and these create a perlocutionary effect.

The act of giving instructions can also be termed as directive speech acts. The whole concept of a directive speech act is to get the hearer to do something according to the speaker’s intentions. In this play, Kurudava instructs Rani to feed the magical roots to Appanna, so that he would get besotted with her.

Kurudava: “Feed him the smallest piece first, if that gives no results, then try the middle sized one. Only if both fail, feed him the largest piece”. [Act One: 12].

Here Kurudava is repeating the instructions to Rani which were given to her by the mendicant. She gives her information, to use the first two smaller roots initially, and if they do not have any effect, advises her to use the third largest root. She also instructs as to how the magical roots should be administered to Appanna.

Kurudava: “Here. Take this smaller piece. That should do for a pretty jasmine like you. Take it! Grind it into a nice paste and feed it to your husband and watch the results.” [Act One: 13].

Kurudava meets Rani and comes to know about her unhappy married life. She is concerned for the younger woman, and wants to help her out in this situation. Hence she gives the magical roots to Rani, and gives directions of administering the roots to Appanna. The motherly affection that Kurudava feels for
her is evident from the endearment 'pretty jasmine' that she uses, to address Rani.

The utterance 'Don't go' appears to have an illocutionary force of an order. As P.F Strawson [1971:27] puts it, 'Don’t go' may have the force of either a request or an entreaty. Requests fall into a group of directives (Leech: 1983:106). The primary intention of the utterance is that of inducing the person addressed to stay where he/she is. His/her staying staying where they are is the primary response aimed at. What makes X’s words to Y, an entreaty not to go is something relating to X’s situation, attitude to Y’s manner and current intention. The characters, the Man and Rani, use these utterances to make their listeners stay. In the prologue of the play Nagamandala, the dramatist (the Man) begs the Story not to go away.

Story: “Goodbye then. We must be going.

The Man: Wait! Don’t go. Please [Prologue: 5].”

Here the condition of the dramatist is very pathetic. If he has to survive that last night, he has to remain awake and has to listen to the Story. The situation is a matter of life and death for him. He has no other alternative before him. And the Story is the only one who can help him in escaping death. Hence as he utters “Wait, Don’t go. Please”, even though he has authority over the Story, at that point, he is helpless and has to beg the Story to remain with him.

Rani’s circumstances are more or less similar to the Man. She pleads to Naga not to leave her and go away.
Naga: “... Well then. Talk to me. No? All right. Then I had better go.

Rani: Don’t please” [Act Two: 22].

Rani is also helpless as the Man. If it is a matter of life and death for the Man, for Rani it is a matter of happiness and misery. Naga, who has assumed the form of Appanna, comes to her at night. She is confused with the change of behavior in her husband. Even though she is completely confused by his transition, she wants Naga, who is kind and compassionate, to stay back with her. Her husband Appanna does not love and care for her, and the changed form of Appanna, (in reality Naga) loves her and is concerned about her. Naga gives her the choice to decide whether she wants him to visit her in the night. But as she is lonely, she believes that Appanna has truly changed to become a caring husband. She does not want to let go of that. Hence in both cases, the characters use the utterance, the entreaty ‘Don’t go’ which is the hope or belief, that such a revelation is likely to secure the fulfillment of the primary intention.

The protagonist Benare in Silence! The Court is in Session also begs and pleads the other characters not to continue with the mock trial. At some point, the trial becomes serious but only for Benare and not for the other characters. They are curious and amused at the plight of Benare.

Benare: “It’s all lie! A complete lie!

Ponkshe: Of course it is. So?
Karnik: Even it is lie! It’s an effective one!

Mrs. Kashikar: Do go on, Samant.

Benare: No! Stop all this! Stop it! [Act Two: 46].

The words ‘Stop’ is generally used to function of as an order. But here, Benare uses the same words as an entreaty. She does not want her life to be revealed to all. Her pleas are not taken seriously and they continue with the trial, until she breaks down in the final act. But her intentions are not recognized by the other characters.

Being an intersubjective phenomenon, the speech act cannot be successfully performed, unless the speaker gets the listener to recognize the speaker’s illocutionary intentions. Austin (1962:116) calls the listener’s recognition of the speaker’s illocutionary intentions the ‘securing of uptake’ (1962:117) and without it; the intended illocution is doomed to failure. Over here, Benare’s utterance becomes a defective speech act caused by the non-securing of uptake, the result usually being a form of talking at cross-purposes where the interlocutors reciprocally defeat each attempts at conversational progress.

Searle (1969) characterizes the speech acts of questioning as a directive, because a question is basically an attempt to get the hearer to do something, namely providing information for the questioner. Requests fall into a group of directives (Leech: 1983:106). As mentioned earlier, Tendulkar’s play is based on the mock trial of Benare. Just like any other court trial, the proceedings involve the questioning and answering of the
witnesses who are relevant in the case. Hence Sukhatme, the lawyer in the play, questions the witnesses as well as the accused. All the other characters give their testimonies regarding the accused, Benare. Tendulkar has intricately woven the plot of the drama, with the enactment of a mock trial. One can see that, the questions that Sukhatme asks in the make shift court, unravels the story of Benare, which she has kept to herself. Act Two which begins with the mock trial, culminates in the real story of Benare, and there is no doubt as to what has led to the unraveling of it. This is a very interesting part in the play, wherein, the questions asked to each of the witnesses leads to the questioning of one and another thereby showing a wholesome trial, without any prior preparation on the part of the lawyer. Cross questioning of the witnesses does not stop with one utterance but a volley of questions follow it. In one instance, Sukhatme cross questions, Karnik.

Sukhatme: “Mr. Karnik- (with sudden fervor) Have you, in any circumstances, on any occasion, seen the accused in a compromising situation? Answer yes or no? Yes, or No?

Karnik: Not me. But Rokde has” [Act Two: 36].

Here the baton moves on to Rokde, who becomes the next witness. Questioning of Rokde leads to further information of Benare.

Sukhatme: “Speak on, Mr. Rokde, What did you see?
(Rokde is genuinely disturbed. He swallows convulsively)

(like a lawyer in a film)

Sukhatme: “Mr Rokde, what did you see in certain important circumstances, on a certain occasion? Answer me, please.

Rokde: I saw—hell!

Rokde: ... I'll tell you, I went to his house some time ago-

Sukhatme: Whose house? Mr Rokde, to whose house did you go?

Rokde: Don't keep interrupting me. I went to— to Damle's house. (Benare tense).... Yes I went there in the evening. At night was falling. And there she was! Miss Benare! [Act Two: 37-38].

Rokde gives this piece of information that changes the course of the entire play. From here onwards, the story takes another shape. The questioning and urging on Sukhatme's part leads to the relationship between Prof Damle and Benare. The mock trial begins to gain its seriousness from the time, Rokde says that he had seen Benare in the Prof. Damle's house at night. This questioning leads to the next witness Samant who is supposed to give detailed information regarding that night. Samant gives a hypothetical story that he reads from a book, which is close to Benare's life story.

Sukhatme: "I'm asking. Tell us quick, Mr. Samant. What were the words you heard? Don't waste time. Tell us quick!— Mr Samant- be quick!

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Samant: If you abandon me in this condition, where shall I go?

( Benare is tense).

Samant: Where should you go is your problem. I feel great sympathy for you. But I can do nothing. I must protect my reputation.’ At that she said, ‘ that’s all you can talk about, your reputation? How heartless you are!

He replied; Nature is heartless! [Act Two: 45].

The testimony given by Samant brings out the real story of Benare, who is carrying the child of Prof. Damle. The real facts come out only after a series of questioning rounds. One can see in the above examples, quoted from the text, that the act of asking for information and that too open-ended questions lead to the truth in Benare’s life. The questioning of the other witnesses brings the play to a culmination.

The other characters also use directive speech acts in conveying their intentions to the others. When Benare makes fun of Mrs. Kashikar about stealing Mr.Kashikar for herself, the latter becomes angry and orders her to shut up.

Benare: “… She has never committed the crime of infanticide. Or stolen any public property except for Milord himself.

Mrs. Kashikar: That’s enough Benare! [Act Two: 29].

Mrs. Kashikar does not explicitly command Benare to shut up. She just uses the words ‘That’s enough’ which has the illocutionary force to keep Benare quiet and not to utter any words. Even though the utterance does not carry the conventional
way of ordering some one, Mrs Kashikar manages to do so with Benare. This is where the force of the utterance becomes significant. Mrs. Kashikar, who is older and more experienced than Benare, uses her authority to shut her up, and do so with these two words, which are as threatening as an order.

Directive speech acts, like any other speech act do have illocutionary forces which have direct perlocutionary effects. In fact, this category of speech acts are the most direct and quicker method to elicit responses from the listener. Even though, there is less chance of politeness in these speech acts, Searle’s theory of the listener recognizing the intention behind these utterances, can be applied here. Appanna’s intentions of suppressing Rani, with these utterances, are recognized by Rani, and she becomes submissive. Kurudava’s directives in feeding the roots to Appanna, results in Rani’s blissful love life. Karnad’s portrayal of the suppression of women is recognized by the readers.

The entreaties of Rani and the Man have an effect on their respective listeners, Naga and the Story, thereby fulfilling their desires. The cross questioning of the lawyer Sukhatme, leads to the interesting developments to the play. The commands issued by Mrs. Kashikar, Ponkshe etc are recognized by their counterparts. Though the sentences explicitly assume the pattern of an order, command, request, etc the utterance meaning is different in both the circumstances. Benare’s pleas to stop the trial go unheard. It is very apparent from the illustrations that Benare’s listeners are not affected by her requests. This is because they are aware that the trial is just a rehearsal, prior to
the performance. It is only Benare who gets carried away by the accusations which form a part of their sham trial. Here we find a kind of infelicity which is commonly manifested in the drama.

2.5 Expressive speech acts

These are acts in which characters express their psychological states or feelings or attitudes about a particular state of affairs. This class includes apologizing, complimenting, deploring, complaining etc. We find a large number of these speech acts in the plays under discussion. In Karnad’s play, the protagonist Rani, expresses her feelings to Kurudava when both of them meet. Her husband has locked her in the house and she has no one to speak to other than herself. Kurudava is the only person she speaks to other than Appanna and she complains to the old woman about her situation.

Rani: “Apart from him you are the first person I have seen after coming here. I am bored to death. There is no one to talk to! [Act One: 11].

Throughout the play, Rani is seen talking about her lonely condition. In Act Two, she complains to Naga, for behaving so differently during the day and the night. She is not aware of the fact that the Appanna who visits her at night is Naga, who has taken the form of Appanna. When her real husband comes during the day, he only abuses her, and behaves very rudely to her. But in the night, he is a changed man. Her confusion and sorrow is very much evident in her complaint.
Rani: “You talk so nicely at night. But during the day I only have to open my mouth and you hiss like a … stupid snake. (Naga laughs) It’s all very well for you to laugh. I feel like crying [Act Two: 22].

Later on, she expresses her anguish about her deplorable condition to Naga. She has told him about her pregnancy and he stares blankly at her, without any emotion. She becomes hysterical and her words show how she feels about her situation.

Rani :(Anguished) “What am I going to do with you? Laugh? Cry? Bang my head against the wall? I can never guess how you’ll react. I thought you would dance with joy on hearing the news, that you would whirl me around and fondle me. Feel my stomach gently and kiss me all that … [Act Two: 31].

The feeling that is dominant in these lines is that of expressive speech acts. Rani talks about her expectations, her fears and anguish regarding the reaction of Naga, when he hears about the baby. She does not know whether to feel happy or not. Rani openly expresses her feelings to Naga.

As Searle has stated, the performance of a speech act depends on the recognition of the intention of the speaker by the hearer and the reciprocation of it by the latter. Kurudava’s expressive speech act is accurately deciphered by her son Kappanna. Kurudava asks Kappanna to peep into Appanna’s house. But he refuses to do it. Kurudava gets her intention fulfilled by complaining to her son.
Kurudava: (tearful) “I wouldn’t have asked you if I had eyes. I don’t know why God has been cruel to me, why he gave me no sight…

Kappanna: (yielding) All right, mother- [Act One: 9].

Kappanna recognizes his mother’s complaint when she makes this utterance. She gets her intention fulfilled by complaining about her blindness. She sentimentally blackmails him into doing what she wanted him to do. Kappanna loves his mother, and she is aware that her son would do anything for her if she speaks about her inability to see. Thus the illocutionary force of a complaint results in a perlocutionary effect.

Compliments come in the category of expressive speech acts. The speaker expresses his/ her delight or disbelief when he/she compliments the listener. This expressive speech act mostly extracts an utterance of gratitude in return. Naga and Kurudava compliment Rani on her good looks. They are totally taken aback by her beauty. Their utterances are filled with admiration and awe.

Kurudava: “… Ayyo! How beautiful you are! [Act: 11].

Kurudava’s surprise in finding Rani so beautiful is quite apparent from her utterance ‘Ayyo’. This phrase, which is an exclamation of surprise, in the colloquial Kannada language, adds to the effect of the compliment that follows. She gives a detailed metaphoric description about Rani’s beauty. Naga gives a surprised exclamation regarding Rani’s beauty.
Naga: You are very beautiful! [Act Two: 20].

Later on he uses a metaphor to describe her long hair.

Naga: “What beautiful, long hair! Like dark snake princesses!
    [Act Two: 22].

These compliments point out to the psychological state of
the speaker. In both the cases, the speakers do not expect Rani to
respond to their compliments. The utterances are the result of
disbelief and more or less, they are a verbal expression of their
thoughts. Nevertheless, these compliments can be called
expressive speech acts.

_in Silence! The Court is in Session_, Samant, a local man
in the group showers compliments on the protagonist. From the
time he has met her, Samant is totally charmed by her. When
Benare jokes about the mock trial and the characters taking part
in it, Samant is seen as openly admiring her.

Samant: (enthusiastically, to Mrs. Kashikar) “Ha ha! Miss Benare
    is really amazing” [Act Two: 29].

He is totally in awe of her. When the other characters question
her promiscuousness, and ask Samant, whether she has any
illegitimate relationship with him, he firmly denies it with a
compliment.

Samant:(rising suddenly , in confusion) “No, No, this lady
    behaved in amost exemplary manner. We just talked of
    magic shows- hypnotism and like- That’s all”— [Act
    Two: 40].
In both the instances, Samant who is just newly acquainted with Benare talks about her in high regard. Towards the end, it is the same Samant who unknowingly unravels Benare's true story, which he reads out from the novel. Tendulkar inserts these compliments in his play to bring the element of irony in the play. The contradiction between Samant's adulation for Benare and the humiliation that he brings to her, out of his ignorance, is depicted by means of this kind of expressive speech acts. If Samant hadn't praised her so much, then the climax of the play wouldn't have been so interesting. The tragedy of Benare, becomes poignant, when Samant, who barely knows her, reveals the facts of her life to the others who know her personally. The nature of the male-centered Indian society is brought out in this manner by the playwright.

This behavior of Samant is in reality, the result of the compliments that Benare showers upon him. The illocutionary force of her utterances leads to the perlocutionary effect, which is Samant's admiration for Benare. The intention of Benare's compliments is later revealed in the play. To achieve that goal, complimenting Samant, is the tool that she applies.

Benare: “... Let’s leave everyone behind. I thought, and go somewhere far, far away with you!

Samant: (in confusion) With me?

Benare: Yes, I like you very much!

Samant: (terribly shy and embarrassed) Tut-tut. Ha ha! I’m hardly ...
Benare: You’re very nice indeed. And shall I tell you something? You are very pure and good person. I like you” [Act One: 2].

To the readers of the play, Benare’s sudden affection towards Samant raises a doubt in their minds. In the opening of the play, the conversation between Benare and Samant, is just that of an acquaintance. Hence the question arises as to why Benare exhibits such an attraction towards Samant. In the course of the play, one sees that the only reason that she has shown affection in the initial stages of the play is because she wants a father for her unborn child. Nevertheless, Benare successfully wins over Samant’s admiration by means of compliments.

Compliments perform several functions in interpersonal communication. The most important function of compliments is to increase or consolidate the solidarity between the complimentor and the complimentee. They act as a social lubricant serving to create or maintain rapport, and especially to achieve their intentions, just we saw in Benare’s and Samant’s compliments to each other. Sukhatme is seen praising Mr. Kashikar for the choice of the charge that he proposes for the mock trial.

Sukhatme: “... Kashikar, you’ve really picked some charge! A first-class charge! There’s no fun in a case unless there’s a really thundering charge! [Act Two: 26].

Sukhatme’s utterance is not an example of a conventional compliment, wherein the conventional compliment, one can find
the usual procedure of praising one’s beauty, or explicitly complimenting the complimentee. In this example, we see that the word ‘first class’ transforms the utterance into a compliment. The term ‘first class’ means ‘that of superior quality’ or is a synonym for ‘the best’. It is used specifically in the Indian context, where ‘first class’ is used for first class coaches in the trains, which are more luxurious than the ordinary coaches. Sukhatme tells Kashikar, that he is appreciative of the charge. He adds the word ‘thundering’ as in ‘thundering charge’ that makes the compliment more powerful.

Apologies are one kind of expressive acts. Expressing one’s feeling that they are sorry for the unhappiness caused by them to others is a part of an expressive speech act. Apologies fall into expressives intended to provide support for the hearer who was malaffected by a specific violation of a social rule. (Reiter: 2000)

The illocutionary force of apologizing is to gain the perlocutionary effect of forgiveness. Such apologies uttered by the characters can be seen in the plays. When Rani complains that she cannot understand his two different faces, Naga tells her that he is sorry, and that he cannot explain the truth to her. Instead he diplomatically avoids telling the truth by a deference strategy ie, by apologizing.

Rani:“... I was desperate that you should come again tonight.

But, what am I to say if you spin riddles like this?
Naga: (Seriously) I am afraid that is how it is going to be. Like that during the day and like this during the night. Don’t ask me why.

Rani: I won’t” [Act Two: 23].

Naga uses this kind of deference strategy to avoid telling Rani the truth. Though he does not explicitly say that he is sorry, he uses the words ‘I am afraid’, to indirectly say that he is sorry that he is helpless and is unable to do anything about the situation. Rani is satisfied with his apologetic response and agrees not to worry him by asking questions. Hence Naga’s intention is fulfilled.

In the last act of the play, Appanna asks forgiveness from Rani, for the harsh treatment that he has meted towards her. When the cobra, does not bite Rani, the Village court advises Appanna to give her respect and worship as a miracle has happened in front of their eyes. Appanna being illiterate and superstitious also believes that she is a Goddess, and genuinely asks Rani to pardon him for his sins.

Appanna: “Forgive me. I am a sinner. I was blind…”

[Act Two: 40].

Both the characters, Appanna and Naga are genuinely sorry for the unhappiness that they have caused Rani. Both have no other alternative other than apologizing, as they are helpless in their respective situations, and they need Rani to accept them. Hence the characters by expressing their need to be forgiven, lead to the happy union with Rani.
In *Silence! The Court is in Session*, the characters do not make explicit apologies. The entire play which is based on the real middle class society with their raw, and harsh personalities, has no character lowering oneself in front of the others. Each one of them, has their own high opinions of themselves, and thinks that they are right in every way, which does not make them apologize for anything.

2.6 Expressive Speech Acts

Expressive speech acts, express moments of pleasure, pain, likes and dislikes, joy or sorrow. The above examples taken from the play bring either one of these emotions to the limelight. These emotions which are taken for granted, are given a special place as expressive speech acts which have functions to perform in a conversation. As George Yule, puts it “expressive speech acts make the words fit the world” [1996:55]. The speaker S feels the situation X. These speech acts also have an illocutionary force that mostly does not have a perlocutionary affect, but even then results in the happiness of the listener which is in favour of the speaker. Of all the three conditions putdown by Searle, the sincerity conditions are the most fulfilled condition. The speakers mean what they say and they are genuinely expressing their feelings, (even if it is for their own purposes) to the other counterparts, thereby fulfilling the other two conditions. The speaker has all the authority to express his/her feelings and in the same way he/she counts their utterance as important to the conversation. This is true in the examples of Benare’s utterances.
of her being happy, Kurudava’s and Naga’s admiration for Rani, and Sukhatme’s praise for Kashikar etc.

2.7 Declarative Speech Acts

The declarative speech acts are the least frequent speech acts in the plays for discussion for they generally occur in the contexts of legal institutions. This class includes endorse, resign, sentence, nominate, name, appoint, apply, etc. The performance of these speech acts brings about immediate changes in the world. Nevertheless there are few declarative speech acts in the plays for study, which bring about sudden changes in the plot as well as in the culmination of the play.

In Nagamandala, we have an example of this kind. These speech acts are not in the context of the legal institutions like the urban courts, but they are in the context of the village court systems which are still prevalent in rural India. The village court or rather the judiciary system of the villages, consists of a group of Village Elders who convict the accused by giving appropriate sentences. The convicted persons are subjected to traditional tests, and the punishments would be meted out accordingly. In this play, the Village Elders persuade Rani to take the oath by holding onto a red hot iron. Rani insists on swearing by the King Cobra, and her wish is granted and she comes out unscathed. In the end, the villagers are all convinced that she is a Divine Being, including the Village Elders. The elderly group declares that Rani is innocent and instructs Appanna to accept her as his wife.
Elder One: “Appanna, your wife is not an ordinary woman. She is Goddess incarnate. Don’t grieve that you judged her wrongly and treated her badly. That is how goddesses reveal themselves to the world you were the chosen instrument for revealing her identity.

Elder Two: Spend the rest of your life in her service. You need merit in tenpast lives to be chosen for such holy duty.

Elder Three: Bless us Mother. Bless our children” [Act Two: 40].

Rani’s life undergoes a drastic change with this sentence. Appanna accepts her as his wife and treats her like a goddess. And Rani gets everything that she has wished for, a devoted husband and a happy life. Hence one can see that the declarative acts do have a performative function.

In *Silence! The Court is in Session!*, one sees a different kind of declarative speech act. As the title suggests the sentence *Silence! The Court is in Session*, is a terminology used in the courts of urban India. Therefore the assumption that a declarative speech act (a court’s sentence) will be performed in the play which has perlocutionary effect is normally expected. But in this play, the speech act, uttered by Kashikar, who enacts the role of the judge, does not have the perlocutionary effect, as it does not change the immediate world. But even then, the following illustration can be termed as a declarative speech act, because it brings a sudden change in the plot of the play.
Mr. Kashikar: (clearing his throat) “Prisoner Benare, under Section No. 302 of the crime of infanticide. Are you guilty of the afore mentioned crime?”

(Benare looks stunned. All are silent for the moment. The atmosphere is extra-ordinarily sombre) [Act One: 23-24].

Under ordinary circumstances, such a question would be shocking for the accused. But here the speech act is not the final sentence given to Benare. But it definitely brings changes in the plot of the play. The light hearted banter, with which the play begins, takes a serious turn with the utterance of this sentence. With it begins another play, which is a mock trial of Benare who is accused of infanticide and which becomes the actual story of the play.

In end of the play, Kashikar wraps up the mock trial by giving Benare, her sentence, based on the testimonies given by the other characters who are the members of her drama group.

Kashikar: “... Therefore this court hereby sentences that you shall live. But the child in your womb will be destroyed.

Benare: (writhing) No! No! No! I won’t let you do it- I won’t let it happen I won’t let it happen! [Act Three: 75-76].

Benare’s sentence is a grave one when it is taken in the context of a real trial. But Kashikar is not a real judge, but he is enacting the role as one. Hence the sentence is not supposed to have an effect on Benare. But her utterance following the
utterance of Kashikar, shows that she is deeply affected by it. The proceedings of the mock trial reveal her true story and Benare is totally devastated by it. Her response to the mock sentence that Kashikar gives her shows that she believes that her child would be destroyed. The mock trial has been transformed to a real one, and the consequences are heart wrenching. Though the sentence is not serious, Benare’s life drastically changes in the end. Mr. Kashikar’s sentence will not take place in real life. It will not have the perlocutionary effect expected in legal courts, but for Benare it is metaphoric, as she knows that this is the sentence that she would get eventually in real life. The sentence given to her is a prediction of the death of the baby. Thereby, one can say that the declarative speech act mentioned above has performed its function.

The declarative speech acts highlighted in the two plays, have their respective perlocutionary effects. When the speech act brings happiness to Rani’s life, it brings misery to Benare’s life. But it brings about changes in both their lives. In Karnad’s play, the conditions are met and hence the speech act is non-defective. The Village Elders are authorized to sentence the accused. According to the Indian tradition, the decisions taken by the village elders are not overruled by any one. They are accepted at face value, and no objections are encouraged. The villagers consider the group as the Supreme Being, who has the power and authority to make decisions regarding their lives. Hence the preparatory condition is fulfilled here. The sincerity condition is also being fulfilled as the Village Elders believe that justice has
been done, and their declarations are accepted, by the villagers. They also view their decisions as a particular kind of social commitment or undertaking which are beneficial to everyone in their village thereby, fulfilling the essential condition.

But in Tendulkar's play, the conditions are not fully met. Mr. Kashikar is an actor, enacting the role of a judge and does not have an authority to give a judgment. Therefore, every utterance that he makes in his role as a judge is insincere and untrue, and does not have any valid evidence. And he is not undertaking any social commitment as the action indicated by his utterance will not take place. The three conditions of Searle are not met here, and the utterance becomes a non-defective speech act. But the illocutionary force of Kashikar's utterance does have a perlocutionary effect on the life of Benare.

As seen in the above instances of speech acts in the two plays, the playwrights never completely withdraw from the characters that he/she creates in his/her plays. The notion of 'pretended speech acts' (Adams 1985:10) that has been dealt before, allow the writers to convey their intentions through their characters. The different facets of relationships between the characters are similar to real life people, and this is brought out by means of speech acts by Karnad and Tendulkar.

2.8 Conclusion

In the present chapter, an analysis of the selected novels within the framework of the five major speech acts proposed by Searle has been attempted. With the help of the examples chosen
from the two plays, the differences between these broad categories in terms of their functions are being shown. Each major speech act contains a wide range of sub-acts that can be distinguished from one another by seeing what felicity conditions they fulfill and do not fulfill within the contexts in which they are employed. The analysis has also shown that the two playwrights have made use of speech acts to convey their intentions which are explicit in the conversation between the characters.