

A STUDY OF SUICIDE LETTERS IN TERMS OF SPEECH ACT THEORY

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Abstract

Language is the window to human mind. It is one of the most complicated behaviours human beings can perform. So, it has been stated that it is through the study of language that we can have some understanding of the human mind and man in general. The present research attempts to uncover the characteristic stamp in the use of speech acts, as classified by Searle's (1971), by suicidal minds through the study of five of their suicide letters that have been dealt with. By so doing we are trying to attract the attention of not only linguists but psychologists also. Further, researches may attempt a similar endeavour with other linguistic aspects.

Introduction

Since J.L. Austin presented speech act theory in his retrospectively published book *How to do Things with Words* – in which he attempts to see language as a kind of social activity rather than merely as a matter of stating truly or falsely – much has been written about it in a number of different areas. Apart from its chief locus in philosophy of language, speech act theory has seen a widespread adoption in literary theory, pedagogy, and other disciplines. While being widely used and popular, the theory itself is much more complex and problematic than many practical applications reveal. The objective of this study is to explain how the speech-act theory can be applied to the analysis of the suicidal persons' minds, whether attempters or committers, and interpret their attitudes, wishes and future readings, if there are any.

Speech Act Theory

Though may be traced back in history to that of ancient Greek philosophers including Aristotle, Protagoras, and the Stoics (Weizbicka, 1986:67; Sbisa, 1995: 496), the idea that people perform "various types of Acts" when they speak was explicitly and rigorously stated by John Austin for the first time in his (1962) **How to Do Things with Words**. Among others, Austin criticizes the belief held by formal semantists that "languages are sets of sentences and that sentences are used primarily, if not exclusively, to make descriptive statements." And thus, no distinction is drawn between 'sentence-meaning and propositional [i.e. descriptive] content' (Lyons, 1995: 234).

Austin though "never presented a fully developed theory of speech acts" (Lyons, 1995: 236), revives these distinctions. His main purpose is to challenge the above mentioned descriptive fallacy. Austin refuses the view that language function that is philosophically interesting is that related only to statements that can be verified as true or false (a view held by logical positives varificationists of the time. They believed that a sentence is meaningful only if it expresses verifiable, or falsifiable, propositions (Ibid: 237). Austin, however, in a follow up to Wittgenstein's theory that holds the slogan that "meaning is use" (which is clearly formulated in the latter's (1958) **Philosophical Investigations**) introduces the distinction between '*constative*' (utterances that may be assessed against the true false criteria and '*performatives*' (utterances that do not submit to the same type of assessment). This forward step of Wittgenstein's theory taken by Austin is nevertheless an independent contribution of him; Austin "had been lecturing on the same topic for some years....as early as 1940" (Lyons, 1995: 236), and thus it is believed that Austin has a little or no knowledge of Wittgenstein's later view expressed in the latter's (1958) **Philosophical Investigations** (Hampshire, 1967: 246).

Austin maintains that, in acting with words, a speaker produces three types of acts:

1. the locutionary act, i.e. the act of uttering and at the same time referring to and saying something about the world (it is the basic act of producing a meaningful linguistic expression; an act which a foreigner or a tongue tied person may fail to produce) (Yule, 1996: 48; Barron, 2003: 11);
2. the illocutionary act, i.e. the function that the utterance is intended to perform such as asking, requesting, etc. (in fact, it is this type of act that "is the principal focus of speech act theory, and it is indeed, itself, standardly referred to as 'speech act' (Barron, 2003:11); (see also Yule, 1996: 49; Levinson, 1983: 236); and

3. the perlocutionary act, i.e. the achievement of some effect on the hearer.

As mentioned above, the second type of act has been the central concern of the speech theory. Austin (1962: 147-65) proposes a five category classification of speech acts. However, his classification was criticized by many scholars among them are Ballmer and Brennenstuhl who believe that Austin's classification lacks 'theoretical criteria' and 'external principles' (Ballmer and Brennenstuhl, 1981: 4). A more detailed criticism is that of Searle who mentions six shortcomings in Austin's classification (see Katz, 1977: 196). In fact 'the question of how many speech acts, or how many speech act types there are, is one which remains open despite many attempts at classification' (Barron, 2003: 12). However, it is Searle's classification (1976) that is still the most widely accepted (Ibid). That is why it is the classification adopted in the present study.

Searle proposes that there are just five basic kinds of action that one can perform in speaking, by means of the following five types of utterance:

1. *assertives*, which commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition (paradigm cases: asserting, concluding, etc.);
2. *directives*, which are attempts by the speaker to get the addressee to do something (paradigm cases: requesting, questioning);
3. *commissives*, which commit the speaker to some future course of action (paradigm cases: promising, threatening, offering, etc.);
4. *expressives*, which express a psychological state (paradigm cases: thanking, apologizing, welcoming, etc.);and
5. *declaratives*, which effect immediate changes in the institutional state of affairs and which tend to rely on elaborate extra-linguistic institutions (paradigm cases: excommunicating, declaring war, christening, etc.) (Searle, 1976 cited in Levinson, 1983: 240).

Suicide: An Overview

Suicide has manipulated a great deal of interest in various fields such as psychology, physiology, sociology, philosophy, and religion. Thomas Merton states that "we fear the thought of suicide, and yet we need to think rationally about it, if we can, because one of the personistics of our time is precisely that it is suicidal age" (Pianalto, 2004: 2).

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Woroblesk sees that the term choice is not precisely used since the suicidal person is not able to make a choice simply because no others are rationally recognized (Jackson, 2003: 10). Hence, suicide is not a pain-free death for "in almost every case," pain is the main reason, whatever the source of this pain is. Shneidman views this pain psychologically calling it a psychache. He assures that this psychache stems from thwarted or distorted psychological needs." Therefore, it is a "drama in the mind." Shneidman, consequently, sees that "thoughts and feelings are not things. They are pure process" (Pianalto, 2004: 7). Salvatore (2007: 1) agrees that suicide is a process clarifying that it "begins in severe stress and pain generated by serious life crisis." However, stress and pain on the one hand and the crisis on the other are interrelated. Thus, the increase in the former worsens the latter. Meanwhile, depression occurs as a side effect resulting from the deterioration of control and self-esteem.

Depression, nevertheless, may not stop the one leading his life though it makes things harder and seem unworthy. Yet, depression can be life-threatening whose consequence is making people give up the will to live (Stewart, 2008: 2). More than 90 % of those who kill themselves suffer from depression or other mental or substance abuse disorder associated with other mental disorders. Thus, changes in brain chemistry and physiology indicate a suicidal risk factor. Most notable is depicted serotonin which is a neurotransmitter whose low levels are associated with depression, and consequently, found in the brain of suicidal victims. In spite of that, suicidal behaviour is not a normal response to stress. "Family history of mental disorder or substance abuse, family history of suicide family violence, including physical and sexual abuse, firearms in the home, incarceration, and exposure to the suicidal behaviour of others, including family members, peers, or even in the media" in addition to prior suicide attempts increase the risk factors of suicide (Stppler, 2008: 3).

In terms of medicine, however, mental health is considered the predominant, but suicide can be attributed to a wider social background namely acquiring help and attention. Thus, it is a means to escape not death for the suicidal person might not accomplish suicide right from the first attempt. Rather, he may try repeatedly which can significantly, increase the probability of 'eventual completion of suicide" (Wikipedia, 2008: 2).

Suicidal males are more than suicidal females though females' attempts are more often. This is attributed to the fact that males use more effective violent means such as guns, knives, ...etc. whereas overdosing on medications is the most familiar means used by females (Ibid: 3). Research shows that "more women become depressed, but men may find it harder to admit to talk about." All age groups can be affected, and it is important to take symptoms seriously and not to dismiss them as an inevitable part of growing up or growing old (Stewart.2008: 4).

Suicide Letters in Terms of Speech Act Theory

Whether a means or a purpose, suicide inspires its victims to reconsider and rethink in their existence but, unfortunately, this negatively feeds back their belief that death is their only choice. Death, hard though, remains temptingly dancing in front of the suicidal person's eyes. Suicide letters, however, reveal the last message of those persons which involves their perspectives and attitudes concerning their left-behind-life. They are, mainly, a representation of the suicidal persons' frustration and submission to death.

The first suicide letter is O. J. Simpson's the American football player. He is a suspect in the murder of his wife Nicole (see the appendix). The letter is a portrayal of innocence in which Simpson tries to synthesize the components of this portrayal by using many shades of blamelessness and highlights of honesty. Thus, he works on his image as a "good husband". Consequently, he, in length, tells his story of devotion (e.g. I loved her, always have, and always will. If we had a problem, it's because I loved her so much) and, to add a realistic impression, he shows the highs and lows in his family life (e.g. Recently, we came to the understanding that for now we were not right for each other, at least for now. Despite our love we were different, and that's why we mutually agreed to go our separate ways. It was tough splitting for a second time, but we both knew it was for the best). He makes use of this area in begging and utilizing sympathy to support his claims that he has no hand in the murder of his wife. Accordingly, the dominance of the assertive speech acts, 69 (75.82 %), is quite justified. Thus, the "suspect" needs to show proofs, explain incidents, and adopt strategies of defense.

Table (1): Speech Acts in the First Letter

Speech Act	No	%
Assertives	69	75.82
Directives	8	8.79
Commissives	1	1.09
Expressives	13	14.29
Declaratives	0	0
Total	91	99.99

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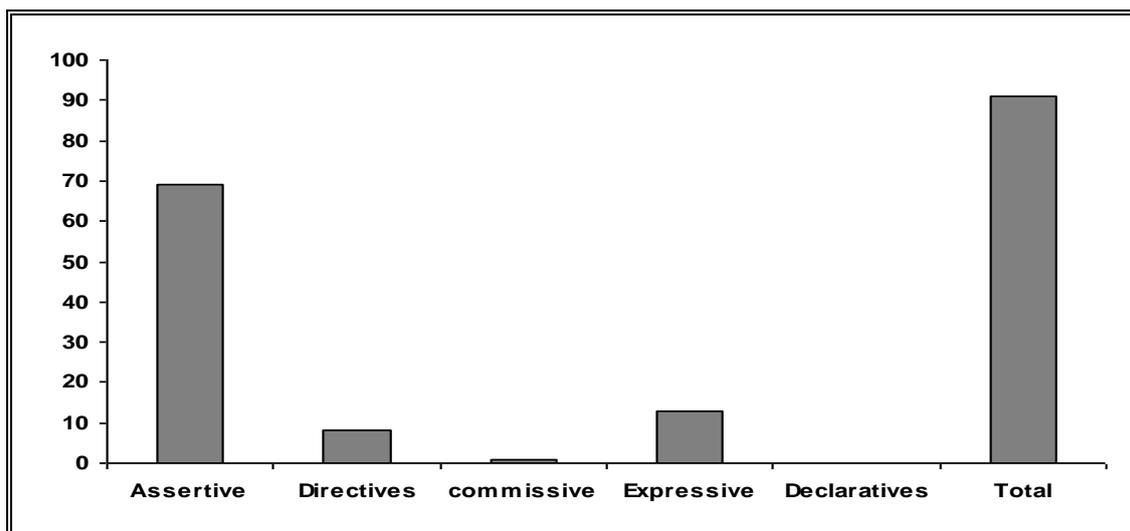


Figure (1): Speech Acts in the First Letter

Further, this suicidal person works on his image as a "good man". This, fortunately, goes parallel with another line of defense namely saying the truths and one of these truths is admitting the "virtues" of others (e.g. I want to send my love and thanks to all my friends. I'm sorry I can't name every one of you, especially A.C. man, thanks for being in my life). Thus, he is smart enough to realize that expressing gratitude is another supportive device to sparkle again. In other words, he figures out that a "good person" should be aware of the good turns of others whatever little they are. This, nevertheless, is well-designed to rescue his fame and incorruptibility. The 13 (14.29 %) expressive speech acts sketch this image effectively and, in this way, participate a great deal in the suicidal person's effort to hold up his claim of innocence.

Moreover, recalling the image of the "good father" is never far-away of the whole portrayal. For this purpose, the suicidal person devotes a fair share, 8 (8.79 %) directives, for making wills for his family. These wills are given over to keep the happy life of his children (e.g. Let my kids live in peace from you) and decreasing others sorrow (e.g. Don't feel sorry for me). Thus, as he trivializes his life to be in the clear and gets rid of stigma, he wishes to keep the life of his children secure and to save his friends' emotions. Thus, people may say "he is worthy sympathy!"

As if it were not his choice, Simpson confines his resolve to keep his family to only one (1.09 %) commissive speech act (And I would take whatever it took to make it work). This is, perceptibly, a clear hint that suicide, at this point, is not a goal but, rather, a means at least for this person. This can be considered another approach of defense and, accordingly, a complementary part of the whole portrayal of innocence. Thus, it is hard to believe, after this emotion-evoking account, that such family-loving person can be a criminal.

Depression and suicide sometimes go hand in hand and death becomes remedial, i.e. a goal. This is already a tragedy in which the suicidal person is never a tragic hero for s/he is absolutely defeated and knows nothing about triumph over difficulties. Yet, the depressed person is often spotless since it is a cancerous disease whose consequence is suicide. The second suicide letter is Virginia Woolf's, the writer, and it mulls over depression and the supremacy of the thought of suicide over her mind.

Out of 34 speech acts, 28 (82.35 %) assertives summarize the reasons that lead to the decision behind leaving life. This is, nonetheless, defensible simply because the depressed person thinks that it is nobody's fault. It is plainly a disease and this letter is a cry of pain and suffering (e.g. I feel certain I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of those terrible times. And I shan't recover this time. I begin to hear voices, and I can't concentrate. So I am doing what seems the best thing to do). Woolf tries to affirm the fact that death is the matter-of-fact destiny of her torment. It is the only alternative seen. As such, this high score of assertive speech acts is fair enough. That is, the suicidal person shows the details of her state, clarifies the symptoms of her disease, and justifies the resolution of this story, i.e. death.

Table (2): Speech Acts in the Second Letter

Speech Act	No	%
Assertives	28	82.35
Directives	0	0
Commissives	0	0
Expressives	6	17.64
Declaratives	0	0
Total	34	99.99

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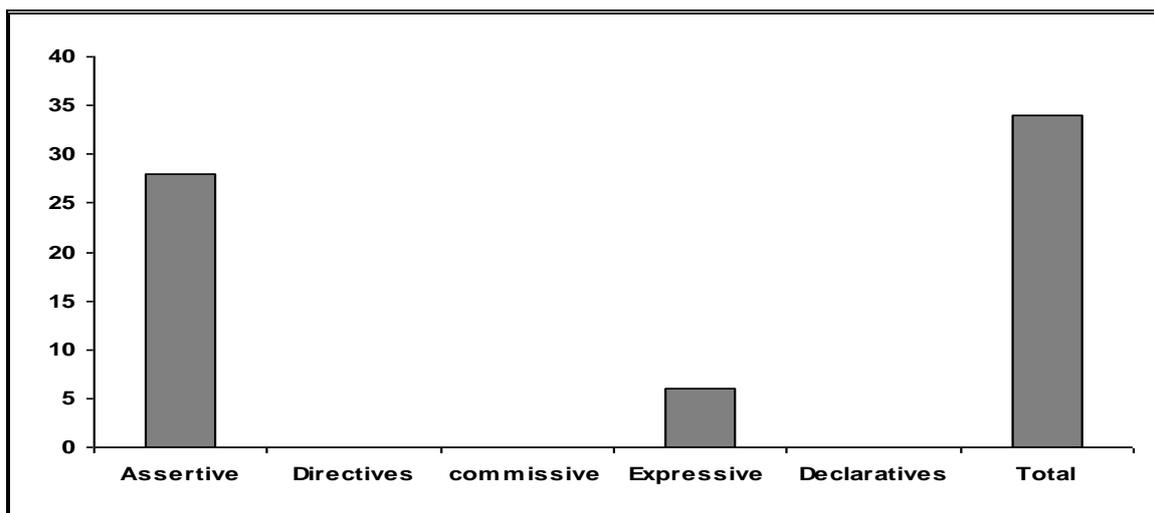


Figure (2): Speech Acts in the Second Letter

Nevertheless, Woolf has been a victim of depression that makes her life a dark tunnel whose destination is death. For her, time is limited and consequently, she makes preparations. One of these preparations is giving thanks and showing gratitude to those who offer help and show support particularly her husband (e.g. What I want to say is I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good). Accordingly the 6 (17.64 %) expressive speech acts are fair enough in this context. What is really noteworthy is that there is no commissive speech acts that, at least, may refer to the suicidal person's intention to commit suicide. However, this is reasonable for Woolf who considers suicide something taken for granted and needs no promises or commitments. It is inevitable.

Suicide, in the third letter – which is anonymous – is a devastating companion of life. It is a conqueror of any survival will. It obliterates all the icons of support whose chief is religion. That is, present though in the mind of this suicidal person, religious instructions neither back nor change his/her mind simply because s/he realizes that it is nothing but a disease. This is never uncommon since depression plagues the mind of this person. It is lucid that suicide becomes a target.

Table (3): Speech Acts in the Third Letter

Speech Act	No	%
Assertives	22	95.65
Directives	1	4.34
Commissives	0	0
Expressives	0	0
Declaratives	0	0
Total	23	99.99

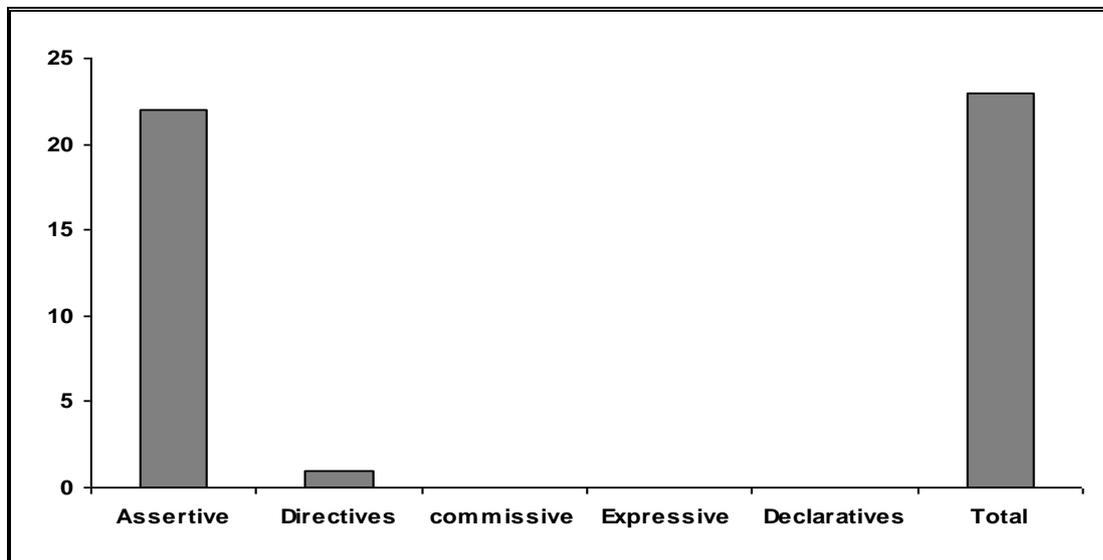


Figure (3): Speech Acts in the Third Letter

The highest score of speech acts, 22 (95.65 %), are devoted to affirm the fact that life becomes insignificant and death becomes predictable. Nothing can stop death in this case because it is the end of a long-term suffering (e.g. I've been hospitalized for attempts before. I've been put on medications to help the depression... the mental disorders that doctors are so quick to diagnose. I'm sick of it all. Why should I bother trying anymore? I'm not even afraid of dying. I'm not afraid of pain). This dominant share of assertives is, as such, justifiable. In other words, a battle with depression results a loser who seems busy giving the details of his/her surrender. It is grief-stricken that the depressed person is blinded by the absolute will to leave life. S/he sees nothing but darkness.

Prayers, nonetheless, are requested through a mere one directive, (4.34 %). When spelled out in the religious environment where this suicidal person is

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raised, this is a bit odd (e.g. Please pray for me). Actually, there is nothing odd for faith plays no role in backing this person simply because he is blinded by his screaming will to get rid of life. According to the confessions of the depressed person, it is hardly curable because neither medications nor faith work and the suicide ghost remains roaming around. This is scaring for it seems that depression is such a dangerous disease that it prohibits any attempt to have even a little flicker of hope to get power to challenge.

The fourth suicide letter – which is anonymous – bursts with grievances. This suicidal person tries to attract attention to the fact that she is a victim of unjust world in which man is lost in alienation. Suicide has been a means to avoid the disaster of watching a son facing death sentence and living alone afterward. The 17, (80.95 %), assertives are devoted to show claims (e.g. I can no longer go through this any more.), tell details (e.g. I wrote you a letter about my son who is charged with capital murder of his father. Well, I found out two days ago that his case is going to the circuit court.) , and giving reasons for committing suicide (e.g. I keep trying but can't hold on any longer. I am hurting inside deeply... I am all alone, since nobody has ever cared for me).

Table (4): Speech Acts in the Fourth Letter

Speech Act	No	%
Assertive	17	80.95
Directives	0	0
commissive	4	19.04
Expressive	0	0
Declaratives	0	0
Total	21	99.99

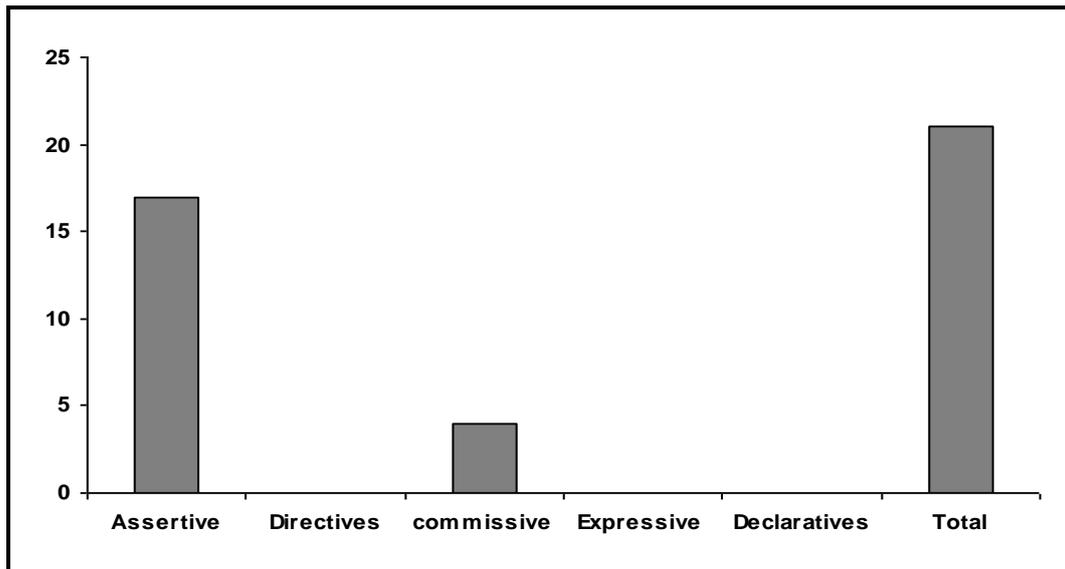


Figure (5): Speech Acts in the Fourth Letter

The intention to commit suicide has been repeated 6 times by means of 6 (19.04 %) commissive speech acts (e.g. Before I see my son get the death sentence, I will take my own life... I would rather shoot myself). This is a fair share when pronounced in the context of showing refusal for reality and begging sympathy.

For the fifth suicidal letter – which is anonymous – life is a problem whose solution is death. It is a long journey of failure to find harmony with the world. In this journey, the suicidal person passed over many stations. Yet, none occupies his mind other than death. It is, at the moment, his/her destination. Experience, not spiritual flaws, originates the dark vision of this suicidal person.

Table (5): Speech Acts in the Fifth Letter

Speech Act	No	%
Assertives	12	92.3
Directives	1	7.69
Commissives	0	0
Expressives	0	0
Declaratives	0	0
Total	13	99.99

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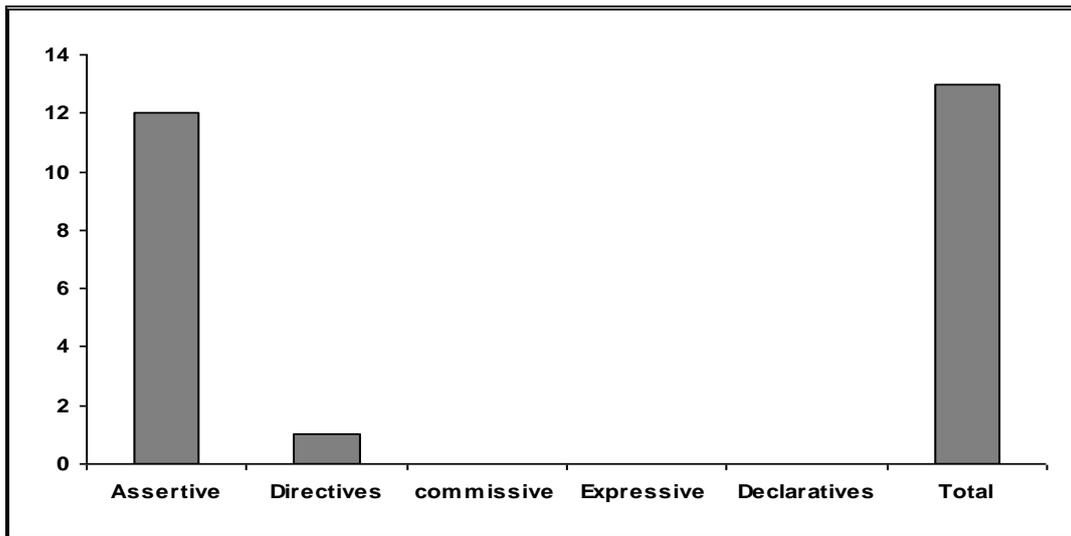


Figure (5): Speech Acts in the Fifth Letter

12 (92.3 %) assertive speech acts refer to the suicidal person's content that life is not worthy-living. This very high score of assertive speech acts outlines the state of helplessness and desperation s/he arrives at (e.g. I know how bad I feel and totally hopeless and that I am not doing my kids any good... so why not commit suicide?). Social support and religious instructions participate no bit in changing his/her mind at the time nothing wrong with society and religion. It is simply the suicidal person's failure to find harmony (e.g. I read the verse you had (*"If I walk in darkness without one ray of light let me trust the Lord, let me rely upon God."* Isaiah 50:10) but I also believe that God would not give us more than we can handle and I have more than I can handle).

On the other hand, it is obvious that death almost becomes foreseeable. That is why the suicidal person asks for prayers but only once, i.e. through one directive speech act (I am writing for prayers). This is a relatively low share. It seems that this person has no belief that people are created for happiness and that is why s/he predicts that prayers may not work and, in turn, prayers become a luxury rather than necessity.

Results and Conclusions

Throughout the study, it has been evident that speech acts are roughly inclusive in conveying the viewpoints of the suicidal people concerning their life and the world. Hence, suicide letters show various aims such as attracting attention, begging sympathy, demonstrating devotion, and so forth. Nevertheless, exploring what is going on in the mind of the suicidal persons pragmatically confirms that they generally have a mutual procedure to arrive at such aims namely explanation. In other words, the suicidal persons focus on giving justifications for their act, i.e. committing suicide. This is

common simply because suicide is a violation to the instructions of religion, since it is a sin, and the norms of the society, since it is a stigma and a crime. In this respect, assertive speech acts are highly convenient. That is, assertive speech acts, having a dominant share (148 out of 182); convey the fact that saying farewell to life requires leaving things uncluttered. And before they die, the suicidal people prefer to have a moment of truth. Suicide letters are, thus, principally, content-revealing, truth-telling and opinion-explaining. This is, precisely, compatible to the assumption previously raised and consequently, speech acts are exhaustively valid to study the suicidal persons' perspectives, beliefs, plans, hopes, and so forth.

Other kinds of speech acts have limited shares, as Table (6) and Figure (6) show. Thus, directives participate 10 times, out of 182, only in making requests and asking the listeners to do things. This is conceivable since the suicidal persons leave everything behind and confine themselves to only one target, i.e. having an end to their life. Commissives, on the other hand, bind the suicidal persons to future acts 8 times. This is fair enough because such people have no future since their lives are already a past. Expressive speech acts occur 19 times. It is, obviously, a limited share but it can be attributed to the fact that the context of rationalizing, rather than expressing feelings towards, suicide is dominant,

Table (6): Speech Acts in the Five Letters

Speech act	Letter 1	Letter 2	Letter 3	Letter 4	Letter 5	Total
Assertives	69	28	22	17	12	148
Directives	8	0	1	0	1	10
Commissives	1	0	0	4	0	5
Expressives	13	6	0	0	0	19
Declaratives	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	91	34	23	21	13	182

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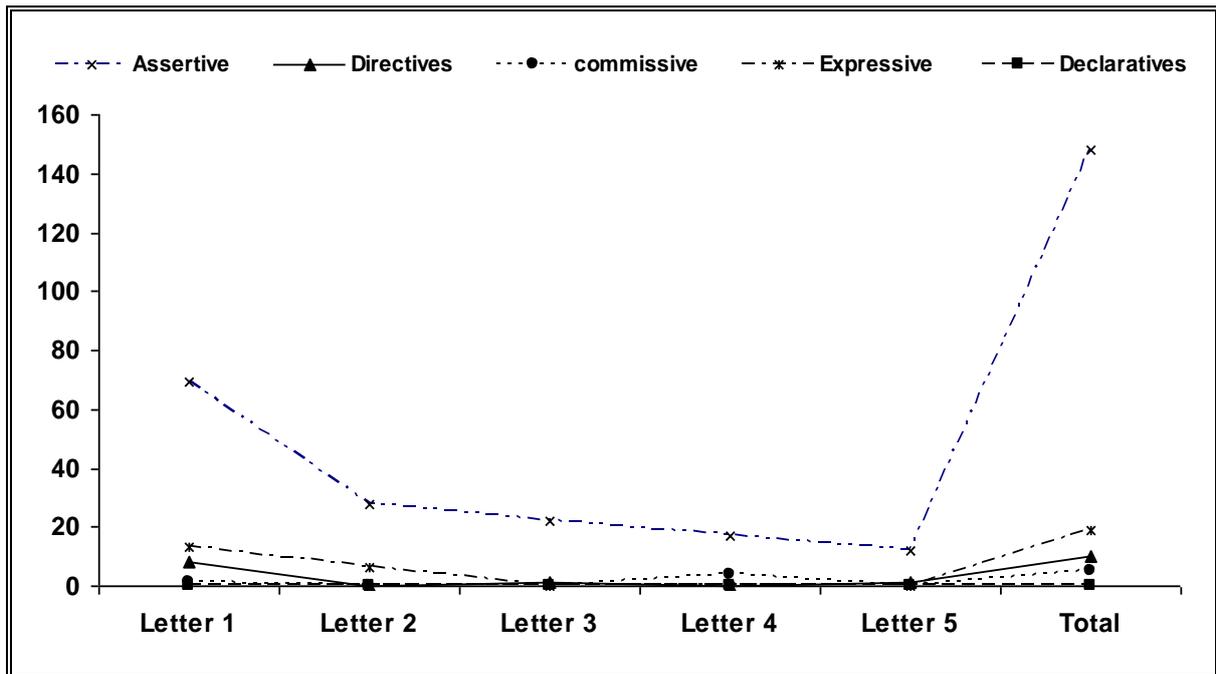


Figure (6): Speech Acts in the Five Letters

Remarkably, the results in the five letters are, more or less, consistent. That is, assertive speech acts get the highest scores in the five letters whereas directive, commissive, and expressive speech acts gain relatively low or no scores. Declaratives have never been used.

Relevantly, this study confirms that linguistics can participate a great deal in analyzing and studying the motivations of suicide and, hence, they can be spotted and, then, handled because suicide letters generally show a scheme of ongoing events of disappointments and failure that leads to an unquestionable certainty that life is not worthy and that death, mysterious though, is an agony-ending resolution. They are, as well, an ear-piercing cry to attract the attention of the world for the issues they raise.

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Appendix: Suicide Letters

The First Suicide Letter: Available at

<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/Simpson/911.html>

To whom it may concern: First, everyone understands I have nothing to do with Nicole's murder. I loved her, always have and always will. If we had a problem, it's because I loved her so much.

Recently, we came to the understanding that for now we were not right for each other, at least for now. Despite our love we were different, and that's why we mutually agreed to go our separate ways. It was tough splitting for a second time, but we both knew it was for the best.

Inside I had no doubt that in the future, we would be close as friends or more. Unlike what has been written in the press, Nicole and I had a great relationship for most of our lives together. Like all long-term relationships, we had a few downs and ups. I took the heat New Year's 1989 because that's what I was supposed to do. I did not plead no contest for any other reason but to protect our privacy and was advised it would end the press hype.

I don't want to belabor knocking the press, but I can't believe what is being said. Most of it is totally made up. I know you have a job to do, but as a last wish, please, please, please, leave my children in peace. Their lives will be tough enough.

Daghir and Naima

I want to send my love and thanks to all my friends . I'm sorry I can't name every one of you , especially A.C. man, thanks for being in my life . The support and friendship I received from so many: Wayne Hughes, Lewis Markes, Frank Olson, Mark Packer, Bender, Bobby Kardashian.

I wish we had spent more time together in recent years . My golfing buddies, Hoss, Alan Austin, Mike, Craig, Bender, Wyler, Sandy, Jay, Donnie, thanks for the fun . All my teammates over the years, Reggie, you were the soul of my pro career . Ahmad, I never stopped being proud of you . Marcus, you've got a great lady in Catherine, don't mess it up. Bobby Chandler, thanks for always being there. Skip and Kathy, I love you guys, without you I never would have made it through this far. Marguerite, thanks for the early years . We had some fun. Paula, what can I say ? You are special. I'm sorry we're not going to have our chance. God brought you to me I now see. As I leave, you'll be in my thoughts.

I think of my life and feel I've done most of the right things. What the outcome people will look and point. I can't take that. I can't subject my children to that. This way they can move on and go on with their lives. Please, if I've done anything worthwhile in my life. Let my kids live in peace from you (press) .

I've had a good life. I'm proud of how I lived. My mama taught me to do fun to other. I treated people the way I wanted to be treated. I've always tried to be up and helpful so why is this happening? I'm sorry for the Goldman family. I know how much it hurts.

Nicole and I had a good life together. All this press talk about a rocky relationship was no more than what every long-term relationship experiences. All her friends will confirm that I have been totally loving and understanding of what she's been going through. At times I have felt like a battered husband or boyfriend but I loved her, make that clear to everyone. And I would take whatever it took to make it work.

Don't feel sorry for me. I've had a great life, great friends. Please think of the real O.J. and not this lost person .

Thanks for making my life special. I hope I helped yours.

The Second Suicide Letter: Available at

<http://www.chasingthefrog.com/reelfaces/thehours.php>

Dearest, I feel certain I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of those terrible times. And I shan't recover this time. I begin to hear voices, and I can't concentrate. So I am doing what seems the best thing to do. You have

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given me the greatest possible happiness. You have been in every way all that anyone could be. I don't think two people could have been happier till this terrible disease came. I can't fight any longer. I know that I am spoiling your life, that without me you could work. And you will I know. You see I can't even write this properly. I can't read. What I want to say is I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. I want to say that - everybody knows it. If anybody could have saved me it would have been you. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness. I can't go on spoiling your life any longer.

I don't think two people could have been happier than we have been.

The Third, Fourth, and Fifth Suicide Letters : Available at
<http://www.sowingseedsoffait.com/suicide.letters.htm>

Letter 3: "I'm not sure why I'm writing this. I went online to look up information on suicide: statistics, methods and all that stuff. I was raised in a family where I went to church every Sunday and was taught the importance of faith and God in our lives. It doesn't matter. It doesn't help me. I got hurt... bad... when I was a child. I was hurt in a way that no person, no little child should be hurt. I think about suicide on a daily basis ... sometimes it's all that I can think about. I've been hospitalized for attempts before. I've been put on medications to help the depression ... the mental disorders that doctors are so quick to diagnose. I'm sick of it all. Why should I bother trying anymore? I'm not even afraid of dying. I'm not afraid of pain. I just want to leave this world. Please pray for me. I'm tired of trying."

Letter 4: "I am writing this letter because soon I will hear what I have not wanted to hear. I wrote you a letter about my son who is charged with capital murder of his father. Well, I found out two days ago that his case is going to the circuit court. He is charged with both robbery and capital murder. Before I see my son get the death sentence I will take my own life. I can no longer go through this any more. I keep trying but can't hold on any longer. I am hurting inside deeply... I am all alone, since nobody has ever cared for me. I no longer want to live in this world full of hate and hurt. It is me that has to watch my son and I would rather shoot myself. Like I told my counselor today, I don't want to live anymore."

Letter 5: "As I read your story on suicide, I think it is so easy to sit and judge those that do kill themselves... I know how bad I feel and totally hopeless and that I am not doing my kids any good ... so why not commit suicide? I guess I am writing for prayers because I know I shouldn't kill myself but I just cannot get the strength to go on anymore. I read the verse you had ("*If I walk in darkness without one ray of light let me trust the Lord, let me rely upon God.*" Isaiah 50:10) but I also believe that God would not give us more than we can handle and I have more than I can handle."

الخلاصة

ان اللغة هي نافذة العقل وهي من اعقد انواع السلوك التي يمارسها الانسان ولذلك قيل ان فهم اللغة يفتح الطريق أمام فهم العقل الانساني والانسان عموماً. تحاول الدراسة الحالية ان تستكشف وجود اي صبغة مميزة في استعمال افعال الكلام كما يصنفها سيرل (1971) في خطابات الاشخاص ذوي العقلية الانتحارية من خلال دراسة لبعض هكذا خطابات. ومن خلال بحثنا هذا فأنتنا لا نحاول ان نجذب انتباه علماء اللغة فحسب بل علماء النفس ايضاً. يمكن لبحوث أخرى ان تتحو نحو بحثنا هذا مع جوانب لغوية أخرى.