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ARTHUR MİLLER'IN *SATICININ ÖLÜMÜ* ADLI OYUNUNDA AİLE İÇİ GÜÇ MÜCADELESİNİN BİÇEMBİLİMSEL BİR ANALİZİ*

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Öz

Bu çalışma *Satıcının Ölümü* adlı oyundaki güç mücadelesini 'biçembilimsel' açıdan incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Oyunda Loman ailesinin dört üyesi arasında kendini gösteren güç mücadelesinde bilhassa baba Willy ve oğlu Biff tarafından kullanılan dildeki 'söz-sırası' ve 'kibarlık' ilkelerinin ihlâli dikkat çekicidir. Bu ihlâller baba ve oğul tarafından üstünlük sağlamak ve 'söylemsel' gücü elde etmek için kullanılan yöntemlerdir. Oyundaki bu güç mücadelesinde karakterlerin dil kullanım tercihleri Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson ve Herman'ın 'söz-sırası' ile Leech, Brown ve Levinson'ın 'kibarlık' stratejileri üzerine yaptıkları çalışmalar ve ileri sürdükleri kuramlar çerçevesinde incelenecek ve söylemsel gücün dinamik yapısı ortaya konulacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Satıcının Ölümü, Biçembilim, Kibarlık, Söz-sırası, Söylemsel Güç

A Stylistic Analysis of Intra-familial Struggle for Power in *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller

Abstract

What this article will focus on is a 'stylistic' analysis of struggle for power in the play *Death of a Salesman*. This power struggle among the members of the Loman family is characterised by the violations of 'turn-taking' and 'politeness' strategies. These strategies are violated especially by the father Willy and his elder son Biff and these violations are the methods they use to gain discursive power over others. These language choices of characters will be analysed in the light of the theories by Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson and Herman on 'turn-taking' and by Leech, Brown and Levinson on 'politeness' in order to reveal the dynamic nature of discursive power.

Key Words: Death of a Salesman, Stylistics, Politeness, Turn-taking, Discursive Power

The concept of 'power' has been studied across disciplines for centuries and approached in many ways from varying theoretical perspectives. In this article the focus will be not on institutionally or socially constructed power as it is conventionally defined but on 'discursive power' enacted by discourse participants through their conversational choices. Language and gender theorists Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman (1985: 116) distinguish between three types of participant identities in a conversation:

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1. 'master identities', which crosscut all occasions of discourse: these are our more permanent identities such as age, sex, social class.
2. 'situated identities', which inhabit particular social settings: these are less permanent identities such as professor and student.
3. 'discourse identities', which constantly shift between discourse participants: these are ephemeral identities created by the verbal activities that we engage in.

Master and situated identities endow a person with social or institutional power in accordance with age, gender, class, status or occupation of that person. However, these attributes do not secure a permanent state of power for the person since discourse identities lead to a rearrangement of power relations in conversation. Discourse identities supply him/her with 'discursive power' so that s/he can exercise this power over other participants even if they are socially or institutionally more powerful. Discursive power is dynamic and might be transferred from one participant to another in a conversation. The conversational strategies employed by participants affect this dynamic power relationship. Among conversational strategies especially 'turn-taking' and '(im)politeness' strategies are the most preferred devices for participants to gain discursive power over others. In the light of the studies by Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson or Herman on 'turn-taking' and Leech, Brown, Levinson or Culpeper on '(im)politeness', a stylistic analysis proves to be an efficient and scientific method to analyze this potential of language to bring about a change in power relations.

The concept of 'the turn' is central to the organization of a conversation. When a participant speaks, s/he takes a 'turn'. Participants are expected to speak in allocated turns. In their article "A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation" Harvey Sacks, Emanuel A. Schegloff and Gail Jefferson (1974: 700-701) lay out a basic systematics for 'turn-taking' in a conversation:

(I) Speaker-change recurs, or at least occurs (cf. §4.1, below).
(2) Overwhelmingly, one party talks at a time (cf. §4.2).
(3) Occurrences of more than one speaker at a time are common, but brief (cf. 14.3).
(4) Transitions (from one turn to a next) with no gap and no overlap are common. Together with transitions characterized by slight gap or slight overlap, they make up the vast majority of transitions (cf. §4.4).
(5) Turn order is not fixed, but varies (cf. §4.5).
(6) Turn size is not fixed, but varies (cf. §4.6).
(7) Length of conversation is not specified in advance (cf. §4.7).
(8) What parties say is not specified in advance (cf. §4.8).

(9) Relative distribution of turns is not specified in advance (cf. §4.9).
(10) Number of parties can vary (cf. §4.10).
(11) Talk can be continuous or discontinuous (cf. §4.1l).
(12) Turn allocation techniques are obviously used. A current speaker may select a next speaker (as when he addresses a question to another party); or parties may self-select in starting to talk (cf. §4.1).
(13) Various 'turn-constructional units' are employed; e.g., turns can be projectedly 'one word long', or they can be sentential in length (cf.§4.13).
(14) Repair mechanisms exist for dealing with turn-taking errors and violations; e.g., if two parties find themselves talking at the same time, one of them will stop prematurely, thus repairing the trouble (cf. §4.l4)

This basic systematics for turn-taking provides a framework both to organize and to analyze a conversation. Participants' 'choices' related to the essential elements of turn-taking organization laid out by Sacks and his friends above serve as a starting point for a stylistic analysis of discursive power held by the participants. In her article "Turn Management in Drama" Vimala Herman states that "such choices bring significant elements of meaning which can condition the content and function of what is 'said' or meant by a speaker's speech" (1998: 24). According to Herman the use of interruptions, overlaps or longer turns are choices of participants which display the changing power relations in a conversation. "For instance," she says "where a dramatic character is consistently interrupted and the opportunity to speak is consistently denied to one or other character, and no counter-bid to speak is successful, the interrupted speaker can be interpreted as the less powerful interactant" (1998: 24). These choices related to 'turn-taking' such as the length of the turns, the use of overlaps, the texture of the turns or the use of interruptions provide stylisticians with a useful tool to analyze the relationship between turn-taking patterns and power as it is summarized in the table below:

("Analysing Major Barbara," n.d.)

Conversational Behaviour	Powerful Participants	Powerless Participants
Who has most turns?	√	
Who has the longest turns?	√	
Who interrupts?	√	
Who is interrupted?		√
Who allocates turns?	√	
Who initiates?	√	
Who responds?		√
Who uses speech acts like questioning, commanding,	√	

demanding, threatening, and complaining?		
Who uses speech acts like answering, agreeing, acceding, giving in, and apologising?		√
Who controls/changes the topic of talk?	√	
Who uses 'title + surname' terms of address?		√
Who uses 'first name' terms of address?	√	

Apart from 'turn-taking' strategies, '(im)politeness' strategies also endow participants with a wide range of choices to gain or maintain discursive power over others in a conversation. Among the theorists studying on 'politeness' Geoffrey Leech is the first one who offers a general approach for its analysis. Taking Paul Grice's 'Cooperative Principle' as its basis Leech (1983) proposes the Politeness Principle in his work *Principles of Pragmatics* and he lays out six politeness maxims similar to the conversational maxims proposed by Grice:

1. Tact Maxim: (a) Minimize the cost to *other* (b) Maximize the benefit to *other*.
2. Generosity Maxim: (a) Minimize benefit to *self* (b) Maximize cost to *self*.
3. Approbation Maxim: (a) Minimize dispraise of *other* (b) Maximize praise of *other*.
4. Modesty Maxim: (a) Minimize praise of self (b) Maximize dispraise of self
5. Agreement Maxim: (a) Minimize disagreement between *self* and *other* (b) Maximize agreement between *self* and *other*.
6. Sympathy Maxim: (a) Minimize antipathy between *self* and *other* (b) Maximize sympathy between *self* and *other*. (1983: 132)

These are the maxims participants should obey for "the social goal of establishing and maintaining comity" (Leech, 1983: 104). Leech states that while choosing the most appropriate politeness strategies in a conversation participants should also take into consideration three interrelated pragmatic scales:

1. The Cost-Benefit Scale on which is estimated the cost or benefit of the proposed action of *A* to *s* or to *h*.
2. The Optionality Scale on which illocutions are ordered according to the amount of choice which *s* allows to *h*.

3. The Indirectness Scale on which, from *s*'s point of view, illocutions are ordered with respect to the length of the path connecting the illocutionary act to its illocutionary goal. (1983:123)

For instance, the utterance "Study for your exam" maximizes the benefit to the other (hearer) so it complies with the tact maxim; however, it seems to be impolite since it is an imperative in form and it does not give the hearer an option. Optionality and indirectness scales are not operationalised. Therefore, in order to have a conversation in accordance with politeness principle, participants should consider not only the aspects like 'benefit, cost, praise, sympathy or agreement' but also the parameters like 'choice or indirectness'. If the benefit for the hearer is higher than the cost, if the speaker gives an option to the hearer or if utterances are more indirect, what participants say will sound more polite. In addition to these three scales, Leech also mentions two more factors participants should consider in a conversation: vertical distance and horizontal distance. Vertical distance is "the degree of distance in terms of power or authority" and the horizontal distance is "social distance" (1983: 126). In other words, while choosing politeness strategies for a healthy and successful conversation factors such as age, status, social class or degree of intimacy should be taken into account. However, sometimes Leech's politeness maxims can be violated by participants in a conversation so that they can exert 'discursive power' over others. By maximizing cost or dispraise to others, by supporting disagreement or antipathy, by using direct utterances or by giving no option, they violate the politeness maxims and scales and they employ impoliteness strategies instead in an attempt to gain power, even if temporarily.

Apart from Leech, Brown and Levinson (1987) are two of the earliest theorists to study politeness. Building on Goffman's notion of 'face', Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness suggests that everyone has a *face*, in other words "the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself" (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 61). According to their theory, face consists of two related aspects:

(a) negative face: the basic claim to territories, personal preserves, rights ton on-distraction – i.e. to freedom of action and freedom from imposition.
(b) Positive face: the positive consistent self-image or 'personality' (crucially including the desire that this self-image be appreciated and approved of) claimed by interactants. (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 61)

For a healthy and successful communication participants should cooperate in maintaining and enhancing each other's face; in other words, they should use positive and negative politeness strategies by showing appreciation or approval and avoiding any imposition. However, sometimes participants prefer to threaten others' face in order to protect their own faces and to gain and maintain their discursive power in conversation. According to Brown and Levinson, acts that impede hearer's freedom of

action and put some pressure on hearer such as orders, requests, suggestions, advice, threats or warnings threaten hearer's negative face, and acts that display negative evaluation of hearer such as disapproval, criticism, contempt, complaints accusations, insults, contradictions, challenges or violent emotions threaten hearer's positive face (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 65-67). They call these 'impolite' acts 'Face Threatening Acts' (FTAs) and these acts furnish participants with an opportunity to gain discursive power in conversation.

Both turn-taking strategies and politeness strategies summarized above can be seen as guidelines for participants to follow for an effective communication; however, these same strategies can also show participants the way they can manipulate the conversation in their favor. Furthermore, these strategies and their violation form a framework for the analysis of the power relations among characters in dramatic works. Violation of these strategies may endow the characters in plays with discursive power even if they are socially or institutionally powerless and this discursive power can change hands easily depending on which participant manipulates the turn-taking and politeness strategies best. Arthur Miller's play *Death of a Salesman* is a particularly useful means of illustrating the power of language and this dynamic nature of discursive power.

Death of a Salesman (1949) is a Pulitzer winner play written by Arthur Miller. The play has been studied by many critics as an attack on the American Dream of achieving success and wealth. Set in America, it relates the conflicts within one family, mainly revolving around its main character Willy Loman. It tells the story of the last day of Willy Loman's life and it ends with his suicide and funeral. The Loman family consists of four members: Willy, his wife Linda, their sons Biff and Happy. Willy, who is a travelling salesman at the age of 63, is exhausted after years of working life. His elder son Biff has just returned home to visit his family. Neither the father nor the son has achieved their goals in life so far and there is high tension between these two characters throughout the play. Two extracts have been chosen to analyse the dynamic power relations among the members of the Loman family. In the analysis of the extracts given below, the turn-taking and politeness strategies employed by the characters will be identified, and the specific choices of language uses and violations will be interpreted for what they contribute to the power relations among the characters. The aim of this stylistic analysis of power relations is to discover how it operates.

What follows is a scene – towards the end of Act I – that consists of all the family members (Willy, Linda, Biff and Happy) conversing in the kitchen. The turns are numbered for reference.

[Willy has just returned to his home in Brooklyn one night, exhausted from a failed sales trip. He is also irritated by the existence of Biff – his elder son who has returned from the west to visit his family. Willy has constant flashbacks. While immersed in his imaginary conversations, he overhears Biff, Happy, and Linda arguing about him. Then, Willy enters the kitchen and yells at Biff. The conversation below is between Willy and other family members after he enters the kitchen]

(1) WILLY: Go back to the West! Be a carpenter, a cowboy, enjoy yourself!
(2) LINDA: Willy, he was just saying...
(3) WILLY: I heard what he said!
(4) HAPPY *(trying to quiet Willy)*: Hey, Pop, come on now...
(5) WILLY *(continuing over Happy's line)*: They laugh at me, heh? Go to Filene's, go to the Hub, go to Slattery's, Boston. Call out the name Willy Loman and see what happens! Big shot!
(6) BIFF: All right, Pop.
(7) WILLY: Big!
(8) BIFF: All right!
(9) WILLY: Why do you always insult me?
(10) BIFF: I didn't say a word. *(To Linda.)* Did I say a word?
(11) LINDA: He didn't say anything, Willy.
(12) WILLY *(going to the doorway of the living room)*: All right, good night, good night.
(13) LINDA: Willy, dear, he just decided...
(14) WILLY *(to Biff)*: If you get tired hanging around tomorrow, paint the ceiling I put up in the living room.
(15) BIFF: I'm leaving early tomorrow.
(16) HAPPY: He's going to see Bill Oliver, Pop.
(17) WILLY *(interestedly)*: Oliver? For what?
(18) BIFF *(with reserve, but trying, trying)*: He always said he'd stake me. I'd like to go into business, so maybe I can take him up on it.
(19) LINDA: Isn't that wonderful?
(20) WILLY: Don't interrupt. What's wonderful about it? There's fifty men in the City of New York who'd stake him. *(To Biff.)* Sporting goods?
(21) BIFF: I guess so. I know something about it and...
(22) WILLY: He knows something about it! You know sporting goods better than Spalding, for God's sake! How much is he giving you?
(23) BIFF: I don't know, I didn't even see him yet, but...
(24) WILLY: Then what're you talkin' about?
(25) BIFF *(getting angry)*: Well, all I said was I'm gonna see him, that's all!
(26) WILLY *(turning away)*: Ah, you're counting your chickens again.
(27) BIFF *(starting left for the stairs.)*: Oh, Jesus, I'm going to sleep!

(28) WILLY *(calling after him)*: Don't curse in this house!
(29) BIFF *(turning)*: Since when did you get so clean?
(30) HAPPY *(trying to stop them)*: Wait a...
(31) WILLY: Don't use that language to me! I won't have it!

(*Death of a Salesman*, I, 69-71)

In this extract taken from the beginning of the play the tension is felt between the father and the son although according to our schematic knowledge related to family relations the family members are generally expected to be less aggressive in their choices of conversational strategies. This tense relationship among the family members and the dynamic nature of discursive power will be clearly seen when the turns are analysed in detail:

(1) WILLY: Go back to the West! Be a carpenter, a cowboy, enjoy yourself!

In turn (1) Willy addresses his son Biff and he uses 'commands'. They are all direct commands and give forceful directives. Commanding is a kind of directive/ impositive which influence the addressee to do something. Using imperatives expresses the belief that the addressee will perform the action. Therefore, in terms of 'optionality scale' of Leech the use of imperatives does not allow the addressee to have an option in that matter. Therefore, commands are less polite than questions as they give no option. Also in terms of 'cost-benefit scale', at first the directives seem to be beneficial for Biff telling him to enjoy himself, but they maximize cost, not benefit, to the hearer, Biff. Therefore, Willy breaks 'the maxim of tact'. Willy threatens 'positive face' of Biff and breaks the 'approbation maxim' as he says critical things about his lifestyle and maximizes dispraise of Biff. He also threatens Biff's 'negative face', impeding his attempt to achieve his goals by making decisions about Biff's life. Using commands, which give no option to the addressee and threatening the positive and negative faces of the addressee and breaking the maxims of tact and approbation, Willy tries to demonstrate his power and control over Biff.

(2) LINDA: Willy, he was just saying...
(3) WILLY: I heard what he said!

In turn (2) Linda abides by 'the maxims of agreement and sympathy', maximizing agreement and sympathy while minimizing disagreement and antipathy between the parts. In this way, she is trying to facilitate the flow of conversation smoothly. In the middle of her utterance Willy interrupts Linda. Interrupting her, he induces her to fall silent. Through interruptions Willy dominates conversation.

(4) HAPPY *(trying to quiet Willy)*: Hey, Pop, come on now...

In this turn, Happy, the younger son, tries to calm his father down, maximizing 'agreement' between the parts and accepts the power and authority of Willy just as his mother Linda does. Their preference to promote agreement makes them powerless parties in conversation.

(5) WILLY *(continuing over Happy's line)*: They laugh at me, heh? Go to Filene's, go to the Hub, go to Slattery's, Boston. Call out the name Willy Loman and see what happens! Big shot!

Willy again interrupts another participant, his younger son Happy, and changes the topic. Holding the control of the topic and interrupting others show his discursive power over others in conversation. He praises himself, and praising himself he breaks 'the maxim of modesty'. He again uses 'commands' to praise himself, giving no option to others to oppose what he says.

(6) BIFF: All right, Pop.
(7) WILLY: Big!
(8) BIFF: All right!

Biff abides by the maxim of agreement, trying to minimize the disagreement and calm his father down.

(9) WILLY: Why do you always insult me?

(10) BIFF: I didn't say a word. *(To Linda.)* Did I say a word?

In turn (9) Willy uses the speech act of 'questioning' and it is a direct question. In fact, although it seems to be a question requiring an answer, it is a command which demands Biff not to insult him. Biff defends himself. He opposes what his father has said and then asks his mother Linda for confirmation.

(11) LINDA: He didn't say anything, Willy.

Linda again tries to maximize the agreement between the parts, abiding by the maxim of agreement. By using his first name to address him, she tries to reinforce intimacy. Her role is to facilitate the flow of conversation and minimize the disagreement.

(12) WILLY *(going to the doorway of the living room)*: All right, good night, good night.

Willy, paying no attention to what Linda has said, goes to the doorway and he withdraws from interaction altogether. Showing a lack of interest in what Linda is saying, he demonstrates his power over his wife.

(13)	LINDA: Willy, dear, he just decided...
(14)	WILLY *(to Biff)*: If you get tired hanging around tomorrow, paint the ceiling I put up in the living room.

Linda, on the other hand, goes on her attempts to facilitate the conversation. Her use of his first name and 'dear' in her utterance indicates that she seeks to make connections and reinforce intimacy. It also shows her inferior position compared to the powerful position of Willy. Willy again tries to withdraw from interaction. Before withdrawing, to show his power and control he gives a command to Biff. Commanding Biff to paint the ceiling maximizes the cost to Biff and breaks 'the maxim of tact'. It also threatens his 'negative face', telling him to do something. Although he uses 'if clause', it does not make it a polite request. It is a direct command, and using 'if clause' makes it sarcastic. Saying to him "you are hanging around all the time" is critical and unpleasant and it threatens his 'positive face' as well.

(15)	BIFF: I'm leaving early tomorrow.

Ignoring the sarcastic command of his father, Biff changes the topic. Taking over the control of the conversation, he opposes his father. He declares his power over him.

(16)	HAPPY: He's going to see Bill Oliver, Pop.

In this turn, Happy tries to explain what Biff means and soften the effect of what Biff says. In this way, he again tries to facilitate the conversation.

(17)	WILLY *(interestedly)*: Oliver? For what?

Willy shows an interest to the conversation, but again he demonstrates his power and control asking questions. Questions are used by powerful participants in a conversation as they give the speaker the power to elicit a response from another person.

(18)	BIFF *(with reserve, but trying, trying)*: He always said he'd stake me. I'd like to go into business, so maybe I can take him up on it.

In turn (18) Biff explains his plan, but he is not so sure about it. His use of the words like 'would like, maybe, can' shows his uncertainty and weakness.

(19)	LINDA: Isn't that wonderful?

(20) WILLY: Don't interrupt. What's wonderful about it? There's fifty men in the City of New York who'd stake him. *(To Biff.)* Sporting goods?

Making a supportive remark, Linda again tries to facilitate the conversation and ensure that the interaction proceeds smoothly. She asks Willy a question not to seek information but to seek confirmation. Her purpose is to gain his sympathy towards Biff abiding by 'the maxim of sympathy' and to reinforce agreement between the father and the son abiding by 'the maxim of agreement'. Although Willy is very interruptive in conversation, he hates being interrupted. He states his disagreement explicitly. He does not agree with Linda and his utterance showing his disagreement is not polite. Therefore, he breaks 'the maxim of agreement'. He uses 'questions' and 'commands'. Willy's dominance over others is clear in the conversation. He dominates the interaction by asking questions and giving commands.

(21) BIFF: I guess so. I know something about it and...

(22) WILLY: He knows something about it! You know sporting goods better than Spalding, for God's sake! How much is he giving you?

In turn (21) Biff's utterance and his use of the word 'guess' are indicatives of his uncertainty about the truth of his assertions. In turn (22) interrupting the sentence of Biff, Willy again breaks the turn-taking rules of conversation in order to establish his dominance. He controls the topic. He seems as if he is saying something critical about Biff as usual, but in fact he praises Biff in this turn, abiding by 'the maxim of approbation' and enhancing the positive face of Biff. After he praises Biff, he again asks a question that requires an answer and in this way he demonstrates his dominance once again in conversation.

(23) BIFF: I don't know, I didn't even see him yet, but...

(24) WILLY: Then what're you talkin' about?

In turn (23) Biff utters sentences that are indicatives of his uncertainty and lack of confidence. Questioning Biff and his plans, his father Willy shows his power. Here he contradicts his own sentences praising Biff, which shows that he does not have any belief in Biff and his capability to achieve.

(25) BIFF *(getting angry)*: Well, all I said was I'm gonna see him, that's all!

In turn (25) Biff gets angry about this competitive flow of conversation. He utters a clear sentence about his plan. Saying "that's all", he asks his father not to ask questions any more.

(26) WILLY *(turning away)*: Ah, you're counting your chickens again.

Willy maximizes the dispraise of Biff breaking 'the maxim of approbation' and threatens his positive face. His being critical of others all the time is one of the ways he shows his dominance.

(27)	BIFF *(starting left for the stairs.)*: Oh, Jesus, I'm going to sleep!

This time Biff decides to withdraw from interaction. This withdrawal and his use of the word ' Jesus' are the signs of opposition against his father's dominance.

(28)	WILLY *(calling after him)*: Don't curse in this house!
(29)	BIFF *(turning)*: Since when did you get so clean?

Although throughout the play Willy swears frequently and uses phrases like "God damnit" "what the hell" (for example, in turn (22) he uses the phrase "for God's sake"), he commands Biff not to curse. He does this to preserve his powerful position. In turn (29) questioning his father about his cursing, Biff opposes his dominance.

(30)	HAPPY *(trying to stop them)*: Wait a...
(31)	WILLY: Don't use that language to me! I won't have it!

Happy tries to calm them down and facilitate the conversation, but Willy interrupts him as usual. He realizes the attempt of Biff to oppose his authority and says that he will not allow it. He does not want to give up his authority.

After this detailed analysis of turns in terms of politeness and turn-taking strategies, the table below shows the relation between conversational behaviour of the characters and their discursive power:

Conversational Behaviour	
Who has most turns?	Willy (14 turns)
Who has the longest turns?	Willy (the longest is 28 words)
Who interrupts?	Willy
Who is interrupted?	Linda, Biff, Happy
Who allocates turns to?	Willy
Who initiates?	Willy
Who responds?	Biff
Who uses speech acts like questioning, commanding, demanding, threatening, and complaining?	Willy, Biff
Who uses speech acts like answering, agreeing, acceding, giving in, and apologising?	Biff, Linda and Happy

Who controls/changes the topic of talk?	Willy
Who uses 'title + surname' terms of address?	-
Who uses 'first name' terms of address?	Linda

Character	Words	Turns	Avarage
Willy	147	14	10,5
Linda	18	4	4,5
Biff	83	10	8,3
Happy	14	3	4,6

The stylistic analysis of the first extract shows that Willy is the dominant participant in the conversation as he is the one who controls the conversation. He controls the topic and flow of the talk; he controls the other participants' talks. He interrupts others; he always uses imperative and question sentences. His turns are longer than others'. Linda and Happy are the powerless participants in this conversation as they talk less than Willy and Biff and they are always interrupted and ignored by Willy. Their function is to facilitate the flow of the conversation smoothly and minimize the disagreement. They show submission to commands. Biff is second in terms of the length of speech. There is a competitive relationship between Willy and Biff in the conversation. The tension between them is strongly felt. Willy is always critical of Biff; he either asks questions or gives commands. Biff usually uses the speech act of "answering". His answers are generally short answers. They are not as informative as Willy wants. Towards the end of the conversation, instead of answering he asks a question. He questions his father and thus his authority. In the end he feds up with this power struggle and he gives in and decides to withdraw from the interaction altogether.

Apart from the turn-taking strategies, in any interaction there are principles of politeness participants should abide by in order to communicate smoothly. The main character Willy, interrupting his conversants throughout the whole conversation, breaks the principles of politeness. Apart from interrupting others, he threatens others' positive and negative faces and breaks the maxims of tact and approbation by giving commands and criticising. On the other hand, Linda and Happy abide by the maxims of agreement and sympathy trying to minimize disagreement and antipathy throughout the conversation. Although Biff is interrupted, criticised and questioned by his father Willy, he also tries to dominate the conversation towards the end and he criticizes Willy, breaking the maxim of approbation and threatening his positive face. Willy's violation of Leech's principles of politeness, namely, 'the sympathy, approbation, tact and modesty maxims' and his threat to the positive and negative faces of others implicate his superiority, seeking power and dominance.

This conversation becomes a struggle for power between Willy and Biff. Although Biff has some attempts to dominate the talk his father Willy preserves his dominance throughout the conversation. Although Linda and Happy demonstrate supportive linguistic behaviour, Willy ignores their support and prefers talking more, interrupting others, commanding, questioning, criticizing, controlling the topic. While Linda and Happy are facilitators in the conversation without trying to give directives or to control conversations, Willy is the leader who uses very strong directives to demonstrate his power and control of the whole group and Biff tries competitively to gain the dominance but then gives in.

After analysing this first extract from the beginning of the play, the analysis of the second extract taken from the end of the Act 2 will be useful to see the dramatic change in power relations in the family and the dynamic nature of discursive power:

[The conversation below again consists of all family members just like the first extract – Willy, Linda, Biff and Happy. Being sacked by his boss Howard, Willy is unhappy and disappointed. He is planting the garden. Biff, who is also disappointed as he could not talk to Oliver to get money, comes home with Happy. Although Linda does not want Biff to talk to Willy, Biff starts a conversation with Willy]

(1) BIFF: No, you're going to hear the truth — what you are and what I am!
(2) LINDA: Stop it!
(3) WILLY: Spite!
(4) HAPPY *(coming down toward Biff)*: You cut it now!
(5) BIFF *(to Happy)*: The man don't know who we are! The man is gonna know! *(To Willy)* We never told the truth for ten minutes in this house!
(6) HAPPY: We always told the truth!
(7) BIFF *(turning on him)*: You big blow, are you the assistant buyer? You're one of the two assistants to the assistant, aren't you?
(8) HAPPY: Well, I'm practically —
(9) BIFF: You're practically full of it! We all are! And I'm through with it. *(To Willy.)* Now hear this, Willy, this is me.
(10) WILLY: I know you!
(11) BIFF: You know why I had no address for three months? I stole a suit in Kansas City and I was in jail. *(To Linda, who is sobbing.)* Stop crying. I'm through with it. *(Linda turns away from them, her hands covering her face.)*
(12) WILLY: I suppose that's my fault!
(13) BIFF: I stole myself out of every good job since high school!
(14) WILLY: And whose fault is that?
(15) BIFF: And I never got anywhere because you blew me so full of hot air I could never stand taking orders from anybody! That's whose fault it is!

(*Death of a Salesman*, II, 228-229)

The overall impression of the conversation in this extract is that the tension between the father and the son has increased. It gives the impression that the source of their problems goes back to their past. This high tension in the family contradicts our schematic knowledge related to the conventions of family relations in our culture, since we believe that there should be affectionate relationship and solidarity among family members. A detailed analysis of the turns in this extract will show the differences between the power relations in the first extract and the second extract:

(1) BIFF: No, you're going to hear the truth — what you are and what I am!

This time, unlike the first extract taken from the beginning of the play, this conversation opens with the command of Biff. He addresses Willy. He asks his father to listen to him. In the first extract, it is Willy who always interrupts and does not pay attention to what other people say. He asks them to say what he wants and to answer his questions. If they do not say what he wants, he becomes critical of them. However, in this conversation taken from the end of the Act 2 Biff forces him to listen to the truth even if he likes or not. By commanding his father, Biff demonstrates his dominance in conversation.

(2) LINDA: Stop it!
(3) WILLY: Spite!
(4) HAPPY *(coming down toward Biff)*: You cut it now!

Linda and Happy take over their role of facilitator in conversation again. This time they try to calm Biff down, not Willy. They try to minimize disagreement, thus abiding by 'the maxim of agreement'. Unlike the sentences they utter in the first extract, they use commands. They command because they want to silence Biff. Willy again threatens the positive face of Biff, using the word 'spite' in turn (3).

(5) BIFF *(to Happy)*: The man don't know who we are! The man is gonna know! *(To Willy)* We never told the truth for ten minutes in this house!
(6) HAPPY: We always told the truth!
(7) BIFF *(turning on him)*: You big blow, are you the assistant buyer? You're one of the two assistants to the assistant, aren't you?

In turn (5), Biff addresses first Happy and then Willy. When he talks about his father he uses the word 'the man'. This word does not contain any sign of affection or respect unlike our expectations from a son. In order to minimize the disagreement, Happy tells a lie in turn (6). In turn (7) Biff takes over the role of Willy completely and

criticizes Happy just like Willy criticizes him in the first extract. Saying critical and unpleasant things about Happy he both breaks 'the maxim of approbation' and also threatens his positive face.

(8)	HAPPY: Well, I'm practically —
(9)	BIFF: You're practically full of it! We all are! And I'm through with it. *(To Willy.)* Now hear this, Willy, this is me.

Happy tries to defend himself, but Biff interrupts him. Interrupting his turn he violates the turn-taking rules and threatens his negative face as he impedes his goal to explain. Then he addresses his father Willy and while addressing him Biff uses his first name. Using his first name shows his dominance and control over the conversation and it indicates the fact that he takes over the role of his father as the leader of the group completely.

(10)	WILLY: I know you!

With this sentence Willy not only declares a known fact (of course he knows his son) but also he declares that he accepts the power of Biff.

(11)	BIFF: You know why I had no address for three months? I stole a suit in Kansas City and I was in jail. *(To Linda, who is sobbing.)* Stop crying. I'm through with it. *(Linda turns away from them, her hands covering her face.)*

In this turn declaring all the truth about himself and all his faults, he becomes more powerful than before. He is the one who declares the truth for the first time. Then he addresses Linda and commands her to stop crying. In terms of 'the optionality scale', he gives Linda no option. Linda, who is not allowed to talk, is not allowed to cry either. She is forced to be silent completely.

(12)	WILLY: I suppose that's my fault!
(13)	BIFF: I stole myself out of every good job since high school!
(14)	WILLY: And whose fault is that?
(15)	BIFF: And I never got anywhere because you blew me so full of hot air I could never stand taking orders from anybody! That's whose fault it is!

In turn (12) Willy accepts his fault first. Then he asks whose fault it is as a last attempt to escape from the reality. However, Biff declares that Willy is the source of Biff's failure in life. This is the end of Willy's powerful status in the family.

The table below again shows the relation between conversational behaviour of the characters and their discursive power in this extract:

Conversational Behaviour	
Who has most turns?	Biff (7 turns)
Who has the longest turns?	Biff (the longest is 29 words)
Who interrupts?	Biff
Who is interrupted?	Happy
Who allocates turns?	Biff
Who initiates?	Biff
Who responds?	Happy and Willy
Who uses speech acts like questioning, commanding, demanding, threatening, and complaining?	Biff Happy, Linda and Willy – only once
Who uses speech acts like answering, agreeing, acceding, giving in, and apologising?	Willy, Linda and Happy
Who controls/changes the topic of talk?	Biff
Who uses 'title + surname' terms of address?	-
Who uses 'first name' terms of address?	Biff

Character	**Words**	**Turns**	**Avarage**
Willy	14	4	3,5
Linda	2	1	2
Biff	147	7	21
Happy	13	3	4,3

In this extract unlike the first one it is clear that Biff is the dominant participant in the conversation. He controls the conversation; he controls the topic and flow of the talk. He interrupts Happy in the conversation. He uses commands and questions. He gives others no option. Biff's turns are longer than others'. Linda and Happy are again the powerless participants in this conversation as they talk less than Willy and Biff and they are always interrupted or silenced by Biff. At first, they try to to facilitate the flow of the conversation and minimize the disagreement, but then they give up completely. They show submission to commands of Biff. Biff is critical of Willy, Happy and Linda; he either asks questions or gives commands to them. They answer his questions or do what he wants. The tension between Biff and Willy increases in this conversation. Biff's use of Willy's first name does not indicate his attempt to reinforce intimacy but it indicates his power over his father. The competitive relationship between Willy and Biff in the conversation comes to an end and while Willy gives up the struggle, Biff

takes over the role of Willy as the leader who controls the group. In terms of the principles of politeness, we see that Biff threatens others' positive and negative faces. By being critical of them he both threatens their positive faces and also breaks 'the maxim of approbation'. Also interrupting and commanding them, he threatens their negative faces. He does not abide by 'the maxim of agreement' as he maximizes the disagreement in the conversation. He also does not abide by 'the maxim of sympathy' as he does not maximize sympathy between himself and Willy. On the other hand, Linda and Happy abide by the maxim of agreement at first but then they give up trying. Biff replaces Willy as the leader who has the power (talking more, interrupting others, commanding, questioning, criticizing, controlling the topic).

For any conversation to flow smoothly, participants should abide by the rules of turn-taking and politeness. However, although it is the ideal one, most of the time in a conversation one of the participants takes over the control. To demonstrate his/her discursive power over others, s/he breaks the rules of turn-taking and politeness. In *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller, at the beginning of the play the father Willy Loman assumes a powerful position in family by breaking all the rules of turn-taking and politeness. Towards the end of the play as Willy realizes his failure to meet his goals in life he loses his control over conversation. However, his loss of dominance over other members of family does not lead to equal power relations in family; instead, as this stylistic analysis reveals, at the end of the play the elder son takes over the power. The tension between these two participants, which is clearly felt in the first conversation at the beginning of the play, increases towards the end. This transfer of discursive power from Willy to Biff does not change the nature of the conversation at all. In both of the conversation Linda and Happy try to facilitate its flow and maximize agreement and while they are reduced to submissive positions there is one person who dominates the others (Willy in the first one and Biff in the second one). This person who dominates others demonstrates his power and authority by breaking all the rules of turn-taking and politeness: he talks more; he interrupts others; he questions and commands them; he controls the topic all the time; he criticizes them; he induces them to silence; he threatens their positive and negative faces; he maximizes disagreement, antipathy and dispraise of others; he gives them no option except for doing what he wants; he maximizes cost to others, not benefits; he uses the social distance as the basis of his authority (his age or gender). The name of this person is Willy at first and then it becomes Biff. Biff replaces the position of his father, but nothing changes for subservient participants, Linda or Happy. The stylistic analysis of intra-familial struggle for power in *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller shows that although unlike social or institutional power 'discursive power' is dynamic in nature, in this play it changes hand to the detriment of disadvantaged participants in terms of master and

situated identities since 'older male participant' holds the discursive power in Loman family throughout the play, no matter whether he is the father or the elder son.

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