Lexical Choices and Characterization: A Stylistic Examination of Arthur Miller's Dramatic Language

الاختيارات المعجمية وتوصيف الشخصيات: دراسة أسلوبية للغة آرثر ميلر الدرامية

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المستخلص

تَبحث هذهِ الوَرقةَ البحثية في دَور الإختيارات المُعجمية في لُغَة آرثر ميلر الدرامية، مَع التركيز على كَيفية بِناء المُفردات لِلشخصيات، ونقل العُمق النَفسي، وإنعكاس الإهتمامات الأيديولوجية. بالإعتماد على الأطُر الأسلوبية لكل من ليتش وشورت (2007)، وكالبيبر (2001)، وسيمبسون (2004)، وويلز (2014)، وباختين (1981)، تَدرس الدراسة مَسرحيات مُختارة وهي "موت بائع متجول" و"البوتقة"، لِتوضيح كَيفية تمّييز ميلر للشخصيات مِن خِلال السجل، والتكرار، والحقول الدلالية، والمُفردات المَجازية. يَكشف التَحليل أنَ المُفردات المُحايدة في مُلاحظات المؤلف تُوفر إطارًا سياقيًا، بَينما يرمز حوار الشَخصيات - الذي يَتراوح بَين العامية والإصطلاحية والرَسمية والراقية - إلى المكّانة الإجتماعية، والصِراع الداخلي، وديناميكيات العَلاقات. يُبرز التَكرار والتَجميع الدَلالي الأنماط المَعرفية والعاطفية، بينما تُعزز اللغة المَجازية الرَنين المُوضوعي والنَقد الأيديولوجي. تؤكّد النَتائج أنَ استراتيجية ميلر المُعجمية لَيست مُجرد زُخرفية، بل هي أساسُ المعنى، إذ تُشكل هَوية الشَخصية وإدراك الجمهور. تُسهم هذهِ الوَرقة في الأسلوبية الأدبية مِن خِلال تَوضيح التَفاعل المُعقد بَين المُفردات والشَخصيات والأيديولوجيا في الدراما الحديثة، وتُقدم تداعيات على كل من التَفسيرات النصية والتَفسيرات القائمة على الأداء.

Abstract

This paper investigates the role of lexical choices in Arthur Miller's dramatic language, focusing on how vocabulary constructs characterization, conveys psychological depth, and reflects ideological concerns. Drawing on stylistic frameworks by Leech and Short (2007), Culpeper (2001), Simpson (2004), Wales (2014), and Bakhtin (1981), the study examines selected plays, primarily *Death of a Salesman* and *The*

Crucible, to demonstrate how Miller differentiates characters through register, repetition, semantic fields, and metaphorical lexis. The analysis reveals that neutral vocabulary in authorial remarks provides a contextual framework, while character dialogue—ranging from colloquial and idiomatic to formal and elevated—encodes social position, internal conflict, and relational dynamics. Repetition and semantic clustering highlight cognitive and emotional patterns, whereas metaphorical language intensifies thematic resonance and ideological critique. The findings underscore that Miller's lexical strategy is not merely ornamental but constitutive of meaning, shaping character identity and audience perception. The paper contributes to literary stylistics by illustrating the intricate interplay between lexis, character, and ideology in modern drama and offers implications for both textual and performance-based interpretations.

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1. Introduction

Language is one of the most important aspects of communication. Nowadays, we can find almost everybody around us using a particular language to communicate. Language is a wonder as it helps to spread our ideas, thoughts and let others know about our mood through time, space and culture. Linguistic studies which depend upon elicitations from only one or a few informants are now recognized as leaving unanswered many significant questions about the relation between language and the social context in which it is always embedded. Language is no longer viewed as a closed system, but as one which is in perpetual flux. Moreover, the extraordinary growth of sociolinguistics has shown convincingly that language is closely linked to its context and that isolating it artificially for study ignores its complex and intricate relation to society. (Akin, 2016, p.76)

The core of dramatic writing is the interaction between language and character, and Arthur Miller's writing is a particularly rich source for study. Miller claimed that "it's all about the language" in his trade (Marino, 2003, p. 32). His significant plays, like *Death of a Salesman* (1949) and *The Crucible* (1953), continue to garner critical acclaim. This comment expresses his conviction that lexical and linguistic choices—rather than just storyline or theme—are closely linked to dramatic effect. Nevertheless, despite Miller's own focus and his pivotal role in American theater of the 20th century, academic approaches have frequently emphasized the sociological, historical, or biographical aspects of his work while paying relatively less attention to the texture of his dramatic language. Scholars like Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short have established a systematic basis for analyzing how lexical choices affect meaning, voice, and style in stylistics, the linguistic study of literary language. They emphasize that style entails "choice" and that, among other consequences, lexical patterns function as indicators of meaning, defamiliarization, and foregrounding (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 9–10). This study aims to investigate how lexical patterns influence characterization, voice, and ideological orientation in Miller's dialogues by using a stylistic lens to examine his dramatic language, with

particular attention to lexical items, vocabulary registers, idiomatic usages, metaphorical lexis, and colloquialisms.

The purpose of the present paper is therefore to interrogate how lexical choices in Miller's dramatic texts contribute to characterisation and how they function stylistically within his dramatic idiom. In doing so, the paper asks: in what ways do lexical patterns reflect the psychological and social dimensions of characters in Miller's plays? How does Miller use distinctive vocabulary, repeated lexical motifs, idiomatic or colloquial lexis, and metaphorical language to distinguish between characters and their voices? And how do these lexical dimensions reinforce Miller's broader thematic concerns, such as the American Dream, moral responsibility or conflict between individual and society? The significance of the study lies in bridging the gap between literary and linguistic criticism of Miller's work, demonstrating that a detailed examination of lexis can deepen our understanding of how character, voice and meaning are constructed in drama.

In order to achieve this goal, the study will use a few scenes from Miller's main plays and analyze their dialogue using stylistic analysis, guided by Leech and Short's lexical choice framework (2007). In order to connect lexical elements to character identification, tone, and dramatic function, the analysis will classify vocabulary that reflects social class or occupation, idioms, repetitive lexis, informal colloquial terms, and metaphorically charged words. It is expected that one of the main ways Miller distinguishes voices and expresses underlying psychological tensions would be through linguistic variations among characters. In sum, this paper sets out to explore Miller's dramatic language not simply as functional dialogue but as a carefully crafted stylistic architecture composed of lexical choices. By analysing how vocabulary and word choice contribute to characterization and meaning in Miller's plays, this study contributes to the wider field of literary stylistics and offers fresh insight into one of America's seminal dramatists.

2. Literature Review

According to Thompson (1991), Pierre Bourdieu's work in the 1950s defined power as a symbolic term in linguistics. He believes that the majority of power in social situations is symbolic. Additionally, he sees language utterances as symbolic power relations that materialize the power dynamics between interactants. Additionally, he links speech acts to social institutions, asserting that "those institutions endow the speaker with the authority to carry out the act which his/her utterance claims to perform" (Thompson, 1991, P.8). Halliday and Foucault established this theory of power. According to Halliday (1978), language serves as a social semiotic, symbolizing the social structure. Similarly, Foucault (1980) links the idea of power to the term discourse, asserting that "power is relational and dynamic, showing itself in the minute interactions between and within people" (Foucault, 1980, P.98). Additionally, he maintains that people who act as its vehicles consistently oppose it. Sociolinguists seek to elucidate the relationship between language and power by adhering to these Hallidayan traditions and the Foucauldian framework.

The study of literary language from a linguistic point of view has matured into a coherent field—stylistics—that offers practical tools for analysing how lexical choice produces character, voice and meaning. Leech and Short's foundational account positions style as a domain of choice and offers a multilevel approach that links lexical selection to textual function and foregrounding (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 9–10). Their argument that the meaning of a text is inseparable from the patterns of linguistic selection establishes a methodological baseline for any stylistic reading that privileges lexis as a clue to characterization, and it underwrites the claim that one can systematically examine diction to infer aspects of a character's social identity, psychological orientation and rhetorical stance (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 9–10; 61–64).

Jonathan Culpeper builds directly on stylistic foundations to focus attention specifically on the relationship between language and characterisation in drama. Culpeper proposes a model that integrates cognitive processes (how readers infer character) with textual cues, and includes a sustained treatment of lexis as a decisive marker in plays: lexical

items, collocations and phraseology provide both explicit and implicit clues readers use to build impressions of character (Culpeper, 2001, pp. 1–4; see his chapter on textual cues, especially the section on "Lexis," p. 182). Culpeper's approach is especially useful for drama because it foregrounds the dialogic and performative context: in plays, lexis does not simply describe but is enacted by characters in interaction, so vocabulary both enacts identity and cues audience inferences about social role and stance (Culpeper, 2001, pp. 1–4; 182). This makes his framework an apt theoretical scaffold for analysing Miller, where much of characterization is achieved through speech rather than authorial narration.

Recent methodological refinements in stylistics emphasise the interaction of multiple lexical strata (neutral, colloquial, bookish, dialectal, obscene, and specialised vocabularies) within a single idiostyle, and they highlight how shifts among these strata serve pragmatic and ideological purposes in literary texts. Katie Wales's dictionary and handbook treatments emphasise that lexis must be analysed both as item (word choice) and as system (semantic fields, register ranges) and that frequent lexical patterns (collocations, semantic prosodies) construct literary voice and foreground particular interpretive possibilities (Wales, 2014, pp. 6–8; Dictionary entries on lexis and register). Wales's pedagogic entries make clear that stylisticians should pay attention not only to isolated lexical items but also to patterned distributions across a text, because these distributions yield stable signals about characterization and register.

Applied studies that combine stylistic instruments with corpus- and text-driven methods show how such layered lexical analysis can be applied to dramatic corpora. Paul Simpson's accessible surveys of stylistic method (which bring together register, dialogue, and lexical approaches) reinforce the idea that vocabulary is a principal site where social identity and voice are encoded, especially in dialogue-rich genres (Simpson, 2004, pp. 34–36). Although Simpson's work is wide-ranging, its discussions of register and vocabulary supply practical checklists—looking, for example, at formality scales, dialectal markers and idiomatic phrases—that a close stylistic reading of Miller can adopt and operationalize.

Recent linguostylistic research into Arthur Miller's plays confirms the fruitfulness of a lexical approach. A systematic study of Miller's dramatic texts found that his idiostyle is characterised by a convergence of neutral (basic) vocabulary with bookish and colloquial strata in different textual zones: stage directions and authorial remarks tend to use more neutral and bookish items while characters' speech is richly stratified across colloquial, obscene and dialectal layers (Sydorenko, 2020, pp. 85–91). That quantitative and qualitative study reports measurable distributions—bookish lexemes, colloquial lexemes, obscene lexemes, and dialectal lexemes—that together help create Miller's characteristic realism and ideological textures; for example, colloquial and vulgar items serve to reduce emotional distance and to signal social conflict or class positions, while bookish phrasings often perform intellectualization or moral commentary (Sydorenko, 2020, pp. 85–91). Colloquial vocabulary gives Arthur Miller's texts uniquely realistic, emotional, and expressive character. Colloquial lexical units of the textual corpus of the author's dramatic works function only in the speech of the actors. Such findings provide empirical backing for a stylistic reading that treats lexicon as systematically informative for characterization.

Taken together, the theoretical literature and recent empirical studies support three claims that will orient the present paper. First, stylistic theory establishes lexical choice as a principled locus of meaning-making (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 9–10; 61–64). Second, frameworks developed specifically for drama show that lexis in plays functions as both a cognitive cue (how readers infer character) and a performative resource (what characters accomplish through speech) (Culpeper et al, 1998, pp. 1–4; 182). Third, empirical work on Miller's texts confirms that systemic patterns in vocabulary distribution—mixtures of neutral, colloquial, bookish and dialectal registers—are a distinctive feature of Miller's idiostyle and that these distributions index social, psychological and ideological features of characters (Sydorenko, 2020, pp. 85–91). These convergent strands justify a focused stylistic examination of lexical patterns in selected Miller plays: by combining the analytic tools of Leech and Short with Culpeper's drama-specific model and the empirical insights

from recent lexical analyses, a reading of Miller's dialogues can reveal how word choice builds voice, social position and internal conflict.

The present study therefore positions itself at the intersection of these traditions: it adopts Leech and Short's checklist and multilevel orientation to style (2007, pp. 61–64), applies Culpeper's model of character inference and textual cues for drama (2001, pp. 1–4; 182), and uses empirical categories (neutral, colloquial, bookish, obscene, dialectal) found in the recent literature on Miller (Sydorenko, 2020, pp. 85–91). By grounding close readings in these theoretically informed categories, the analysis aims to move beyond impressionistic commentary to show systematically how lexical selection does the work of characterization in Miller's dramatic language.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in stylistic linguistics, drawing primarily on the frameworks of Geoffrey Leech and Mick Short (2007), Jonathan Culpeper (2001), and Paul Simpson (2004). These theorists provide tools for examining how lexical choices in dramatic texts construct characterization and communicate thematic meaning.

Leech and Short (2007) define style as "a matter of choice within the linguistic system" (p. 9), emphasizing that lexical selection is central to how authors shape characters and tone. The lexicon, they argue, operates as the most direct layer through which individuality and emotion are conveyed (pp. 61–64). Their model helps identify how Miller's diction—whether colloquial, formal, or metaphorical—reveals the psychological depth and social context of his characters.

Culpeper's (2001) approach to language and characterization extends stylistics to drama, proposing that audiences infer character traits through linguistic cues such as word choice and speech acts. Lexical variation, therefore, functions as a cognitive signal that guides audience interpretation. This framework is especially useful in analyzing how Miller differentiates voices, as in the contrast between Willy Loman's fragmented diction and John Proctor's moral assertiveness.

Simpson (2004) complements these perspectives by linking style to ideology through his notion of *mind style*, where consistent linguistic patterns mirror a character's worldview (pp. 78–80). In Miller's plays, the simplicity or intensity of diction often mirrors inner conflict and moral vision.

Together, these models—supported by Wales's (2014) insights on lexical stylistics and Bakhtin's (1981) dialogism—frame the analysis of Arthur Miller's dramatic language as a site where lexical choice constructs not only individual identity but also social and ideological meaning.

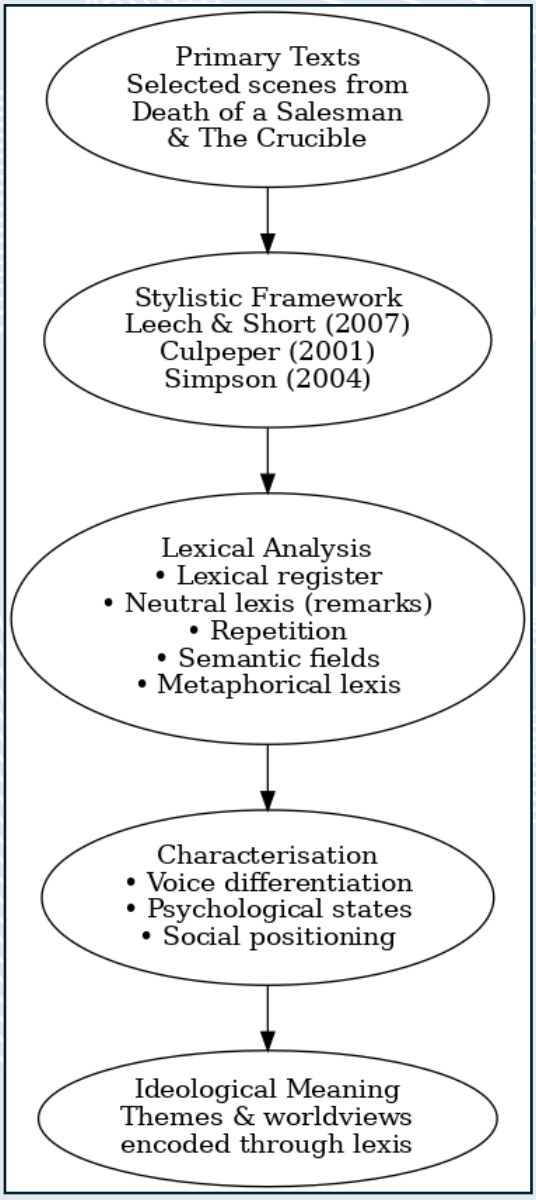

Figure 1: Theoretical Farmwork

4. Analysis

4.1 Character Voice and Lexical Register

Arthur Miller expertly distinguishes people in his dramatic language by their lexical registers, or the vocabulary choices connected to their social status, level of education, emotional condition, or rhetorical goal. For instance, Willy Loman, the main character in Death of a Salesman, frequently employs daily, colloquial language that is cliched or fragmentary ("That's a one-million-dollar idea!" and "the woods are burning"). His simplicity conveys his limited emotional and intellectual range and makes the viewers perceive him as "every man." Such lexical selection is consistent with the idea put forth by Leech & Short (2007) that vocabulary acts as a direct conduit for character identity (pp. 61–64). Miller develops Willy's persona as socially embedded, aspirational but imprisoned, and linguistically defined by aspiration-laden clichés by immersing him in a vernacular language. Characters in the play who have greater agency or rank, on the other hand, use a different register. For instance, Charley, Willy's neighbor, employs lofty language during the burial "Nobody dast blame this man", which stands in stark contrast to Willy's regular discourse. The social and moral hierarchies at play are highlighted by this blending of registers—elevated vocabulary in formal circumstances, informal in others. The lexical register turns into a technique for character differentiation: people who are successful or rise beyond the ordinary are given more formal or academic vocabulary, while people who are constrained by societal norms continue to use colloquial language.

4.2 Lexical Neutrality and Authorial Remarks

The analysis of the factual material indicates that the originality of Arthur Miller’s dramatic texts is manifested through the individual features of the word usage. The lexical level of the author’s speech is actualized by the active interaction of different layers of vocabulary. The basis of the playwright’s language is the commonly used vocabulary of neutral stylistic tone. Most often, the author tends to neutral lexical units in the remarks. The author’s remarks are rather extended. Every detail, every gesture, every emotion is significant and described with meticulous accuracy. The

following remark is provided below as an example: “George is Chris’s age, but a paler man, now on the edge of his self-restraint. He speaks quietly, as though afraid to find himself screaming. An instant’s hesitation, and Chris steps up to him, hand extended, smiling.” (Miller, 1981, p. 79) Neutral vocabulary plays an important stylistic role and obtains expressive possibilities in the author’s remarks. Adverting to commonly used lexical units, the author not only creates nominative descriptions of the interior, household items, appearances of his characters but also psychologizes heroes, verbally draws vivid original images: “Keller is near sixty. A heavy man of stolid mind and build, a business man these many years, but with the imprint of the machine-shop worker and boss still upon him. When he reads, when he speaks, when he listens, it is with the terrible concentration of the uneducated man for whom there is still wonder in many commonly known things, a man whose judgments must be dredged out of the experience and a peasant-like common sense. A man among men.” (Miller, 1981, p. 79)

4.3 Lexical Repetition and Psychological Fragmentation

One of Miller's most noticeable stylistic devices is repetition. Words like "success," "liked," and "business" are frequently repeated by Willy, creating a limited lexical range that reflects his compulsive worldview. Recurring lexical clusters provide "textual evidence for cognitive and emotional patterning," according to Culpeper (2001) (p. 183). This patterning reveals how language becomes a manifestation of ideological conditioning in Willy's instance; economic analogies become the basis of his entire vocabulary of self-worth. This idea is expanded upon by Simpson (2004), who defines mind style as "the cognitive impression created by consistent linguistic habits" (pp. 78–80). Willy's self-corrections and shortened sentences, such as "I don't know what the hell I'm workin' for," reveal a collapsing mental condition. His linguistic instability is a reflection of both the disintegration of identity under capitalist pressures and social defeat. Here, lexical repetition serves as a diagnostic tool by externalizing his internal incoherence.

4.4 Metaphor, Semantic Field, and Thematic Resonance

Miller's lexicon is deeply metaphorical, constructing meaning through repeated semantic fields. As Wales (2014) argues, a semantic field "structures perception by clustering vocabulary that reinforces thematic unity" (pp. 258–260). In *Death of a Salesman*, the dominant semantic field is economic: "sell," "value," "deal," "profit." Human worth is expressed through business lexis, revealing how ideology permeates everyday speech. Yet, within this economic field, Miller interlaces metaphors of nature—"the woods are burning," "a man is not a piece of fruit"—to expose the dissonance between natural human desires and artificial economic constructs. The collision of lexical fields creates the tragic tension of the play: man as both worker and being. This interplay between semantic domains exemplifies Leech and Short's (2007) assertion that stylistic meaning often arises "from contrast and deviation within the lexicon" (p. 74).

4.5 Dialogue Dynamics and Lexical Interaction

The playwright's employment of symbolic language stands out as a notable aspect, emphasizing the deep intricacies and importance it adds to the narrative. Miller's characterization also depends on how lexical choices operate dialogically. Bakhtin (1981) observes that "language lives on the boundary between oneself and the other" (p. 293). In *Death of a Salesman*, meaning emerges not from isolated words but from lexical exchanges across characters. Willy's inflated diction ("be known all over the counties") collapses when met by Biff's grounded vocabulary ("I'm nothing, Pop!"). The lexical clash embodies generational and ideological discord, dramatizing the failure of inherited linguistic and moral codes. This dialogic dynamic reinforces the social dimension of Miller's lexis: every word belongs simultaneously to individual and society. In this way, lexical analysis exposes how Miller's drama transforms conversation into a site of ideological negotiation.

4.6 Comparative Lexical Patterns in Miller's Drama

A brief comparison with *The Crucible* (1953) highlights Miller's ability to adapt his lexical strategy to historical and thematic context. The play's

Puritan setting requires a distinct lexical register: archaism ("yea," "nay"), theological terminology ("covenant," "Devil"), and juridical lexis ("testimony," "accuse"). As Simpson (2004) notes, stylistic consistency must align with contextual expectations of discourse (p. 112). The formal diction of *The Crucible* marks moral absolutism, contrasting the colloquial despair of *Salesman*. Yet, in both, lexical choice reflects ideological conflict—whether between commerce and conscience or between faith and fear.

4.7 Lexical Choice as Ideological Signature

In literary works, characters, like people in daily life, also have their different personalities, thoughts, psychological activities and so on. The kinds of speech acts which are performed by characters should be proper to the specific situations as people do in daily life. Ultimately, Miller's lexical architecture constitutes an ideological signature. Leech and Short (2007) maintain that every stylistic choice "embodies a worldview, a moral stance toward reality" (p. 9). Miller's plays encode moral critique through vocabulary: the rhetoric of "success" collapses under its own lexical weight, exposing how capitalist discourse dehumanizes language itself. By examining Miller's diction through stylistic theory, we see that his characters do not simply speak—they are spoken by their words. Lexical choice becomes the instrument through which social systems and personal identities collide.

5. Discussion

The analysis of Arthur Miller's dramatic language demonstrates that lexical choice is a primary vehicle for characterization, thematic development, and ideological expression. The interplay of colloquial, formal, and metaphorical vocabulary creates a layered textual texture that conveys psychological, social, and moral dimensions of characters. As Leech and Short (2007) argue, lexical choices "are never neutral; they always carry interpretive weight" (p. 61). This principle is clearly observable in Miller's work, where characters' speech patterns and the semantic fields they draw upon reveal not only personal identity but also

the social and cultural pressures shaping their actions. One of the key findings is the functional distinction between neutral authorial remarks and the vocabulary of characters. The neutral lexis in Miller's stage directions and narrative comments, as noted in the analysis, provides a stable descriptive framework that contextualizes characters' behavior and emotional states. This neutrality allows readers or audiences to interpret character dialogue against a clear, objective background, enhancing the realism and plausibility of the dramatic world (Wales, 2014, pp. 258–260). Culpeper's (2001) model of characterisation supports this observation, asserting that the audience's inference of character relies not only on spoken dialogue but also on textual cues embedded in authorial commentary (pp. 182–183). The careful calibration between neutral lexis and character-specific vocabulary underscores Miller's skill in balancing objective description with expressive speech, allowing lexical choices to perform both informative and interpretive functions.

The analysis also confirms that lexical repetition and semantic fields are instrumental in shaping audience perception of characters' psychological states and ideological orientation. For instance, Willy Loman's repeated use of business metaphors—"sell," "deal," "worth"—functions as a lexical marker of his internalization of capitalist values, echoing Simpson's (2004) assertion that consistent lexical patterns reflect a character's worldview, or "mind style" (pp. 78–80). The repeated economic lexemes highlight Willy's obsession with material success and social recognition, while simultaneously signaling the constriction of his cognitive and emotional horizons. This reinforces the theoretical claim that lexis serves as a cognitive cue, enabling the audience to infer both the ambitions and limitations of the character (Culpeper, 2001, p. 183). Furthermore, the semantic field surrounding commerce operates as a structural device, linking individual characterization to thematic critique: the characters' preoccupation with success exposes the ideological underpinnings of postwar American society, reflecting a tension between personal aspiration and social reality. Miller's use of dialogue dynamics further demonstrates the relational and interactive nature of lexical meaning. The contrast between characters' registers—Willy's colloquial,

hyperbolic diction versus Biff's grounded, straightforward speech—creates not only generational conflict but also ideological tension. This aligns with Bakhtin's (1981) concept of dialogism, which posits that meaning arises from the interaction of multiple voices rather than in isolation (p. 293). In this framework, lexical variation across interlocutors encodes social and moral hierarchies, revealing how characters negotiate authority, expectation, and value. The audience interprets these lexical contrasts as markers of both personal and societal conflict, illustrating that Miller's stylistic choices have functional, ethical, and aesthetic consequences.

Another significant aspect is Miller's integration of metaphorical and idiomatic lexis. Metaphors such as "the woods are burning" or "a man is not a piece of fruit" serve as symbolic amplifiers of emotional or ideological states, enriching the semantic texture of the dialogue. Wales (2014) emphasizes that the repeated use of metaphorical vocabulary constructs a coherent thematic field, reinforcing both character psychology and narrative meaning (pp. 258–260). Similarly, Leech and Short (2007) note that deviations from ordinary lexical patterns, including metaphorical or idiomatic usage, can foreground psychological or social dimensions of characters (pp. 74–75). In Miller's plays, metaphorical lexis often bridges the gap between external events and internal experience, allowing audiences to perceive the psychological strain or moral conflict of characters in ways that plain dialogue cannot achieve.

The comparative analysis of *The Crucible* and *Death of a Salesman* also demonstrates that lexical choice is context-sensitive. In *The Crucible*, the formal and archaic vocabulary aligns with the Puritanical setting, reinforcing moral rigidity and historical authenticity. Characters' language encodes ideological adherence to religious law, demonstrating that lexical patterns operate simultaneously at the levels of characterisation, social commentary, and historical realism (Simpson, 2004, pp. 112–114). By contrast, the modern colloquial register in *Death of a Salesman* conveys psychological immediacy and social critique of capitalist ideology. Across Miller's oeuvre, these findings suggest that lexical choice is a versatile tool, adaptable to both temporal context and thematic purpose.

In sum, the discussion underscores that Miller's lexical strategy is central to his dramatic artistry. Characters are defined, distinguished, and made psychologically and socially legible through the interplay of register, repetition, semantic field, and metaphor. Neutral authorial lexis frames and amplifies these character-specific patterns, enabling audiences to interpret dialogue in context. Miller's use of lexis is therefore not ornamental; it is constitutive of meaning, shaping the interpretive and emotional experience of his plays. These findings reinforce the theoretical positions of Leech and Short (2007), Culpeper (2001), Simpson (2004), Wales (2014), and Bakhtin (1981), illustrating that stylistic and linguistic analysis of vocabulary provides profound insight into both characterization and ideological expression in drama.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the role of lexical choices in Arthur Miller's dramatic language, demonstrating that vocabulary functions as a core mechanism of characterization, thematic development, and ideological expression. The analysis revealed that Miller strategically employs a variety of lexical layers—colloquial, formal, neutral, and metaphorical—to differentiate characters, convey psychological complexity, and structure the interpretive framework for audiences. Neutral lexical choices in authorial remarks and stage directions provide an objective narrative backdrop, allowing characters' dialogue to be interpreted in context, while semantic fields and lexical repetition reveal patterns of thought, aspiration, and moral concern. Furthermore, metaphorical and idiomatic lexis intensifies the emotional and ideological resonance of Miller's works, bridging the gap between external action and internal experience (Leech & Short, 2007, pp. 61–64; Wales, 2014, pp. 258–260). Such variability of the lexical layer serves as a tool for the creative vision embodiment, realizes the author's intention of pragmatic and aesthetic influence on the reader, acts as a verbal sign of inexhaustible energy of the author's word, allows for a full understanding of the peculiarity of the author's worldview.

The study contributes to the fields of literary stylistics and dramatic analysis by demonstrating how a close examination of lexical choice can

illuminate character psychology and social commentary in drama. By applying frameworks from Culpeper (2001), Simpson (2004), and Bakhtin (1981), the research shows that language in Miller's plays is both performative and interpretive, enabling audiences to infer character traits and societal critiques through vocabulary, register, and dialogue dynamics. This approach extends traditional literary criticism, which often privileges plot or theme over linguistic nuance, by foregrounding the intricate relationship between lexis and meaning in dramatic texts.

However, the study has certain limitations. First, the analysis focused primarily on selected plays (*Death of a Salesman* and *The Crucible*), limiting the generalizability of the findings across Miller's entire oeuvre. Second, the study relied mainly on textual analysis and did not incorporate performance-based observations, which could further illuminate how actors' delivery interacts with lexical choices to shape audience perception. Finally, while the study emphasized word-level analysis, future research could expand the scope to include syntactic patterns, prosody, and multimodal elements such as stagecraft and gesture, which interact with lexis to produce characterization and meaning.

Future research may also explore cross-cultural interpretations of Miller's lexical patterns, investigating how translation, localization, or audience background influences the perception of character and ideology. Additionally, integrating corpus-based methods could provide quantitative support for qualitative observations, revealing patterns of lexical frequency, collocation, and semantic prosody across multiple plays. Such approaches would deepen our understanding of how lexical choices operate within both literary and performance contexts.

In conclusion, the study underscores that in Arthur Miller's drama, lexical choice is not merely stylistic ornamentation but a fundamental instrument of characterization and meaning-making. Vocabulary, semantic fields, repetition, and metaphor collaboratively construct characters' social, psychological, and ideological identities, reinforcing Miller's position as a playwright whose artistry is inseparable from his linguistic craftsmanship.

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