

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the introduction of the research. In this chapter, the situation is explained more profoundly and with more focus to make it easy for the reader to understand how to fix the research. It consists of the background of the research, limitations of the research, formulation of the research, purpose of the research, significance of the research, and definition of the key terms.

1.1. Background of the Research

Drama Language is one of the most important tools used by human beings to communicate with one another. Through language, people can express their ideas, thoughts, feelings, opinions, and intentions. Language also plays a significant role in establishing social relationships and maintaining communication within society. In everyday interactions, people use language not only to convey information but also to perform actions. These actions are commonly known as speech acts.

Speech acts are an important aspect of pragmatics because they focus on the relationship between language and its context of use. Pragmatics studies how speakers use language to achieve particular communicative purposes and how hearers interpret the intended meaning of utterances. Current pragmatic studies show that

communication is not only the literal meaning of words, but also involves speaker's intention, social relationships, and contextual factors. Thus speech acts are important for understanding meaning in communication.

The speech act of request is one of the most frequent speech acts used in everyday communication. A request expression is a sentence that the speaker uses to ask another person to do something, to give information, to help, or to satisfy a need. Requests are important because they allow people to achieve their goals and maintain social relationships. Requests, however, are often politely uttered to reduce the burden placed on the hearer.

Request expressions can be expressed in a variety of ways in language. Some requests are made explicit, and others are. Unlike commands, requests are often expressed politely so as not to place a burden on the hearer.

There are a number of ways of making requests in a language. Some requests are direct, others indirect. The choice of forms used in making requests is determined by many factors such as social status, age, familiarity, power relations and cultural norms. Therefore, request expressions are one of the most complex and interesting topics in pragmatic studies.

Request expressions have also been the object of recent research, as they hold information about the interpersonal relationship and the

communicative competence. Researchers have argued that speakers tend to employ different request strategies to fulfill their goals and at the same time to be polite and keep social harmony. Hence, the study of request expressions affords valuable insights into how language is. Therefore, the study of request expressions adds to our understanding of language use in social interaction.

We not only use request expressions in our daily conversations, but also in literature. Literary works are rich sources of authentic communication especially dramas as they provide dialogs which resemble real life communication. Dialog reveals intentions, desires and relationships, and lets characters express feelings. Thus, drama is an appropriate medium for the analysis of speech acts such as request expressions.

Drama is a type of literature where the story is told thru the characters' dialog and actions. As opposed to novels, which depend largely on narration, dramas use dialog as the main form of communication. Thus, dramatic texts provide a rich corpus of speech acts for pragmatic analysis.

There are many examples of request expressions in the literary work *Under the Gaslight* by Augustin Daly, a drama. The social conditions and interpersonal relationships among the characters are different in this drama. The characters in the story often use request expressions to ask for help, get information, persuade people, get

cooperation and express their needs. These request expressions are also very useful in character development and story progression.

The researcher chooses *Under the Gaslight* because this drama has a lot of request expressions that can be analyzed by Request Strategies Theory. The dialog between the characters is rich data for examining how requests are expressed in different situations and how they function within the context of the story. Moreover, the drama provides interactions between characters from different social backgrounds. This enables us to observe the influence of social relationships on the use of request expressions.

There have been several previous studies on request expressions in different contexts. (2023) Rahmawati and Suryani analyzed the politeness strategies used in request expressions by Indonesian EFL learners and found that politeness is important in influencing the success of communication thru requests. But their research was on language learners, not on literary discourse. Moreover, Pardomuan and Hellystia (2026) examined directive speech acts in English film discourse and discovered that request expressions are often employed to establish cooperation, negotiate relationships and mirror the interpersonal power relations among characters. However, their study was based on film discourse and did not specifically focus on the forms and pragmatic meanings of request expressions in literary texts, especially drama.

Previous studies have shown that the study of expressions of request has been mainly focused on language learners and film discourse. These studies have contributed to the understanding of requests from different perspectives, but limited attention has been paid to the analysis of request expressions in literary works, especially in drama. In addition, there has been little work on either the grammatical forms or the pragmatic meanings of request expressions in dramatic dialogs. Thus, there is still a gap in the research that needs to be filled. The gap opens up the possibility to explore the realization and interpretation of requests in dramatic text.

Seeing the phenomenon and the research gap found, the researcher is interested to do a study entitled *An Analysis of Request Expressions in the Drama Under the Gaslight*. This study aims to identify and classify the types of request expressions used in the dialog of the drama and analyze the pragmatic meanings of request expressions used in relation to the dialog of the drama. Since the expressions of request may have different meanings depending on the setting, the speaker's intention and the relationship between the speaker and hearer, it is important to study both their forms and meanings for a more complete understanding of language use in dramatic discourse.

The research is expected to contribute in a number of ways. First, it contributes to the field of English linguistics, particularly pragmatics, by providing a better understanding of the forms and pragmatic

meanings of request expressions in literary discourse. Second, the results are supposed to help students and readers to interpret request expressions more accurately by taking into account their linguistic forms and contextual meanings. Finally, this research is expected to enrich previous research by focusing specifically on request expressions in a drama, an area that has received relatively limited scholarly attention. Therefore, this research is expected to contribute to the development of pragmatic studies concerning request expressions in literary discourse.

1.2. Identification of the Research

Based on the background of the study, several problems can be identified as follows:

1. Request expressions are frequently used by the characters in *Under the Gaslight*.
2. Different characters use different request strategies depending on the communicative situation.
3. The forms of request expressions vary according to social relationships and contextual factors.
4. The meanings of request expressions cannot always be understood from their literal forms.
5. Limited studies have analyzed request expressions in the drama *Under the Gaslight*.

1.3.Limitation of the Research

To avoid broad discussion, this study is limited to the analysis of request expressions found in the drama *Under the Gaslight* written by Augustin Daly.

The researcher focuses on:

1. Identifying the request expressions used by the characters.
2. Classifying the request expressions based on Request Strategies Theory.
3. Interpreting the meanings of request expressions based on their contexts.

Other speech acts such as commands, suggestions, warnings, invitations, apologies, and promises are not discussed in this study.

1.4.Formulation of the Research

Based on the limitation above, the problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What types of Request strategies are used in the drama *Under the Gaslight*?
2. What is the Pragmatic Meaning contained in each Request Expression?

1.5.Purpose of the Research

The purposes of this study are:

1. To identify the types of request strategies used in the drama *Under the Gaslight*.
2. To explain the meanings of request expressions based on the context of the dialogues.

1.6. Significance of the Research

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, the present study is expected to contribute to the development of pragmatic studies especially in the discussion of request expressions and speech acts. The research findings might contribute to the previous studies about request strategies found in literary works. Furthermore, it is anticipated that this study will provide more information about the function of request expressions in dramatic discourse.

The research may also be significant for current research on speech acts, providing empirical evidence from literary texts. The analysis of request expressions can help researchers to better understand the relationship between language, context and communicative intention.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Students

This research is expected to help learners comprehend the request expressions and their functions in the communication. It can enhance students' understanding of pragmatics and speech act theory.

b. For Lecturers

The results of this study can be used as supplementary teaching materials for courses in pragmatics, discourse analysis and literary studies.

c. For Future Researchers

This research can be a reference for the future researchers who are interested to do the research related to request expressions, speech acts or

drama analysis.

d. For Readers

The research can help readers understand how request expressions are used in different contexts and how they contribute to the development of dramatic interactions.

1.7. Definition of the Key Terms

1. Request Expression

Pérez-Hernández (2020), request expressions are directive speech acts used by speakers to ask hearers to perform a particular action. The realization of requests depends on the communicative purpose, social relationship, and level of politeness between the speaker and the hearer.

Request expression refers to an utterance produced by a speaker to ask another person to perform a particular action, provide information, or offer assistance. Requests can be expressed directly or indirectly depending on the communicative context and social relationship between the speaker and the hearer.

In this study, request expressions refer to all utterances in the drama *Under the Gaslight* that are intended to ask, persuade, encourage, or influence another character to perform a specific action.

2. Speech Act

Stavros Assimakopoulos (2025/2026), speech act theory views utterances as actions whose meaning emerges through the interaction between the speaker, the listener, and the communicative context.

A speech act is a communicative action performed through language. When speakers produce utterances, they do not merely convey information but also perform actions such as requesting, apologizing, inviting, suggesting, and promising. In this study, the theoretical basis of speech act theory is used to analyze request expressions in the drama.

3. Pragmatics

George Yule (2020) defines pragmatics as the study of the meaning intended by speakers and understood by listeners based on the communication context.

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that focuses on the use of language in context. It is about how to understand meaning in terms of situation, social relationship and communicative intention. The significance of pragmatics to this study is that request expressions cannot be fully understood without the context in which they are produced.

4. Drama

According to Bradford (2021), drama is a literary composition presented by means of dialog and action, intended to represent human experiences, conflicts and emotions either in performance or in written form.

is a story told thru the dialog and action of a literary work. It is designed to be acted on stage and focuses on communication between characters. In this study, request expressions are analyzed by using drama as a data source.

5. Under the Gaslight

Augustin Daly's *Under the Gaslight*, one of the most popular American

melodramas, employs natural dialog to create complex social relations and dramatic conflict. Its wealth of conversational interactions makes it a good source of pragmatic and speech act analysis.

Under the Gaslight is a play written by Augustin Daly. The play has many character interactions, which can be a good source for the analysis of request expressions.

6. Request Strategy

Request strategies refer to the linguistic behavior that speakers use when making requests. This study categorizes request strategies into three categories:

1. Direct Request Strategy
2. Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy
3. Non-Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy

The main framework for the analysis of request expressions in the drama is provided by these categories.

7. Meaning

Meaning is the intention to communicate that a speaker conveys by an utterance. In this study, meaning refers to the intended message behind each request expression used by Under the Gaslight characters.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides a detailed review of relevant literature reviewed for the study. The theoretical framework is very important and is discussed in depth. The researcher intends to elucidate this chapter so as to improve its clarity and the reader's comprehension. The chapter is divided into three parts namely review of related theories, review of related studies and discussion of the conceptual framework.

2.1.Review of Related Theories

2.1.1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of language in use, and therefore of language in context. It considers how speakers convey meanings which are more than the literal meanings of words and sentences. Pragmatics is the study of how speakers and hearers relate to each other, to social situations, to cultural backgrounds and to communicative purposes in shaping meaning.

The study of pragmatics is important because we cannot understand communication thru grammar alone. Speakers generally imply their intentions and hearers must infer such intentions from contextual information. Pragmatics, then, is concerned with how meanings are conveyed and understood by language users in actual contexts.

Recent studies emphasize that pragmatic competence is crucial for

speech act comprehension since successful communication does not rely merely on linguistic knowledge but also on the ability to infer intentions in context. The context is very important when trying to determine whether an utterance is a request , suggestion , warning , etc .

In literary works such as drama, pragmatics allows investigators to understand the communicative intentions of the characters. Through pragmatic analysis, readers can identify the hidden meanings behind dialogues and explain how language contributes to plot development and characterization.

2.1.2. Speech Act Theory

Speech Act Theory explains that language is not only used to convey information but also to perform actions. When people speak, they simultaneously perform acts such as requesting, promising, apologizing, inviting, suggesting, warning, and commanding.

Recent discussions of speech act theory continue to emphasize that utterances function as social actions performed in specific contexts. Requests are among the most common speech acts because they are used to encourage others to perform actions desired by the speaker.

Speech acts are generally classified into five categories:

1. Representative Speech Acts
2. Directive Speech Acts

3. Commissive Speech Acts
4. Expressive Speech Acts
5. Declarative Speech Acts

Among these categories, request expressions belong to directive speech acts because they aim to influence the hearer's future actions.

In drama, speech acts are realized through dialogues among characters. Every interaction reflects communicative intentions that contribute to the progression of the story.

2.1.3. Request Expression

A request expression is an utterance produced by a speaker to ask another person to perform a specific action. Requests may involve asking for help, information, cooperation, permission, or services.

Recent studies define requests as directive acts through which speakers attempt to get hearers to do something. Requests are often accompanied by politeness strategies to reduce the imposition placed on the hearer. Request expressions are important because they reveal social relationships between interlocutors. The choice of request forms depends on factors such as:

- 1 Power relations
- 2 Social distance
- 3 Context
- 4 Degree of imposition

5 Politeness considerations

In dramatic dialogue, request expressions frequently appear because characters often seek assistance, information, cooperation, or support from others.

2.1.4. Request Strategies

Balman, Lee, and Inoue (2020) request strategies are pragmatic strategies employed by speakers to ask hearers to act while maintaining politeness and minimizing the imposition placed upon the hearer. Request strategies are influenced by contextual factors such as social distance, power relations, and the degree of imposition.

Blum-Kulka and Olshtain (2021) define a request as a directive speech act used by a speaker to ask the interlocutor to perform an action that benefits the speaker. Because requests have the potential to restrict the recipient's freedom, speakers need to choose strategies appropriate to the social context.

Situmorang (2022) defines a request strategy as the form of speech act implementation chosen by the speaker based on the social context of the communication. Request strategies are determined not only by sentence structure but also by the speaker's pragmatic competence.

Request strategies refer to the linguistic methods used by speakers when making requests. Contemporary research continues to classify request strategies into three major categories: direct requests, conventionally indirect requests, and non-conventionally indirect requests.

A. Direct Request Strategy

Direct requests are clear about the speaker's intention.

Examples:

- a. "Open the door."
- b. "Give me the letter."
- c. "Come here," he said. "Now."

Characteristics:

- a. The request is expressed explicitly and directly.
- b. The speaker clearly states the intended action.
- c. The hearer can easily understand the request without additional interpretation.
- d. It commonly uses imperative sentences or explicit request expressions.
- e. It emphasizes clarity and efficiency in communication.
- f. It imposes a relatively higher degree of obligation on the hearer.
- g. It is generally considered less polite than indirect requests because it minimizes mitigation.

B. Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy

Conventional indirect requests make requests more polite by using well-known linguistic conventions.

Examples:

- a. "Could you open the door?"
- b. "Would you mind helping me?"
- c. "Will you pass the book?"

Characteristics:

- a. The request is expressed indirectly through conventional expressions.
- b. It commonly uses modal verbs such as can, could, will, would, may, and might.
- c. The speaker attempts to reduce the force of the request.
- d. It maintains politeness while keeping the intended meaning clear.
- e. It considers social distance, power, and the degree of imposition.
- f. It is the most frequently used request strategy in daily communication.
- g. It allows the hearer greater freedom to accept or refuse the request politely.

Studies show that indirect requests are often used in a conventional way as they provide a balance between politeness and effectiveness.

C. Non-Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy

Non-conventionally indirect requests are expressed through hints.

Examples:

- a. "It is very hot in here."
- b. "I cannot reach that book."
- c. "The room seems quite dark."

Characteristics:

- a. Implicit, not explicit request.
- b. The speaker hints, instead of asking directly for an action.
- c. The hearer must interpret the intended meaning based on the context.
- d. It does not contain conventional request expressions.

- e. It minimizes pressure on the hearer and protects the hearer's negative face.
- f. It requires shared background knowledge between the speaker and the hearer.
- g. It is generally regarded as the most polite request strategy because it gives the hearer greater freedom to respond.

Studies show that indirect requests require greater pragmatic competence because interpretation depends heavily on contextual cues.

2.1.5. Request Expressions in Drama

Since characters are heard primarily thru dialog, there is a wealth of data to be mined for pragmatic analysis of drama. Dialog is how characters reveal feelings, motives, conflicts, and relationships.

Research on request strategies in dramatic texts has shown that drama provides authentic examples of request performances in social interactions. Request expressions help to characterize, develop conflict and plot.

Expressions of request are abundant in *Under the Gaslight*, as characters frequently seek help, information, cooperation, and emotional support from one another. The drama is therefore a suitable material for the analysis of request strategies and their communicative functions.

2.2.Review of Related Findings

Some studies related to request expressions have been conducted by researchers in the last few years. These studies provide important references to understand the use of request expressions in different contexts and

communicative situations.

Rahmawati and Suryani (2023) investigated the politeness strategies in request expressions used by Indonesian EFL learners and found that politeness has an important role in determining the success of communication thru requests. The results show that speakers are likely to adjust their requests in accordance with social status, familiarity, and context of communication so as to maintain harmonious interpersonal relations. But their research was on language learners, not on the meanings conveyed by request expressions in literary discourse. Hence, the present study contributes to the discussion by analyzing the expressions of requests and their meanings in dramatic dialogs.

Alshraah, Aly, and Nasim (2023) investigated the pragmatic realization of request expressions by Saudi EFL learners. The results indicated that many learners had difficulty in choosing appropriate request strategies according to social relationships and power distance between speakers and hearers. The study pointed out that both the linguistic and pragmatic competences are properly needed for the production of the request expressions. But the research was on foreign language learners while the present study is about request expression used by fictional characters in a literary work.

Rasameekunwit and Sungkaman (2023) investigated pragmatic transfer in the speech act of request produced by Thai EFL learners. The results showed that the learners' making requests in English is influenced by their cultural background and first language. Research showed the considerable influence of social and cultural factors on the meanings of requests. However, the study did

not focus on literary texts which is what differentiates it from the present study.

Oktavia et al. (2023) analyzed the direct and indirect request strategies of international students in the interlanguage pragmatics context. The results indicated that request expressions are considered as face-threatening acts which makes the speakers to use indirect strategies to preserve politeness and interpersonal relationships. However, the research was not about literary discourse, but about intercultural communication.

Pardomuan and Hellystia (2026) analyzed directive speech acts in English film discourse. They found that request expressions are frequently used to establish cooperation, negotiate social relationships, and reflect interpersonal power relations among characters. Their findings also revealed that request meanings may be expressed directly or indirectly depending on communicative strategies and situational contexts. However, the research focused on film discourse rather than classical dramatic texts. Therefore, the present research contributes to literary pragmatic studies by examining request expressions in the drama *Under the Gaslight*.

Katili and Mahmud (2023) investigated discourse analysis in literary studies and found that dialogues in drama reflect communicative styles and social interaction patterns similar to those found in real-life communication. Their research highlighted that dramatic texts provide rich linguistic data for understanding meaning construction and interaction among characters. These findings support the use of drama as an appropriate object for pragmatic investigation, particularly in the analysis of request expressions in literary

discourse.

Based on the previous studies, it can be seen that research on request expressions has primarily focused on language learners, intercultural communication, and film discourse. Although these studies have contributed to the understanding of request expressions from different perspectives, only limited attention has been given to the analysis of request expressions in literary works, particularly in drama. In addition, previous studies have rarely examined both the grammatical forms and the pragmatic meanings of request expressions within dramatic dialogues. Therefore, there remains a research gap that needs to be addressed. This gap provides an opportunity to investigate how request expressions are realized and interpreted in a dramatic text.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

Language is how people express what they intend, what they need and what they desire. Request is one of the most frequent acts of communication. A request expression is a class of directive speech act that attempts to get another person to do a specific action.

This study is the analysis of request expressions in the drama *Under the Gaslight*. The analysis is based on Request Strategies Theory which categorizes request expressions into three types:

Direct Request Strategy

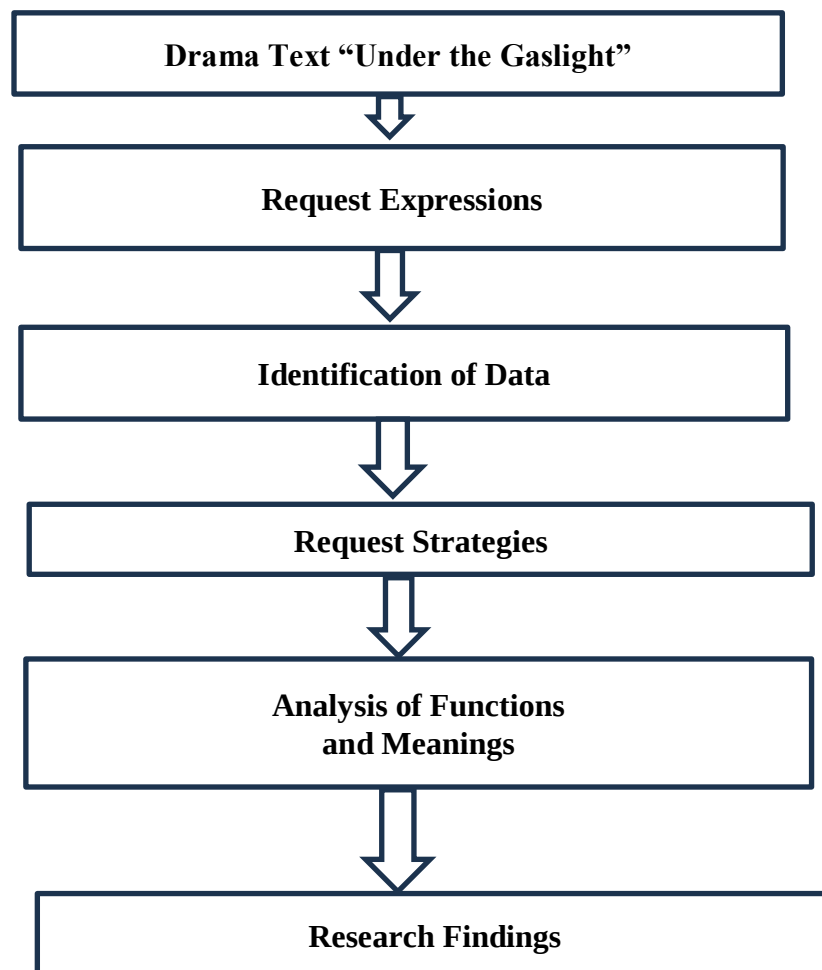
1. Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy
2. Non-Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy

The researcher finds the request expressions used by the characters and

classifies them into these categories. The researcher then analyzes the functions and meanings of the request expressions in relation to the context of the dialogs after classification.

The analysis process can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework



Data in this study are drawn from Under the Gaslight. The researcher identifies all expressions of request in the dialogs of the characters. These expressions of request are then classified into the categories of request strategies. The researcher then investigates the communicative functions and

contextual meanings of each request expression after categorization. Finally, the findings provide a comprehensive description of request expressions used in the drama.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of the research methodology employed in this study in detail. This includes a careful look at the research design, context, population and sampling, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and analysis methods. All the elements have been taken into account and integrated, so as to guaranty a rigorous and systematic approach to the resolution of the research objectives.

3.1. Research Design

The study used a descriptive qualitative research design. Qualitative research is used because the data are in the form of words, utterances, dialogs and not in the form of numerical data.

This research aims to identify, classify, and analyze request expressions in the drama *Under the Gaslight*. In this case, the researcher is interested in the forms and meanings of the request expression used by the characters.

The researcher uses a descriptive approach, since the researcher describes the phenomena systematically and objectively based on the data obtained from the drama script.

3.2. Object of the Research

The object of this research is the request expressions in the drama *Under the Gaslight* written by Augustin Daly . This drama is chosen by the researcher due to the diversity of interactions among characters involving request, persuasion,

cooperation and information seeking. These interactions offer rich data for the analysis of request strategies. The study's data consist of words, phrases, clauses and sentences categorized as request expressions.

3.3. Instrumentation of the Research

Research instruments are essential elements in the conduct of research, they are tools used for the collection, organization, analysis and interpretation of data . Researcher as instrument is a qualitative research approach that involves the active participation of the researcher in the collection of data, examination of information, analysis of findings, and interpretation of meaning (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). Thus the success of the research largely depends upon the ability of the researcher to identify, classify and interpret data systematically.

The main instrument for the identification and analysis of request expressions in the dialog of Augustin Daly's play **Under the Gaslight** is the researcher in this study. The researcher reads the script carefully and identifies the utterances that contain request expressions, describes the function of request expressions used by the characters and explains the meaning of request expressions based on the context of the dialog. The analysis concerns the way in which characters utilize expressions of prohibition to prevent, forbid or restrict certain actions and how the intended meaning is interpreted thru contextual factors such as the speaker, the addressee, the situation and the communicative purpose.

To support the data collection and analysis process, several supplementary instruments are employed in this study. These instruments include the **Under*

the Gaslight* script as the primary data source, a recording sheet to log relevant utterances containing expressions of prohibition, a data classification table to organize the forms and meanings of the expressions systematically, and a validation sheet to verify the accuracy of data identification and interpretation. The use of these supplementary instruments assists the researcher in managing data efficiently and conducting the analysis in a structured manner.

3.4. Technique of Collecting the Data

The data are collected through documentation and note-taking techniques.

The procedures are as follows:

1. Reading the drama *Under the Gaslight* thoroughly.
2. Identifying request expressions found in the dialogues.
3. Highlighting relevant utterances.
4. Recording the utterances into data sheets.
5. Classifying the data according to request strategy categories.
6. Organizing the data for analysis.

3.5. Technique of Analyzing the Data

The data are analyzed using the following procedures:

1. Identifying request expressions in the drama.
2. Classifying the request expressions into:
 - a. Direct Request Strategy
 - b. Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy

c. Non-Conventionally Indirect Request Strategy

3. Interpreting the meanings of the request expressions based on context.
4. Drawing conclusions based on the findings.

The data analysis follows the qualitative data analysis procedures consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.