

A RESEARCH ON A STUDY OF THE PERFORMANCES OF SPEECH ACTS IN INDIAN NOVELS IN ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

Linguists studied language structure before Austin. Language was neglected. Philosophers, linguists, etc. were influenced by J.L. Austin. Pragmatics investigates language use, whereas linguistics studies language scientifically. Pragmatics relies on Speech Act Theory. Speech Act theory originated with J.L. Austin's idea that speakers act with words. Pragmatics began with How to Do Things with Words. Words act, according to Speech Act Theory. Speech acts include speaking. Words may order, advise, promise, complain, and more.

Searle added Direct and Indirect Speech Acts to Austin's Speech Act Theory. Asking questions is a direct speech act. Indirect Speech Acts occur when the speaker's aim differs from the literal meaning. To convince, pose a question. Speech and behavior are linked in this research. A Study of Indirect Speech Acts in the Chosen Novels of Indian Writers in English" studies indirect speech acts in different conversational pieces in various episodes from the chosen novels and their influence on the novels' development. Indirect Speech Acts and these texts are comparable. Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger (2008), Kiran Desai's The Inheritance of Loss (2006), and Jaishree Misra's Afterwards (2004) were examined.

They're comparable. Immigrant writers authored these novels. They also consider India in their global outlook. The Inheritance of Loss is set against the Indo-Nepal conflict. The story takes place in Kalimpong, a Darjeeling border town. This challenging work by Kiran Desai examines current Indian issues including fanaticism, social instability, illegal immigration, and cultural identity.

It's dangerous. Indian slavery and class strife are satirized in this work. Driver-turned-entrepreneur Balram recounts. Modern Indian culture is seen in Balram Halwai. The art has dark humor and introspection. Indirect speaking actions are extremely significant in this work. The book was made in 7 days for Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. It ridicules Indian politics, politicians, corruption, feudal system, cast system, election system, etc.

Love and relationships is complex in after. "Maya" Warrior escapes her suspicious husband with Rahul Tiwari's aid. Her London elopement ends horribly. Maya's father and grandmother die from familial shame. Maya dies instantly in an accident as though punished by God. Maya's daughter "Anjali" must return to India to her biological father since Rahul feels lonely again. Maya and Rahul's hasty decision and suggested infatuation ruin others' lives.

INTRODUCTION

Preliminaries

The present research entitled 'A Study of Indirect Speech Acts in the Selected Novels of Indian Writers in English,' is principally aimed at investigating and examining the application of Indirect Speech Acts in various conversational pieces in different incidents taken from the selected novels and their significant role in the development of the novels. It is an endeavor to compare these novels in the light of Indirect Speech Acts due to certain resemblance

observed between them. The selected novels for the purpose of analysis are:

The White Tiger by Aravind Adiga- 2008,

The Inheritance of Loss by Kiran Desai- 2006,

Afterwards by Jaishree Misra - 2004.

The central concept of Pragmatics is the Speech Act Theory. The core of the Speech Act Theory is the notion that the speaker performs actions via words. Performing actions with words is called Speech Acts. Various actions are performed via words such as requesting, asking, ordering, suggesting, promising, complaining and so on.

Austin's Speech Act Theory was further expanded by Searle who divided Speech Acts into Direct and Indirect Speech Acts. Direct Speech Acts are those where the utterance and intention of the speaker is one and same such as asking a question for seeking an answer. On the contrary, when the speaker's intention behind the utterance is different than its literal meaning, it is called as Indirect Speech Acts such as asking a question for requesting or pursuing the listener to do something. Keeping this distinction in view the present research aims at establishing a link between human utterance and human behaviour.

Selection of the Novels and the Methodology for analysis

The proposed research designs to adopt the following methodology: The primary source of research is J.L. Austin's book, How to Do Things with Words (1962) and John Searle's development and expansion of Austin's theory in the book, Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language (1969) and the selected novels for analysis.

The secondary source will be various reference books, researches and journals related to the present area of research. Other pragmatic concepts and conversational principles will also be applied as per the examples. The collected data will be segregated and applied wherever needed.

After explaining the theoretical framework in detail, the highly significant Indirect Speech Acts in the selected novels will be identified. These Indirect Speech Acts will be segregated according to their function and analyzed minutely. Possible conclusions will be laid down eventually.

Regarding Indirect Speech Acts, various questions will be categorized into rhetorical questions, and those questions that perform more than one function. Other forms of Indirect Speech Acts like different figures of Speech, emphatic statements, circumlocution, hedging and denial etc. will be analyzed. Similarly, those conversational pieces, the interpretation of which is different than literal and intended meaning will be given separate space. Indirect Speech Acts in these novels will lead to the internal comparison among different Indirect Speech Acts used in diverse context. The contribution of Indirect Speech Acts will be brought out and explained in detail.

Pragmatics: Its Development

The first Pragmatic approach to Linguistics is evident in the late sixties and early seventies in the works of Ross, Lakoff and others. In the theory of sense and reference which was introduced by Frege in his article 'Funktion und Begriff' (1891) and extended in his work 'Über Sinn und Bedeutung' (1892) the seeds of Pragmatics can be traced.

Charles William Morris (1903), in his writing on the General Theory of signs explains

syntactic, semantic and pragmatic relations of linguistics and non-linguistic signs. He asserts that language may be governed by syntactic, semantic and pragmatic rules. Morris attempted to define Pragmatics as the study of the relation of signs to interpreters.

Speech Acts

Along with our physical and mental activities we also perform 'linguistic activities', such as, asking, stating, requesting, ordering, promising etc. These linguistic activities are 'Speech Acts'. Prior to Austin (1911-1960) language was considered simply as a combination of 'sound and meaning' or 'set of correct sentences'. Language was studied through the glass of a scientist and not of a humanist. The structural or formal point of view was the focal point in language study.

The basic purpose of language, that it is used for communication was somehow ignored. A linguistic act is included in each and every linguistic communication. It was J.L. Austin who diverted the approach of philosophers towards language from the structural point of view to the functional view point. He asserted that language is used for performing Actions. Austin (1962) defined Speech Acts as, "the act of uttering a certain sentence in a given context for determined purpose, i.e. an act of communication." Some other definitions of Speech Acts are:-

Speaking a language is performing speech acts, as making statements giving commands, asking questions, making promises and so on (Searle 1969:16) Speech acts are actions performed via utterances. (Yule G. 1996:47)

A sentence is studied by grammarians from grammatical point of view. The rules of Syntax and Semantics can be studied on the basis of a sentence. For grammarians the structure of sentence is more important than its function. Any example can be cited to explain a certain type of sentence by grammarians. To explain the SVO(subject, verb, and object) structure of declarative sentence in general the following example may be cited,

I write a thesis.

Though, the above sentence satisfies the essential rules of assertive sentence, yet practically, it bears little communicative value. In day to day life, we do not utter any sentence simply to follow the grammatical rules but we mean something while uttering it. A sentence is 'context free', whereas an utterance is 'context bound'. Without the knowledge of context one cannot identify what the utterance mean. An utterance is used for communicative purpose.

An utterance is not the exposition of grammatical rules but it is the exposition of intended meaning. The degree of intended meaning varies in different context or situations. Therefore, in the words of Nozar Niazi an utterance is a unit of communication whose significance or value is established by its contextual situation. (2004:13)

Thus, an utterance, "Its three o'clock." will have different value and significance depending upon speaker, hearer and situation. If the utterer is a friend, it will cause an immediate reaction of the other friends who have planned to go for watching afternoon movie. If the utterer is an invigilator, the students appearing in the exam will be alerted of time to hear the same utterance.

Austin's Contribution to Speech Act Theory

Right from ancient philosophers such as Plato, St. Augustine till modern philosophers, such

as, Russel, Wittgenstein, Carnap Ryle, Quine, Strawson an attempt was being made to link logic with language. It was their strict dogmatic notion that language is a matter of logic i.e. only that language is correct which uses logic. The other uses of language were considered metaphysical, emotional or simply bad.

Thus, logic was considered most essential to language. On the other hand, J.L. Austin the 'father of the Speech Act Theory' lays emphasis on the study of the way the people use language for communication. J. L. Austin's 'William James lectures', delivered at Harvard in 1955, were posthumously published under the title *How to Do Things with Words* (1962).

It is the study of the way people use language for communication. The central focus of the study is language user's linguistic knowledge of the world. In the words of J. Lyons, It is a theory of saying as doing within the frame work of social institutions and conversations.

ANALYSIS OF INDIRECT SPEECH ACTS

In actual life, language is used. These circumstances may be social, political, cultural, or professional. Literature reflects life and language used in different contexts by people in different times. Dialogue is essential to theater. Fictional dialogues are character conversations. The reader might assess or sketch the interlocutor/s via such discourse. The background of any discussion makes it simpler to understand the speech situation and the literary work incorporating dialogue.

Conversation happens via Speech Acts. These Speech Acts are direct or indirect. Direct Speech Acts are those in which form and function match, such as utilizing interrogative to ask questions or seek answers. However, Indirect Speech Acts use imperative function to pose questions. In their conversations, people favor indirect speech acts over direct ones. This may be an effort at politeness. Indirect Speech Acts, according to Nozar Niazi, are used to avoid endangering the other's face by hedging, apologizing, telling white falsehoods, speaking off-the-record, offering reasons for not accepting an invitation or complying with a request, etc.

Reconsidering the difference between Direct and Indirect Speech Acts, Searle says, Indirect Speech Acts are cases in which one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by way of performing a direct one. (1979:60)

Thus, when there is a direct relationship between form and function of the utterance, it is called as a Direct Speech Act, whereas when there is an indirect or implicit relationship between its form and function, the utterance is considered as an Indirect Speech Act. Varieties of questions will be investigated in the present chapter from its indirect point of view.

Conclusion

The Indirect Speech Acts help in sharpening the readers' perception of the novel. The development of the plot and characters can be understood in detail by analysing Indirect Speech Acts particularly. It helps the readers to interpret the utterances precisely. The procedure of teaching and learning can be made interesting by applying pragmatic terms in

general and Indirect Speech Acts in particular. The analysis helps the teachers and students to explore the concealed interpretation under superficial utterances.

The authorial point of view, psychological mechanism of the speaker, the traits and peculiarities of characters can be carved out by the study of Indirect Speech Acts. The traditional approach of reading and learning literary works can be replaced pragmatically by Indirect Speech Acts.

Thus, the readers' point of view may be broadened and they can analyse the work with the different view. Teachers can guide the students how to gather different threads and shades of meaning and weave them together to arrive at concrete interpretation. The diverse interpretation of literary works may get a proper direction and help in bringing harmony in various perspectives to arrive at particular conclusion in a combination by using Indirect Speech Acts.

In the light of Indirect Speech Acts, the novel can be studied from various perspectives such as psychological, social, personal, economical etc. Teachers can also point out the various strategies of Indirect Speech Acts such as irony, sarcasm, euphemism, varieties of questions performing many functions etc. using various figures of speech as per the context and shared knowledge etc. Teachers can train the students to explore various shades and layers of meanings of the utterances. Teachers can help the students in identifying primary illocutionary force or combination of these forces in the utterance by applying Indirect Speech Acts, context and principles of conversation. They can demonstrate to students how implicatures lead to precise interpretation of the utterance under observation. The relevance and significance of the superficially irrelevant Indirect Speech Acts can be explained to the students in the larger context of the novel. A study of Indirect Speech Acts offers a great deal of explanatory possibilities and can guide teachers, students and the general reader to overcome the problem of interpreting the utterance. It will certainly lead them to appreciate the aesthetic value of literary work in general and Indirect Speech Acts in particular.

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