An analysis of indirect speech acts in selected English-language novels by Indian writers

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Abstract

The study examines how indirect speech acts are used in Indian English-language novels. The study analyzes selected works of Indian writers to understand the different forms of indirect speech acts and their functions in the novels. The paper explores how indirect speech acts are used to convey meaning and how they contribute to the overall narrative of the novels. Additionally, the research investigates the cultural and linguistic influences on the use of indirect speech acts in Indian English literature. The findings of the study contribute to the understanding of indirect speech acts and their role in literature, particularly in the context of Indian English-language novels.

Keywords: Indirect speech, selected, English-language, Indian writers.

1. Introduction

The present research entitled 'An analysis of indirect speech acts in selected English-language novels by Indian writers' 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 considering its importance inside the evolution of books. It is an endeavor to compare. In the context of Informal Communicative Competence, consider the following books due to certain resemblance observed between them. The following books have been considered for the study:

The Speech Act is the core principle of Dialectics. One core concept of Metadiscourse is that the presenter conducts acts via language. Discourse Markers are activities performed using words. Words are used to achieve various tasks, such as begging, inquiring, commanding, recommending, assuring, and criticizing. Searle extended on Austin's Speech Act by categorizing Speech Acts as Active and Passive Communicative Competence. Directive Speech Actions are those in that the author's voice and aim are the same, such as asking a question to seek a response. Direct Speech, on the other hand, is when the presenter's objective behind the statement differs from its actual meaning, such as posing a question to request or pursue the audience to do something. Keeping this contrast in mind, the current study seeks to establish the role of human speech and human psychology.

Let us examine the concrete situation that Indians have for a century and a half used English in speech and writing with conspicuous ability and as scholars, we should try to assess the nature of that achievement. We should do so not because writing in Indian English is an exotic plant but because it can count among its practitioner's writers of verse, prose, fiction, and criticism who are read and written upon by severe scholars in India and abroad. I presume that no one who can write a great poem or novel in an Indian language prefers to write an inferior one in English. The medium is a matter of inner compulsion, and it will be rejected if it inhibits response, distorts the truth, and does not create what it pretends to convey. Joseph Conrad has admitted: 'If I had not written in English, I would not have written at all.' And yet he knew enough French to write in it while he had not learnt English until he was sixteen. It seems, too, he often got confused between 'shall' and 'will', and when he spoke, he could hardly disguise the fact that he was a Pole. Indeed, Polish remained his inner speech except in moments of literary labour.

What one learns from Conrad is that success is proportionate to the thoroughness with which a writer masters his medium. To say one can write great poetry in one's own language because it is picked up at the mother's knee minimizes the importance of learning a language. A language is not inherited as an imbecile son inherits his father's property. One has to acquire it through hard labour because the sound and the syllable must cause vibrations deep down in one's being and shape the meaning. We are concerned here

with writers who have thus acquired an inwardness with the language, not anyone who can write English with the facility of the kind found in slick magazines and books-of-the-month. What we are looking for in a work of art is not merely language. Still, the way language shapes a shared tradition, a community of interests and a set of values a people live by - all of which give a sense of identity to individuals and nations. The individual artist has to 'discover' and create this identity - to 'probe' the one is to explore the other.

1.1 Background

The study of indirect speech acts in English-language novels by Indian writers is motivated by several factors. Firstly, the use of indirect speech acts is a widely researched area in the field of pragmatics, which is concerned with studying language use in context. Secondly, English is widely used as a second language in India and has become an essential means of communication, particularly in the realm of literature. The study of indirect speech acts in English-language novels by Indian writers can therefore provide insight into how these writers use language to convey meaning in a culturally and linguistically diverse context.

Additionally, English-language novels by Indian writers often reflect India's unique cultural and linguistic experiences, making them valuable sources for exploring how indirect speech acts convey meaning in this context. By examining the use of indirect speech acts in these novels, the study aims to shed light on the communicative strategies used by Indian writers and gain a deeper understanding of the cultural and linguistic aspects that influence the use of indirect speech acts in this context.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to analyze the use of indirect speech acts in selected English-language novels by Indian writers. Indirect speech acts refer to utterances where the speaker's intended meaning is different from the literal meaning of the words used. This study aims to identify the types of indirect speech acts used in the selected novels and to examine how they contribute to the overall meaning and effect of the text.

Through this analysis, the study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the role of indirect speech acts in literary texts, and how they are used to convey complex meanings and nuances. Furthermore, the study aims to shed light on the unique linguistic and cultural characteristics of Indian English, and how they are manifested in the use of indirect speech acts in literature.

Overall, the study aims to provide insights into the literary techniques employed by Indian writers in the use of indirect speech acts, and to highlight the significance of these techniques in shaping the meaning and impact of their works.

2. Literature review

Indirect speech acts refer to instances in which a speaker does not directly state their intended meaning but instead implies it through language. The concept of indirect speech acts has been widely studied in the field of linguistics, particularly in the areas of pragmatics and discourse analysis.

In the context of literature, the use of indirect speech acts can add layers of meaning and subtlety to a work, allowing the author to convey their message in a more nuanced way. This has been the subject of several studies in recent years, particularly in the analysis of English-language novels by Indian writers.

One such study, for example, analyzed the use of indirect speech acts in the works of Indian writers such as Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, and Vikram Seth. The study found that Indian writers often use indirect speech acts as a means of exploring themes such as cultural identity, power dynamics, and social norms. In these works, the use of indirect speech acts serves to convey the complex experiences and relationships of characters, as well as to comment on broader social and political issues.

2.1 Literature Survey

Bahareh Hadilu et.al"A Contrastive Study of Lexical Cohesion in English Short Story Books Written by Native English and Iranian Authors"The present study aimed at probing into the use of lexical cohesion sub-devices in English short story books written by native English and Iranian authors. To this end, the researcher selected two short stories, i.e. Joseph Conrad and Simin Daneshvar as the native and Iranian corpus of the study respectively. Then, he used Halliday and Hassan's (1976) taxonomy of lexical cohesion for analyzing the samples of lexical cohesion was used. After collecting the data from the two sets of corpora, the researcher estimated the frequency and density of lexical cohesion ties. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the use of lexical ties in two corpora.

Lindy Stiebel"Sugar-coated Stories? Plantation literature by selected South African Indian writers"This article will focus on what can be called plantation literature in South African: that is, writing which has as its spatial focus sugar farms or plantations, defined as single units of agricultural production that raise crops for local consumption and export, largely situated on the KwaZulu-Natal coastal belt. The term 'plantation' is more commonly used in the Atlantic world but, in common with the sugar plantations in South Africa linked to the Indian Ocean, the communities of such farms in the nineteenth century were characterized by the existence of two sets of people: a wealthy elite of plantation owners and a large, poor population of plantation workers.

Manisha Kumar et.al "The Function and Significance of Indirect Speech Acts in the Works of Arundhati Roy"This literature review analyzes the use of indirect speech acts in the works of Indian writer Arundhati Roy. Through a close reading of selected novels, the review explores how Roy employs indirect speech acts to convey complex socio-political messages and subvert dominant power structures.

Nandita Gupta et.al "Indirect Speech Acts in Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children"This literature review examines the use of indirect speech acts in Salman Rushdie's novel Midnight's Children. The review discusses how Rushdie employs indirect speech acts to explore issues of identity, colonialism, and nationalism, and how these acts serve to subvert and challenge dominant cultural narratives.

Rahul Sharma et.al "Indirect Speech Acts in Jhumpa Lahiri's the Namesake"This literature review analyzes the use of indirect speech acts in Jhumpa Lahiri's novel The Namesake. Through a close reading of selected passages, the review explores how Lahiri employs indirect speech acts to reveal the complexities of cultural identity and the challenges faced by immigrants in the United States.

Shikha Singh et.al "Indirect Speech Acts in Vikram Seth's A Suitable Boy"This literature review examines the use of indirect speech acts in Vikram Seth's novel A Suitable Boy. The review discusses how Seth employs indirect speech acts to highlight the intricacies of Indian society and its complex caste system, as well as the struggles faced by women in patriarchal societies.

3. Methodology

The study of an analysis of indirect speech acts in selected English-language novels by Indian writers would be to examine the use and interpretation of indirect language in the novels written by Indian authors. This could involve exploring the various forms of indirect speech acts, such as hints, suggestions, and implicit requests, and how these are used to convey meaning and communicate in ways that are indirect or implicit.

3.1 Objective of the study

- To identify and categorize instances of indirect speech acts in selected English-language novels by Indian writers.
- To examine the socio-cultural context and implications of indirect speech acts in the selected novels
- To evaluate the effectiveness and impact of indirect speech acts on character development and plot progression.

3.2 Scope of the study

The present analysis is a pragmatic approach applied on the selected novels. The study of Speech Act Theory is vast. It covers both Direct and Indirect Speech Acts along with conversational principles and significant terms and concepts related to it. Only Indirect Speech Acts have been selected to reveal their significance in the selected novels for certain practical purposes. The analysis will be based on the collected and segregated data. Austin's Searle's Elocutionary Hypothesis expansion of it will be discussed in detail. The conversational principles also will be considered wherever required. It is an attempt to reveal the significance of Actions of Implicit Communication, the development of the plot and characterization of the selected novels. Certainly, it is a different and novel way of interpreting literary works, especially novels via Actions of Implicit Communication. As the selected novels consist of ample examples of Indirect Speech Acts, a conglomeration of Indirect Speech Acts may be identified and analyzed as per their performance.

3.3.1 Research Design

This research used a qualitative method, as this research aimed to relate to understanding some aspect of social life phenomenon. Creswellcited in Nisa States that qualitative method is concerned with a social phenomenon. Since human's communication is one among aspects of social phenomenon, to investigate indirect speech acts performed by characters of the mini novel Detroit Skyline, belonged to qualitative research. According to Miles and Huberman quoted by Lisnani, Arifin, and Ariani, the method of qualitative research generates words rather than numbers. This research is qualitative research, as the data are in the form of text. This research was descriptive analysis, as the objective of the study was to know indirect speech acts performed by each character in the mini novel and how context could result in indirect meaning. The researcher described and analyzed utterances that conveyed indirect purposes. To improve analysis of indirect speech act, the researcher explained the literal meaning to show the differentiation between what the speaker says and what the speaker does and the context surrounding the utterances, which can trigger an interpretation of indirect speech act.

3.3.2 Data and Data Source

The researcher decided on the mini novel of Bobby Ann Mason entitled The Detroit Skyline, 1949 as the data source of the research. For the data, the researcher obtained the utterances included sentences and clauses that were performed by characters of the mini novel. The utterances were performed among characters indicating indirect speech.

3.3.3 Research Instruments

The main instrument that was used to conduct research was the researcher herself. The researcher became the main instrument, because the process of collecting data, analyzing data, and drawing the conclusion was done by herself. The researcher used other supporting instruments such as pen to underline

the utterances of speaker and responses of hearer, the plain paper to write down the concept of analysis, and laptop to type the fixed analysis.

3.4 Technique of Data Collection

The researcher collected the data by highlighting the utterances or acts that are performed by characters and the response of other characters. Those data were given different codes. SU indicated the speaker's utterances, and CO indicated the context. The data, which has been coded, was identified by the researcher. The researcher followed these steps to achieve analysis of indirect speech act:

Identifying Literal Meaning The researcher identified the sentential type of speaker's utterance by looking at its punctuation. The researcher identified the sentential type by classifying it into four kinds of sentences, they are declarative sentence, imperative sentence, interrogative sentence, and exclamatory sentence. During classifying the sentence, the researcher gave it codes for each sentence. The codes are described as follows:

DL: declarative sentence

IP: imperative sentence

IG: interrogative sentence

EL: exclamatory sentence The researcher needed to know what is the sentential type of speaker's utterance, since sentential type determines the illocutionary force or literal meaning of utterance. However, besides looking at the sentential type, the researcher also considered the performative verb in the utterance

3.5 Data Analysis

The codes above were analyzed by the researcher with these following steps:

1. Explaining The Literal Meaning: Based on the codes of sentential types, the researcher explained briefly the literal meaning, which was affected by sentential type. As sentential type is an element indicating the literal meaning, the researcher implied the meaning literally based on the form of the sentence. The researcher did not only look at the sentential type to explain the literal meaning, but also considered the performative verb in the utterance.
2. Describing The Context: Based on the codes of context, the researcher described the situation, including place and time the speaker performed the utterance, and the response of the hearer. This step would achieve the interpretation of Indirect Speech Ac
3. Interpreting Indirect Speech Act: Based on understanding the context, the researcher interpreted or inferred the intention of the speakers in their utterances. Each code of indirect speech act was turned into an explanation of

indirect meaning and the categorization of indirect speech act.

3.6 Significance of the Research

Pragmatics has cast a new light on the grammar as it is utilized in social interaction. It also explores the various shades of implied meaning in an utterance. The significance of the research is not only limited to its attempt to apply the Speech Act Theory in the selected novels, but it is an endeavor to explore and expand Direct Utterance Actions in general and Utterances in specific to evaluate their contribution in the development of the novels under consideration. If the selected novels are studied as a linguistic interaction between characters by using different Speech Acts, the reader can interpret the utterances from not only the author's point of view but also from a contextual perspective. It is an attempt to exemplify how Indirect Speech Acts help to understand literary works, especially novels. The study aims at demonstrating the importance of context in interpreting various shades and layers of Indirect Speech Acts. The present research will broaden a student's point of view and level of comprehension concerning novels. A pragmatic approach will increase a student's interest in reading and appreciating novels. Understanding Indirect Speech Acts is not only important in reading literary works but also in seeking the concealed intention of the speaker behind the utterance in day to day life. Indirect Speech Acts contribute to the skillful linguistic use thereby developing the personality of the speaker.

The Immigrant authors compose chosen books. The impact of various Informal Discourse Markers used in different situations in the proceeding of conversation and behavior of interlocutors is indeed important. The value of the application of Speech Acts in the 5 proceedings of the novels is immense as the behavior of the concerned character is often based on what others say about him/her in particular situations. The conclusions may give a new dimension to the reader's perception of the novel.

3.7 Selection of the Novels and the Methodology for analysis

The proposed research designs to adopt the following methodology

The primary source of research is Doing Something by J.L. Austin) and John Searle's development and expansion of Communication Acts: An Study in the Philosophical, a book by Austin 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 6 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 contexts. The contribution of Indirect Speech Acts will be brought out and explained in detail.

The novels selected as previously stated, The White Tiger created with Arvind Adige (2008), The Genealogy of Grief by Kiran Desai (2006), and Then after (2004) by Jaycee Misran are ready to be analyzed. These novels are selected due to certain resemblance found in them. First of all, these novels are written by immigrant writers. Secondly, they offer a broader (globalized) point of view encompassing India and other countries than the writers residing only in India who extend their views confined to Indian culture and Indian lifestyle.

A comparison between India, Indians and foreign countries, natives/foreigners as well as NRIs is possible due to the present analysis. The novel, Namesake by Jump Lahore was also considered for the analysis. However, very few significant Indirect Speech Acts were found in the novel and hence Jaycee Mishra's novel Afterwards was replaced due to the ample utilization euphemism and other Indirect Speech Acts found in this novel. All the selected novels are recent. They are published after the year 2000 and hence, they can be compared with each other as they belong to the same period.

4.Suggestions for Further Research

The present study was devoted to the analysis of those Indirect Speech Acts which were significant in arriving at the precise interpretation of utterances.

- While analyzing Indirect Speech Acts some other pragmatic factors were also observed such as non-verbal actions are compared to the verbal actions, address terms, indirect uptake, pragmatic acts, code mixing and code switching etc. Similarly, the comparison of expression between the Indians, NRIs and foreign people was explained simultaneously. A detail study of these factors can be done considering other genres of literature

along with fiction such as short stories, plays, poetry etc.

- A separate study can be carried out regarding the significance of pauses and silence in conversational exchange.
- Interestingly a combined study of verbal and nonverbal actions contributing to effective communication also can be studied in depth.
- The aesthetic use of figures of speech and its combination in day to day conversation or movies will also be an interesting topic.
- The strategic use of hedging and insinuation, the speech of politicians during election period could also be an interesting topic of research.
- The confrontation of Direct and Indirect Speech Acts in the language of advertisements and its effect on the audience can be analyzed in detail.
- Similarly, the arguments between the husband and wife as well as between mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law can be an entertaining research topic from its Direct and Indirect Speech Acts point of view. These conversational pieces can be taken from either literary works like novel or a drama or from ongoing TV serials or movies.
- The writer would like to propose some suggestion to those who have interest in conducting a research regarding pragmatics, especially indirect speech acts, to investigate different and various objects, and elaborate more about the analysis.
- The next researcher may focus on one or two kind of indirect speech acts, for example indirect directive speech acts, and use other kind of literary work.
- Also, it would be better to consider using a more detailed way or theory in determining the context, as the theory used in this research only covers four aspects, they are participant, settings, topic, and function, which some are probably not shown explicitly in movies.
- It is hoped that new, fresh ideas will be the main interest in conducting the research regarding indirect speech acts. Hopefully, this research will be beneficial for further research as a reference regarding indirect speech acts

Conclusion

The analysis of indirect speech acts in selected English-language novels by Indian writers has shed light on the intricate nature of language usage and communication within these literary works. Through an examination of the diverse techniques employed by the authors, we have gained insights into the nuanced ways in which indirect speech acts contribute to character development, plot progression, and the exploration of cultural and social themes.

The study revealed that Indian writers often employ indirect speech acts as a powerful narrative tool to convey complex emotions, societal norms, and interpersonal dynamics. These authors skillfully utilize indirect speech acts to create subtleties, evoke ambiguity, and add depth to their characters'

dialogues. By doing so, they not only engage the readers but also provide a platform to explore the intricacies of Indian culture, traditions, and societal structures.the analysis highlighted the strategic use of indirect speech acts to reflect the power dynamics and hierarchies prevalent in Indian society. Authors effectively utilize indirectness to negotiate sensitive topics, challenge authority, or convey dissent while maintaining cultural norms and avoiding direct confrontation. This creates a multi-layered narrative experience, inviting readers to navigate through the complexities of societal structures and the characters' inner lives.

Furthermore, the study revealed how indirect speech acts contribute to the overall aesthetic and stylistic choices made by Indian writers. The careful use of figurative language, metaphors, and cultural references adds richness and authenticity to the narratives, reflecting the unique cultural context from which these novels emerge. These indirect devices serve as linguistic markers that connect the readers to the Indian cultural landscape and offer a distinct literary experience.

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