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UNDERSTANDING CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE IN 'BOL': A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Sometimes, people say something while they mean another. It happens when people do not follow four maxims of communication, as introduced by H.P. Grice (1975) in his theory of Cooperative Principle. This non-observance of speakers leads to the possibility of suspending, opting out, infringing, violating and flouting of four proposed maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. Therefore, the focal interest of this research is to analyse the selected dialogues produced in Pakistani Movie 'Bol' based on this non-observance of maxims. This study also investigates the types of conversational implicature in the utterances of the film and illustrates the role of conversational implicature in meaning-making process. In conducting this research, the researcher uses a Pakistani social drama film 'Bol' as a data source and selects five dialogues to examine their intended meaning through non-random sampling. For this purpose, an analytical model devised by Mane (2012) based on Grice's (1975) theory of implicature is used to describe and understand the implied meaning of the selected dialogues that is a result of non-observance of characters in communicating their ideas, moods and thoughts. The research concludes after analysing the dialogues that two types of conversational implicatures, those are generalized conversational implicature (GCI) and particularized conversational implicatures (PCI) are more evidently employed to gain the desired impacts implicitly. This research can be a significant addition in already available research on the usage of implicature in Pakistani contemporary films. This study ends up with the limitations and specific suggestion for more research in this area of sociolinguistics. In this way, the research is open to review many other films, dramas and other theatre work under the theoretical propositions of Grice in Pragmatics.

INTRODUCTION:

Language is a sovereignty of humans and it is a powerful tool to communicate flow of thoughts, ideas and feelings. Human's language performs dynamic functions in their practical lives. These dynamic functions provide them a high technology lifestyle. These post-modern lifestyles of humans always need a language and its use to evolve as per their practical needs. Cohen (2013) defined communication as a process of exchanging meanings in individuals through language. Human's behaviours and eccentricities are apparently shown in the practical usage of language. This makes them not to contribute in communication as they need. Sometimes, people use language in an arbitrary manner that their words do not convey the full-fledged meaning in their conversation. This lack in conversation arises ambiguity and vagueness in meanings. Every now and then, they use some words while they mean something else. To understand this kind of utterance, one has to consider the external aspects of language such as caste, culture and creed. This condition in pragmatics is referred to as implicature (Cameron, 2012).

To understand the phenomenon of implicature, see the dialogue below between Ali and Ahmad, talking about the choice of cell phones:

(1) Ali: Do you like *Samsung* or *Huawei* as your cell phone?

Ahmad: I like iPhone.

The dialogue in example (1) is about the choice of a cell phone brand. Ali talks between Samsung and Huawei while Ahmad answers for iPhone. So that, the answer of Ahmad simply implicates his disliking for Samsung or Huawei as a cell phone brand.

The answer in the above-mentioned example (1) of Ahmad is an illustration of conversational implicature. It means that he does not contribute in the conversation as he needs to do. In fact, it is an indirect answer to the question that apparently does not relate to the question what Ali asks. This kind of conversation is a part of our daily life and this makes conversational implicature an important phenomenon to be studied. However, this phenomenon is not limited to our real life situations but it has a lot of occurrences in the entertainment industry such as movies, dramas and theatre as well. In the movies, most of dialogues make the audience to think for a second to get the appropriate answer in the particular context and in general simultaneously. This happens when the speaker does not speak what they mean. In this way, one can certainly differentiate the literal and deeper meaning of the words spoken in a conversation. Sometimes, it is a deliberate kind of deviance.

The focal interest of this research is a Pakistani Social Drama Film, 'BOL', written, directed and produced by Shoab Mansoor. It is a social critique against the male patriarchy to get freedom of thoughts, freedom of expressions and freedom of speech, especially in women. The character and dialogue delivery of Zainub, who is played by Humaima Malick (a Pakistani Actor) is vigorous. She is the eldest among seven sisters and has rebellious attitude in the cage of

Hakim Sahib, her father. Her father plays the role of masculine dominion in the movie.

Moreover, this study not only focuses on Grice's Maxims and conversational implicature found in the dialogues of the movie 'BOL' but it also helps in providing the causes of the violation of maxims and the deviance from Cooperative Principle. Further, this research attempts to search out the types of conversational implicature and differentiate between the generalized conversational implicature (GCI) and particularized conversational implicature (PCI), found in the movie 'BOL'.

Research Objectives:

Depending on the focal interest and the background described, the objectives of this research are:

- ❖ To identify the Grice's maxims of Cooperative Principle and explain the non-observance in the dialogues of the Pakistani movie, 'BOL'.
- ❖ To categorize the conversational implicature in GCI and PCI, used by the characters in Pakistani Movie, 'BOL'.
- ❖ To describe the implied meaning of the selected dialogues of the Pakistani movie, 'BOL'.

Research Questions:

Based on the research objective, there are several research questions:

- ❖ What are Grice's maxims of Cooperative Principle and What kind of non-observance found in the dialogues spoken in the Pakistani movie, 'BOL'?
- ❖ What are the types of conversational implicatures found in the dialogues of the Pakistani movie, 'BOL'?
- ❖ What is the implied meaning conveyed in the dialogues spoken by the characters in the Pakistani movie, 'BOL'?

Significance of the Study:

This research will be a significant addition to the available research done on the usage of implicature in literary work. Actually, this research will establish a modern way of interpreting and analysing Pakistani artistic addition like movie 'BOL'. Of course, it will help the reader to get an easy access to conversational implicature and its categorization into GCI and PCI. The basic achievement of this research is to provide beneficial understanding of the meaning that the dialogues convey in the movies, dramas and other theatrical creations. Hence, this research opens up new ways to review several movies, dramas and other artistic works, especially in Pakistan under the theoretical propositions of Grice in Pragmatics.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

When people say in difference with what they actually mean and this meaning carries particular background, context and cultural influence, the difference takes it in the category of implicature in the field of pragmatics (Leech, 1983).

This all happen when the meanings of the utterances cannot be defined by semantic theory, pragmatics helps in providing the hidden and implied meaning to understand the conversation implicitly as well as explicitly. Moreover, the context that pragmatics most of the times needs to convey a specific meaning of the conversation has four elements. These elements are setting, topic, function and participant as proposed by Holmes (2000). In focusing on these elements, the researchers describe the classification of particularized conversational implicature (PCI) and generalized conversational implicature (GCI).

Let's start our discussion from the very beginning when Grice (1975) proposed four maxims of conversation in his Cooperative Principle. When one person communicates, he/she require to fulfil the level of contribution in the conversation as it is required. This Cooperative principle further divided into four sub-principles, that are what we call today maxims of conversation.

- Quantity (where one tries to be as informative as one possibly can, and gives as much information as is needed, and no more.)
- Quality (where one tries to be truthful, and does not give information that is false or that is not supported by evidence.)
- Relation (where one tries to be relevant, and says things that are pertinent to the discussion.)
- Manner (when one tries to be as clear, as brief, and as orderly as one can in what one says, and where one avoids obscurity and ambiguity.)

However, there are many times when people do not care for these maxims to convey their thoughts, ideas and moods in conversation. This overlooking of maxims is called non-observance (Brumark, 2006). This non-observance, infringing, opting out and deletion in following these maxims further excite the phenomenon of conversational implicature. According to Grice, conversational implicature is simply called implicature and it is the implied meaning of what people say. Levinson also explains that implicature may be an addition to the information provided in the explicit accounts to generalize it to the whole community in which it is spoken. Grice in Levinson's book, 'Pragmatics' (1983) provides the types of conversational implicature in generalized conversational implicature (GCI) that does not need context to explain the meaning but the culture and customs of the society what the utterances need to follow and particularized conversational implicature (PCI) that always need a particular background and context to dig out the meaning what is hidden in the utterances. This research provides an analysis of a Pakistani social drama film 'BOL', written, directed and produced by Shoaib Mansoor. This is not the first time in the world when researcher takes movies for an analysis in terms of conversational implicature. It was first conducted by Lestari in 2013, entitled 'The Analysis of Conversational Implicature in the Movie Script of 'Despicable Me'. The study has found most of non-observance in the maxims of quality and manner. Another study is on 'Harry Potter and Goblet of fire' by Yunita Nugraheni (2010) studies non-observance of maxims. This limitation of the study leads the researchers to take movies as a data source an interesting one. Vikry (2014) analyse 'Iron Man' but this study has uncertainties and lacks in the cultural reflection. Najwa (2016) studies 'The Analysis of Conversational

Implicature in the movie 'Frozen'. Najwa's thesis is a detailed version of this kind of analysis and this include relevance theory, politeness theory and genres of literature to get the implied meanings.

This study is research on the Pakistani movie for the first time in history, there are several researches in Pakistan but on novel, play and other solid literatures. This research takes a Pakistani social drama film, 'BOL' written, directed and produced by Shoaib Mansoor and analyse five utterances spoken by the lead character of Zainub (Humaima Malick). This analysis not only covers Grice's maxims of conversation and their non-observance and takes out the hidden and implied meaning but it also provides a brief description of the types of conversational implicature into generalized conversational implicature (GCI) and particularized conversational implicature (PCI). This research also stands for the social implication that the story line of 'BOL' covers in producing the utterances. It is actually a social reflection of gender stereotypes, gender discrimination, misinterpretation of religion, domestic violence, an unaware male on family production. This needs an official law to obey in the state for family planning with respect to family income and other resources by which every child can at least claim the basic necessities of life.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The central aims of this research are to find out the illustrations of conversational implicature produced in Pakistani social drama film, 'BOL' due to the non-observance of conversational maxims as proposed by Grice (1975), to classify it into its types and to elucidate the implied meanings of the dialogues spoken by the lead characters in the movie. Because this research deals with the spoken utterances of the interlocutors, so this applies descriptive qualitative method that is usually referred to the nature phenomenon and the relevancies present between them (Farkhan, 2011). In this way, there is no need of any statistical data and calculations. Moreover, this research involves content analysis of the selected dialogues from the movie in order to get their hidden meanings and implications. The hidden meaning of any conversation can only be understood by its contextual background. Contextual background helps in providing the indirect and implicit detail of the conversation. (Grundy, 2013; Holmes, 2005).

Data Collection and Sampling:

The data source of this research is the Pakistani social drama film, 'BOL'. The data is un-randomly chosen five dialogues spoken by the lead character of Zainub, played by Humaima Malick by the researcher herself after watching the movie. The non-random data collection is usually applicable for qualitative, explanatory and pilot study (Kumar and Stracke, 2007). These selected dialogues imply certain non-observance of maxims and this further generates generalized conversational implicature (GCI) and particularized conversational implicature (PCI). During the collection of these five dialogues, the research has made use of the following ways:

- Watched movie 'BOL' written, directed and produced by Shoaib Mansoor on YOUTUBE repeatedly. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6gKfRrZRIw0>
- Noted down five selected dialogues.
- Considered the types of maxims and their non-observance discovered in the dialogues.

Data Analysis:

Based on the selected five dialogues spoken by the lead character, Zainub in the movie, Data analysis contains three major sections:

- Situation or context
- The dialogue
- Interpretation in terms of Grice's maxims, their non-observance, implied meaning and classification of implicature into GCI and PCI.

Dialogues of Zainub:

- (1) **Context:** In the very beginning of the movie, Zainub confesses her story of killing her own father in front of media just before her hanging to death. This story has a prologue in describing how they were stayed in Lahore and how the Hakim Sahib, her father became poor day by day because he wanted a boy but got a number of girls. He is not actually fond of women, especially his daughters.

Utterance#01

Zainub: *Mere abba ki amdani bhi kum hoti gae, lekin bachay barhthey gaye.*

Interpretation: The utterance literally means that *hakimi* (traditional cure) is losing its worth due to the revolution of medicine in the world and the family of Hakim Sahib is increasing with regular intervals. The family got 14 children but seven died and all in want of a boy. This utterance consists of two part, 'Mere abba ki amdani bhi kum hoti gae' and 'lekin bachay barhthey gaye'. However, these two statements cannot be related obviously and disobey the maxim of quantity, relation and manner. This violation leads to consider the implicated meaning of this utterance that is, 'there is no such awareness of family planning by considering the family income and income source'. Moreover, in the wish to have a boy, Hakim Sahib cannot see the pain and agony of his wife and continued to beat him for a boy. Interestingly, this utterance has occurred in the movie twice to emphasis on women's care during child birth. The implicated meaning depends upon the context that is why it is considered as particularized conversational implicature (PCI). Interestingly, this utterance has occurred in the movie twice to emphasis on women's care during child birth.

- (2) **Context:** After seeing the pitiable life situation of her mother, Zainub arranges tubal ligation for her mother in the absence of her father. He is not even informed. After a few weeks, Hakim Sahib asks his wife for an oath of Holy Quran about pregnancy but she is not able to answer. So, Zainub has started to give an answer for her mother's pregnancy.

Utterance#02

Zainub: *Mard hain na abba jahan la-jawab huye wahan haath chalnay lagey.*

Interpretation: This utterance has generalized view point about gender stereotypes that men are dominant and violent. Here, Hakim Sahib refers to the so-called masculine patriarchy. Hence, the dialogue spoken by Zainub is considered in Generalized conversational implicature (GCI). However, the implied meaning infers the inferiority and poverty of women in the thoughts, expression and speech that she cannot even resist her father to slap her. The implied meaning is not context-based but culture-based and this is our societal vision that men are superior and can do such kind of activities in his fit of fury. By guessing so, it may be every time a slap whenever Zainub argues and makes him speechless either in religious or social debate.

(3) **Context:** The transgender adult child of Hakim Sahib, named Saifi, was harassed and the story of harassment was told to his eldest sister, Zainub and mother but Hakim Sahib also heard it. After seeing everyone sleeping, he goes to Saifi's attic and killed him mercilessly by a plastic bag. All this homicide is seen by Zainub and argues with his father, Hakim Sahib about the birth of a transgender in a normal household.

Utterance#03

Zainub: *Khuda ko Khaaliq bhi mantay hain aur Uski takhleeq se itni nafrat bhi kartay hain.*

Interpretation:

The literal meaning is actually a sense of misanthropy that human hates human. But this is only a generalized sense. According to the context, father does not like and want his transgender child as he has harassed now. This is a threat to his reputation now and always be. This dialogue has a deviance of quality and manner. The implicated meaning of this utterance is that his father Hakim Sahib hates not only his transgender child but his daughters as well. But no one in the house can understand it. At the climax of the movie, we see when Hakim Sahib tries to kill his daughter from a prostitute Meena, played by Iman Ali. Hence, this utterance lies in the category of particularized conversational implicature (PCI). However, when it is discussed generally neglecting so many things, our culture flags a slogan of '*Ghairat ke naam pe qatal*' that Hakim Sahib did.

(4) **Context:** Her father Hakim Sahib did a Nikkah (religious marriage ceremony in Muslims) with prostitute Meena (Iman Ali) for money to give birth a daughter and will hand to Saqa (Shafqat Cheema) for prostitution. When Zainub tells abba (Hakim Sahib) about marriage of Ayesha (Mahira Khan) and Mustafa (Atif Aslam), her abba slaps her, abuses her and calls it a sin.

Utterance#04

Zainub: *Qadam toh ab bahir nikleinge, abba.*

Interpretation: This utterance provides a non-observance in terms of quality, relation and manner because of its stern brevity that it cannot be understood by itself. Definitely, it needs a context to understand the utterance in its true implied sense. So, it categorizes in PCI. The literal meaning says that his daughter would go out for work and education from now onwards. But this proposes a strong implied meaning in feministic viewpoint that women are not repressive, depressive and dependent for all of their lives. They are strong enough to take their decisions themselves. The implicated meaning of the word '*qadam*' is referred to freedom of thoughts, expression and speech that is the obligatory characteristic of Humans, so why not women.

(5) **Context:** At the epilogue of the movie, the lead character Zainub criticizes and demands an answer about a child birth from the so-called society that permit a husband to harass his wife for a boy hardheartedly. Moreover, she asserts a question that why people produce a line of children when they have not enough resources for their education, food and clothes, the basic necessities of every human. In a series of questions, one of them is given as utterance#05.

Utterance#05

Zainub: *Jaiz bacce paida kar k unki zindagiyan haram kar dena jurm kuin nahi?*

Interpretation: This utterance has a strong voice of women that has suffered a lot in male patriarchy. The literal meaning suggests a question about child birth. Actually she asks why illegal child births are crime. She further asks, why there is no policy and planning in the country for such kind of domestic violence only in want of a boy. Her spoken words deviate in from quantity to quality and manner. Implicitly, she condemns not only the society to set a notion of a boy that he can fulfil the financial needs of the family, but he questions a point on legislative bodies, bureaucracy, social activists and politicians who never have any action against this sort of violence. The dialogue needs cultural recognition in understanding the implicated meaning, so it can generalize in sense of unaware, wrongly described or lost people who follow the social dictums blindly. Hence, it has described generalized conversational implicature (GCI).

CONCLUSION:

In the selected data of five utterances, it is acknowledged that non-observance, infringing, deletion and deviation propose the conversational implicature. The researcher is successful in organizing the utterances of Zainub and arranges to find out the implied meaning of them. In this way, the conversational implicature is classified into two types, generalized conversational implicature (GCI) and particularized conversational implicature (PCI). GCI occurs in the selected data for two times whereas PCI occurs twice. Most of the implicature are aroused in the speech because of the violation of quality and manner. In addition, the utterances that lie under the category of GCI highlights some social problems and social agendas while PCI arises a particular context in story line

of the movie and audience needs to have some schemata (background knowledge) to understand all the utterances deeply and instinctively. These contexts and cultures allow to have an easy access to the meanings and interpretation implicitly.

SUGGESTIONS:

The subject of this research is quite interesting that a number of readers want to take out the implied meaning of the dialogues in the movie 'BOL'. The pragmatic research opens up ways of doing research in several areas with respect to implicature. Other researchers can take time and place suggestions in linguistic aspects. We have other types of implicature besides GCI and PCI, those are conventional implicature and scalar implicature, can study movies, dramas, books and other artistic literary. However, movies can not only be studied in terms of implicature but there are several other aspects such as speech act theory, politeness theory and performative derivations.

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