



Analyzing Speech Acts in Chetan Bhagat's Selected Novels

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Abstract:

This paper explores the intricate world of speech acts in the application of Chetan Bhagat's selected novels. This 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 Chetan Bhagat's selected novels.

Keywords: Speech Acts, Direct speech act, indirect speech act, locutionary and Illocutionary speech act.

Introduction

J. L. Austin introduced the theory of speech acts in his book '*How to Do Things with Words*' (1975). According to Austin, utterances are performatives i.e. the speaker is nearly always doing something by saying something. Normally, we perform verbal actions of different types through language such as requesting, commanding, questioning, informing, promising, greeting, compliment, etc., and these actions are carried out through utterances, which are called as speech acts.

According to Searle (1979), when we understand the intention of the speaker then alone we get the meaning. Therefore, he concludes that language is intentional behavior, and it needs to be treated like a form of an action. Without speaker's intention, it is not possible to understand the words. The following extracts were taken from Chetan Bhagat's selected novels and analyzed in the light of speech act theory..

Simile:-

1. It is a literary device and figure of speech. Simile introduces vividness into what we say. Authors and poets use simile to convey their emotions and thoughts through apt word pictures. Here is an example of simile from the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life*.
2. 'It is 5.25 runs required per over,' I said, not able to resist doing a mathematical calculation. That is one reason I like cricket, there is so much maths in it.
3. 'You don't know this team. Tendulkar goes, they panic. It isn't about the average. It is like the queen is dead, and the hive loses order,' Ishaan said. (2)
4. The above conversation takes place between Govind, Ishaan and Omi. These three are watching a cricket match between India and

South Africa at Ishaan's home. They are very crazy about cricket. That is one reason why they start a cricket equipment shop. Cricket is very popular among Indian youngsters. Some people think that cricket is God for them. Therefore, Ishaan indirectly criticizes the mentality of Indian people. Ishaan compares a cricket match with a bee hive. In his opinion, Tendulkar is the queen bee and other players in the team are like rest of the bees in a hive. The bee hive is similar to a cricket team. He compares the two using the word 'like'. This word makes the comparison simile. In the absence of this word the comparison would become a metaphor.

Irony:-

1. It is a figure of speech in which words are used in such a way that their intended meaning is different from the actual meaning. Let us discuss an example of irony from the novel *Five Point Someone*.
2. Baku told Alok and me to step forward, so the seniors could have better view and a bigger laugh.
3. "Look at them, mothers fed them until they are ready to explode, little Farex babies,' Baku cackled.
4. The demon joined him in laughter. Anurag smiled behind a burst of smoke as he extinguished another cigarette, creating his own special effects. (4)
5. The above conversation takes place in the hostel corridor on the first day of their college. There is a cruel tradition in which seniors rag juniors. Baku and Anurag are senior to Alok and Hari. They order them to remove their clothes and stand in a queue. At that time, Baku's indirect ironical comment on them is, 'Look at them, mothers fed them until they are ready to

explode, little Farex babies.’ Actually, Farex powder is usually given to small babies in the form of liquid. Babies look healthy when they are fed with Farex. It means that they are very fat and belong to wealthy families. Another point in the above text is the use of the word ‘demon’.

Euphemism:-

The term euphemism refers to polite, indirect expressions which replace words and phrases considered harsh and impolite or which suggest something unpleasant. Let us discuss an example of euphemism from the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life*.

Three bicycles tried to overtake each other in the narrow by lane. I had to step inside Qazi restaurant to let them pass. A scent of fried coriander and garlic filled the narrow room. The cook prepared dinner, a bigger feast than usual as India had won the match. Ishaan and I came here sometimes (without telling Omi, of course) for the cheap food and extraordinary mutton. The owner assured us ‘small mutton,’ implying goat and not beef. I believed him, as he would not have survived in the neighbourhood if he served beef. I wanted to eat here instead of Gopi. But we had promised Gopi to Omi, and the food was fantastic there as well. Food is a passion here, especially as Gujarat is a dry state. People here get drunk on food. (7)

The above example takes place between Govind, Ishaan and Omi. One day they decide to go in the Qazi restaurant for eating food. Govind and Ishaan usually come to this place without informing Omi, who is the son of a priest. The most important expression in this extract is ‘small mutton’. India is a dominantly Hindu community nation. The biggest minority in India is the Muslim community. Hindus do not eat beef, and Muslims do not eat pork. Even the mention of these two words may offend the religious sentiments of two communities. Therefore, the words beef and pork are usually avoided especially among uneducated villager.

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