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CHAPTER III: ANALYSIS OF CONVERSATIONS -
A SUITABLE BOY

3.1 Preliminaries
The present chapter is an attempt at the application of the pragmatic framework emerging from the previous chapters for the purposes of analysing conversations in fiction. The works chosen for illustration here (in chapters four and five) are two voluminous novels by Vikram Seth - A Suitable Boy and An Equal Music. Vikram Seth is an eminent Indian writer in English. Though Seth has several works including poetry anthologies, translations, travelogues, etc to his credit, his fame as a writer of great repute rests chiefly on the two highly acclaimed novels presently selected for the study. These novels have been duly honoured with several respectable Awards. His A Suitable Boy is a 1349 page long saga of the Indian life during the 1950s. The world of A Suitable Boy is populated with a wide variety of characters belonging to different strata of the society. This cross section of the Indian society in the fifties depicts the lives of the Hindus and Muslims, the Rajas and Maharajas, Zamindars, politicians, businessmen, Government servants, officers in corporate sector, professors, students, artists and courtesans; ladies and gentlemen ranging from the highly traditional to the highly fashionable super sophisticates in the society. Here one comes across a wide variety of people belonging to different religions, casts, creeds, and professions. Vikram Seth effectively portrays a complex of innumerable subcultures that make for the superstructure of what we may call Indian culture. A major portion of this novel, as of a majority of novels, comprises of conversations. And it is through the conversations that Seth here effectively depicts the multicultural phenomenon of the contemporary Indian society. Each of these sub-cultures reflects, adds to or recreates in its own way the typically identifiable Indian sensibility. Seth presents these sub-cultures through the lives and activities of four hugely extended families- the Mehras, the Kapoors, the Khans, the Chatterjis- along with their friends, neighbours, acquaintances, servants, lovers, rivals, patrons, co-religionists, etc. This typical sensibility is
reflected in the domestic comedy of Mrs. Rupa Mehra and Lata (the mother and
daughter in a typical Indian home), the political rivalry of the two opposite
groups (Nehru-Tondon Rivalry, and at a more immediate level the perennial
power struggle between Mr Mahesh Kapoor and Mr L. N. Agarwal), the rivalry
of the Academicians (Dr Pran Kapoor Vs. Professor Mishra), and the way the
Hindus and Moslems maintain their individual identities, etc. It is through the
conversations interspersed through the novel that Vikram Seth presents his
vision of a comprehensive picture of Indian culture in this novel.

However, as the present research is limited to the study of conversational
implicatures, the selection of the stretches of conversational interaction taken up
for analysis here represent isolated bits of the character-character conversation
rather than a coherent and comprehensive picture of the different strands of Sub-
Plots contributing to the organic structure of the novel. The purpose here is to
apply the analytical pragmatic framework (especially analysis of conversational
implicatures) to conversations in fiction.

Implicatures are a central phenomenon in the communicative activity. It is
hardly possible for interlocutors to arrive at the total signification of utterances,
and at an advanced level, at the entire communicative import of a given speech
event without considering this phenomenon. Since utterances are the basic units
of communication, understanding an utterance is crucial to understanding the
purpose and the general direction of the entire interaction. Understanding an
utterance, however, is not simply a matter of knowing the meanings of words
uttered and of the way in which they are combined. It also involves drawing
inferences on the basis of contextual knowledge and assumptions by relating
‘what is said’ to the general principles like CP and PP and their maxims.
Understanding ‘what is said’ maybe said to be the first step towards
understanding the utterance. And, as stated in chapter 3, for arriving at 'what is
said' in cases where the linguistic clue provided in the utterance is skeletal, and
also in cases where the clue is in the form of a full sentence, involves choices
and decisions concerning which sense and reference, from among all the
possible ones that form the entire conventional content of the expressions used.
is relevant and could possibly have been intended by the speaker. It is only after having made such choices and decisions concerning the possible Senses and references involved, that the hearer or the analyst, can proceed in the direction of understanding or interpretation of an utterance. For arriving at 'what is said' in the form of 'explicature' of the utterance, thus, one has to depend on textual context as well as on one's intuition and on the rationality based principles of interactional behaviour. In the analysis of the conversational interactions taken up for illustration here, therefore, the general pattern includes (i) actual text, (ii) conversational interaction in idealised form, (iii) textual background, (iv) significance of the interaction within the general framework of the novel, (v) analysis of implicatures, and (vi) the illustrative value of the selected interaction in terms of the aspects of implicature analysis highlighted.

The process of implicature analysis begins with the identification of what the speaker of the initial utterance says and what he 'implicates' by means of what he has said. What the initial speaker has said provides the hearer with a clue regarding the textual context of the utterance. Using shared background knowledge concerning the immediate interactional context as well as the larger social and cultural context of the utterance the hearer then makes an assumption or assumptions regarding what the speaker has said. And in case of the utterances loaded with implicatures, on the basis of such assumptions, the hearer proceeds to develop hypotheses concerning speaker intentions by relating 'what is said' to the principles and maxims of the conversational interaction. The process of heuristic analysis continues till the hearer arrives at the hypothesis or the assumption which makes the utterance consistent with the overall assumption that the speaker is following the CP. This process goes on in cyclic fashion through the entire conversational exchange.
3.2 Conversational passages

3.2.1 Cluster One

3.2.1.1 Conversation One

Extract selected for analysis

‘You too will marry a boy I choose,’ said Mrs Rupa Mehra firmly to her younger daughter.

Lata avoided maternal imperative by looking around the great lamp-lit garden of Prem Nivas. The wedding-guests were gathered on the lawn. ‘Hmm,’ she said. This annoyed her mother further.

‘I know what your hmms mean, young lady, and I can tell you I will not stand for hmms in this matter. I do know what is best. I am doing it all for you. Do you think it is easy for me, trying to arrange things for all four of my children without His help?’ Her nose began to redden at the thought of her husband, who would, she felt certain, be partaking of their present joy from somewhere benevolently above lairs Rupa Mehra believed, of course, in reincarnation, but at moments of exceptional sentiment she imagined that the late Raghubir Mehra still inhabited the form in which she had known him when he was alive: the robust, cheerful form of his early forties before overwork had brought about his heart attack at the height of the Second World War. Eight years ago, eight years, thought Mrs Rupa Mehra miserably.

‘Now, now, Ma, you can’t cry on Savita’s wedding day,’ said Lata, putting her arm gently but not very concernedly around her mother’s shoulder.

‘If He had been here, I could have worn the tissue-patola sari wore for my own wedding,’ sighed Mrs Rupa Mehra. ‘But it is too rich for a widow to wear.’

‘Ma!’ said Lata, a little exasperated at the emotional capital her mother insisted on making out of every possible circumstance. ‘People are looking at you. They want to congratulate you, and they’ll think it very odd if they see you crying in this way.’

(A Suitable Boy, 3)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Mrs Mehra : You too will marry a boy I choose.
T-2 Lata : Hmm...
T-3 Mrs Mehra : I know what your hmms mean, young lady, and I can tell you I will not stand for hmms in this matter. I do know what is best. I am doing it all for you. Do you think it is easy for me, trying to arrange things for all four of my children without His help?
T-4 Lata : (Putting her arm gently but not very concernedly around her mother’s shoulder) Now, now, Ma, you can’t cry on Savita’s wedding day.
T-5 Mrs Mehra : (Sighing) If He had been here, I could have worn the tissue-patola sari wore for my own wedding. But it is too rich for a widow to wear.
T-6 Lata : (A little exasperated) Ma! People are looking at you. They want to congratulate you, and they’ll think it very odd if they see you crying in this way.
Textual Background
It is the opening of the novel. The setting is Savita’s marriage with Dr. Pran Kapoor. Here Mrs Mehra asserts her prerogative in the matter of a choice of a suitable boy for her marriageable daughter, Lata. Mrs Mehra has succeeded in arranging for and bringing about Savita’s marriage. She believes that she has chosen well for Savita. Her prudence in the case of Savita’s marriage is certainly praiseworthy. Savita obeyed her mother’s dictates, and had set an example for her younger sister. Mrs Mehra here expects the same kind of obedience from Lata. However, Lata is a tough. She won’t give in as easily as Savita did. Mrs Mehra, a strong-willed lady, here faces stubborn opposition of her equally strong willed daughter Lata. Mrs Mehra tries to convince Lata that in their present situation it was necessary for Lata to obey her. She gives elaborate reasons, justifies her actions, makes emotional capital of her pathetic situation for the purpose. She sounds almost sentimental. However, this doesn’t seem to have the desired effect on Lata.

Significance of the passage
This interaction highlights the central concern of the main plot - parental concern and apprehensions for their children. It introduces the issue of Lata’s marriage in nutshell and gives a foretaste of what is going to follow during the search for a suitable boy for Lata. It throws light on the nature of their relationship and provides clues for understanding their behaviour throughout the novel. The opposition between the two perspectives sets the tone for the treatment of the theme in the novel. In fact, how the mother exercises her prerogative and whether Lata obeys her, and the outcome of their efforts to achieve their individual goals, is the major concern of the main plot which runs through the whole of the 1349 page long novel.

Implicature Analysis
Mrs Mehra’s utterance at T-1 position – ‘You too will marry a boy I choose’ is a topic sentence. It announces the central theme of the novel, viz. the search for a suitable boy for Miss Lata Mehra. Here, Mrs Rupa Mehra expresses her intention of finding a suitable match for her younger daughter Lata. This,
incidentally, is the chief concern of Mrs Rupa Mehra throughout the novel. On the surface level, Mrs Rupa Mehra seems to suggest to Lata that like Savita, she also should marry a boy of her choice. However, she implicates that her daughter should recognise her prerogative in the matter of choice of a suitable match for her. As the author overtly states, the utterance is intended by the mother as a mand- ‘a maternal imperative’, making explicit the mother’s desire that her choice be mandatory for her daughter. However, the very need to expressly say so indicates her lack of confidence in the possibility of success of her endeavour. Mrs Mehra knows that Lata is a self-willed girl and convincing her is not as easy as it was in Savita’s case.

Mrs Rupa Mehra’s injunction to her daughter is followed at T-2 position by a slight pause on the other end and a ‘Hmm’. It seems that the daughter refuses to take her mother’s advice seriously. In a way, she is avoiding the maternal imperative by showing lack of interest and thereby expressing her inclination not to take the instruction seriously. Lata’s cryptic response - ‘Hmm…’, uttered in an appropriate tone and taken in its literal sense, would mean that she agrees with her mother and is ready to take her advice. However, this does not seem to be the case. Here intonation seems to play important role. For, Hmm, said in different tones can mean different things like (1) agreement (2) dislike or arrogant refusal, (3) expressing epiphanic insight or understanding of the co-locutor’s so far hidden intentions, resulting in a sudden revelation of the point of the utterance, etc. Since the conventional content of an utterance consists in the complex of all its possible senses taken in their totality, all the possible meanings of the particle ‘Hmm’ form part of the conventional content of Lata’s utterance ‘Hmm…’ It is from this entire range of the possible meanings that the hearer has to identify the most appropriate one in the given context. The meaning so identified by the hearer will, for the purpose of utterance interpretation, then serve as what the hearer will take as ‘what is said’ by the speaker. This the hearer will use for further interpretation of the utterance. In the present case, Lata’s utterance seems to signify, at least on the surface level - ‘O Kay. Let’s see how it turns out’. This, then, amounts to ‘what is said’ by means of the curt
utterance of ‘Hmm …’. This, however, is certainly not what Lata means. And Mrs Rupa Mehra knows that this is not what Lata means. For she would have been satisfied if Lata had meant what she seems to have said. On the contrary, Lata’s short response, instead of pleasing, irritates her mother. Perhaps Mrs Rupa Mehra expected Lata to be more specific and outspoken. A mere ‘Hmm …’ doesn’t mean anything specific, or, alternatively, it could mean any number of things. Lata seems to have expressed casual attitude towards her mother’s assertion through this short, vague and ambiguous response. And her tone, it seems, has effectively communicated her attitude. Her utterance seems to carry the implicature that she is not going to be bothered too much by such exhortations and constant nagging. And this is the meaning reciprocated and responded to by her mother. For, Mrs Mehra immediately sharply reproaches Lata and reinforces her prerogative to be obeyed. This understanding of the utterance expressed by Mrs Mehra seems to be ratified by Lata. Lata’s silence and her attempt to change the topic indicate that her mother had rightly understood her utterance. For if Mrs Mehra’s interpretation of Lata’s utterance had been wrong Lata would have tried to rectify it at T-3 position. It is, therefore, clear that what Lata meant by her short brusque utterance of ‘Hmm …’ was that she didn’t care much for such exhortations and constant nagging and that she was not going to be bothered too much by it. This, then, is what Lata implicated by her utterance ‘Hmm…’

In her utterance at T-3 position Mrs Mehra reacts to her understanding of the implicated meaning of the particle ‘Hmm…’ She reprimands Lata, reinforces her assertion and declares her determination to force her choice on Lata. She is determined to waive all attempts to resist, overlook, neglect or prevent her from forcing her choice. She says that she won’t entertain her daughter’s nonsensical moods and would not tolerate any opposition in the matter. Mrs Mehra seems to say that she understands quite well that Lata doesn’t value her advice much, and that her casual response reveals her reluctance to obey her mother. And she warns her that she is not going to put up with such nonsense. Mrs Mehra thus implicates that despite all opposition, she will force her choice on Lata.
Mrs Mehra asserts that she knows what is best for her daughter. She seems to say that (with her experience of the world and the judgement of circumstances, knowledge of the things and understanding of human nature) she can take proper decision. She tells Lata that she is young and inexperienced and lacks discriminatory sense and proper judgement of human nature. She justifies her intentions and expectations by stating that she has no personal interests of her own and that she does everything for her daughter’s well being. She thus implicates that in their present situation it is hard to find a satisfactory match, and, therefore it is in Lata’s best interests to take the advice. Moreover, she seems to implicate that it is Lata’s moral duty to be guided by her mother’s advice.

Mrs Mehra further asserts her claim for being obeyed by her rather obstinate daughter by raising a rhetorical question signifying that it is not easy for her to arrange for things single-handedly. Had her husband been alive, he would have taken care of all these things and spared her the effort. Now she has to arrange for proper marital alliances for her daughters. No one - neither her father nor her elder son nor any other close relative or friend shows any real interest in the matter until she herself takes initiative, makes enquiries and pursues the matter. Mrs Mehra’s problem is that she must find a suitable boy for Lata, and she finds it difficult to handle the issues, tackle the problems and find satisfactory solutions, especially when her husband is not there to help her. She indulges in sentimental recounting of the hardships she encountered and had to face single-handedly, and tries to make emotional capital of the whole issue to establish her right and to win sympathy of her children and to elicit their love, care and obedience. Her children understand this perfectly well.

At T-5 position the conversation takes an unexpected turn. Mrs Mehra gets sentimental and reveals another dimension on which she thinks the untimely death of her husband affects her. Had her husband been alive, she would have worn the rich and elegant tissue-patola sari which she had worn on the day of her own wedding. This utterance shows Mrs Rupa Mehra in comic, almost ridiculous, light. Mrs Rupa Mehra, it seems, mourns the loss of her husband not
so much for the sake of love as for social inconvenience it causes. It is more out of the needs of the present occasion and the constraints she faces due to her being a widow rather than for the genuine sorrow she feels for his loss. For it does directly constrain her conduct. In the present circumstance, it restricts her costume and prevents her from putting on her best appearance.

When Mrs Mehra was about to burst into tears. Lata comforts and cautions her by saying that people were looking at her. Lata’s utterance at T-6 position seems to express the proposition- ‘it is improper of Mrs Mehra to cry on Savita’s wedding day’. However, by saying this, Lata seems to implicate that Mrs Mehra should control her emotions and withhold her tears.

Illustrative value of the text
Parental authority and tendency to impose their decisions on their children in the face of opposition, or of the latent possibility of opposition, from the other side are effectively communicated by implicating rather than explicitly stating one’s personal goals (desires, wishes, intentions, etc) in each case. The opening sentence of the novel tells us much about the circumstances at the time of the ongoing interaction and the situation. The insistent ‘too’ in the phrase ‘you too’ suggests, for example, that the mother has successfully exercised her prerogative in case of Savita’s marriage. Savita obeyed her mother’s dictates, and has set an example for her younger sister. It implicates that Mrs Mehra expects Lata to obey her. Mrs Mehra’s repeated attempts to solicit the promise from her daughter in the form of open declaration that she will accept her mother’s choice without grudge and Lata’s evasive technique are organised at the level of implicatures. The one could be taken as performing the act of offering help, seeking reassurance, ordering, etc; while the other is resorting to the strategies like changing topic and diverting the course of the interaction along a different dimension. Implicature analysis can, on such occasions, provide insight into the hidden motivations of the interlocutors.
3.2.1.2 : Conversation Two

Extract selected for analysis

‘Ma!’ said Lata, a little exasperated at the emotional capital her mother insisted on making out of every possible circumstance. ‘People are looking at you. They want to congratulate you, and they’ll think it very odd if they see you crying in this way.’

Several guests were indeed doing namaste to Mrs Rupa Mehra and smiling at her; the cream of Brahmpur society, she was pleased to note.

‘Let them see me!’ said Mrs Rupa Mehra defiantly, dabbing at her eyes hastily with a handkerchief perfumed with 4117 eau-de-Cologne. ‘They will only think it is because of my happiness at Savita’s wedding. Everything I do is for you, and no one appreciates me. I have chosen such a good boy for Savita, and all everyone does is complain.’ Lata reflected that of the four brothers and sisters, the only one who hadn’t complained of the match had been the sweet-tempered, fair-complexioned, beautiful Savita herself.

‘He is a little thin, Ma,’ said Lata a bit thoughtlessly. This was putting it mildly. Pran Kapoor, soon to be her brother-in-law, was lank, dark, gangly, and asthmatic.

‘Thin? What is thin? Everyone is trying to become thin these days. Even I have had to fast the whole day and it is not good for my diabetes. And if Savita is not complaining, everyone should be happy with him. Arun and Varun are always complaining: why didn’t they choose a boy for their sister then? Pran is a good, decent, cultured khatri boy.’

There was no denying that Pran, at thirty, was a good boy, a decent boy, and belonged to the right caste. And, indeed, Lata did like Pran. Oddly enough, she knew him better than her sister did— or, at least seen him for longer than her sister had. Lata was studying English at Brahmpur University, and Pran Kapoor was a popular lecturer there. Lata had attended his class on the Elizabethans, while Savita, the bride, had met him for only an hour, and that too in her mother’s company.

‘And Savita will fatten him up,’ added Mrs Rupa Mehra. ‘Why are you trying to annoy me when I am so happy? And Pran and Savita will be happy, you will see. They will be happy,’ she continued emphatically. ‘Thank you, thank you,’ she now beamed at those who were coming up to greet her. ‘It is so wonderful- the boy of my dreams, and such a good family; the Minister Sahib has been very kind to us. And Savita is so happy. Please eat something, please eat: they have made such delicious Gulabjamun, but owing to my diabetes I cannot eat them even after the ceremonies. I am not even allowed gajak, which is so difficult to resist in winter. But please eat; please eat. I must go in to check what is happening: the time that the pandits have given is coming up, and there is no sign of either bride or groom!’ She looked at Lata, frowning. Her younger daughter was going to prove more difficult than her elder, she decided.

‘Don’t forget what I told you,’ she said in an admonitory voice.

‘Hmm,’ said Lata. ‘Ma, your handkerchief’s sticking out of your blouse.’

‘Oh!’ said Mrs Rupa Mehra, worriedly, tucking it in. And tell Arun to please take his duties seriously. He is just standing there in at corner talking to that Meenakshi and his silly friend from Calcutta. He should see that everyone is drinking and eating properly and having a gala time.’

‘That Meenakshi’ was Arun’s glamorous wife and her own disrespectful daughter-in-law. In four years of marriage Meenakshi’s only worthwhile act, in Mrs Rupa Mehra’s eyes, had been to give birth to her beloved granddaughter, Aparna, who even now had found her way to her grandmother’s brown silk sari and was tugging it for attention. Mrs Rupa Mehra was delighted. She gave her a kiss and told her: ‘Aparna, you must
stay with your Mummy or with Lata Bua. otherwise you will get lost. And then where would we be?’

(A Suitable Boy, 4-5)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Lata : (A little exasperated) Ma! People are looking at you. They want to congratulate you, and they’ll think it very odd if they see you crying in this way.

T-2 Mrs Mehra : (Hastily dabbing at her eyes with a handkerchief perfumed with 4117 eau-de-Cologne) Let them see me! They will only think it is because of my happiness at Savita’s wedding. Everything I do is for you, and no one appreciates me. I have chosen such a good boy for Savita, and all everyone does is complain.

T-3 Lata : (A bit thoughtlessly) He is a little thin, Ma.

T-4 Mrs Mehra : Thin? What is thin? Everyone is trying to become thin these days. Even I have had to fast the whole day and it is not good for my diabetes. And if Savita is not complaining, everyone should be happy with him. Arun and Varun are always complaining: why didn’t they choose a boy for their sister then? Pran is a good, decent, cultured khatri boy... And Savita will fatten him up... Why are you trying to annoy me when I am so happy? And Pran and Savita will be happy, you will see. They will be happy... (Greeting the guests who were coming up to greet her) Thank you, thank you... It is so wonderful- the boy of my dreams, and such a good family; the Minister Sahib has been very kind to us. And Savita is so happy... Please eat something, please eat: they have made such delicious Gulab-jamuns, but owing to my diabetes I cannot eat them even after the ceremonies. I am not even allowed gajak, which is so difficult to resist in winter. But please eat; please eat. I must go in to check what is happening: the time that the pandits have given is coming up, and there is no sign of either bride or groom! ... (Looking at Lata, frowning) Don’t forget what I told you.

T-5 Lata : Hmm... Ma. your handkerchief’s sticking out of your blouse.

T-6 Mrs Mehra : (Worriedly tucking her handkerchief in her blouse) Oh! ... And tell Arun to please take his duties seriously. He is just standing there in a corner talking to that Meenakshi and his silly friend from Calcutta. He should see that everyone is drinking and eating properly and having a gala time... (Turning to Aparna and giving her a kiss) Aparna, you must stay with your Mummy or with Lata Bua, otherwise you will get lost. And then where would we be?
Textual Background

On the occasion of her daughter Savita’s marriage Mrs Mehra remembers her lonely struggle to manage the family affairs after her husband’s death eight years ago. She also remembers the happy times when he was alive and she is deeply grieved by the difference his untimely death has made to her life. Being a widow now, she is faced with so many social constraints. She is torn between her desire to look grand on her daughter’s wedding and the social inappropriateness of her showing off in best appearance and happy spirit. She tells Lata about her suffering. She complains that she did everything only for the better future of her children, and that despite her sincerity and hard work no one appreciates her efforts. In fact she deplores that all her children, instead of supporting her, indulge into criticizing her.

Her eyes moisten at the memory of what she has gone through and she bursts into tears. If her husband were alive, he would have arranged for everything in the best possible way and spared her the effort. Moreover, if he were alive she would have enjoyed the pleasure of showing herself off in the best possible appearance. She also feels sad at the thought that because of her husband’s untimely death, she is deprived of the pleasure of putting on her jewellery and wearing best clothes. However, this does not seem to be a purely emotional outburst. It seems that she is making emotional capital of her grievances. She seems to be consciously manipulating it for the purpose of influencing the opinion of her children and eliciting their love, concern and obedience. Lata sees through her design. She feels that her mother is saying all this only in order to influence her opinion and elicit her obedience. And she feels exasperated by the thought of how her mother tries to make emotional capital out of every possible circumstance.

Significance of the passage

This extract reveals the changes in the mood of Mrs Mehra. She loved her husband, and is deeply grieved by his death. She believed in reincarnation, but she also believed that he still assumed or occupied the same familiar form as she had known him by and that from somewhere in the blessed spheres in the
universe up above, he was watching the ceremony, and admiring her abilities. However she also loved herself and her family equally well. She wanted to fulfil her family duties in the best possible manner and also to enjoy the pleasure and the social significance of being the hostess, the bride’s mother. In fact, despite her adverse financial condition and odd circumstances she had carried on the family responsibilities admirably well. She imagines that wherever he might be, her husband must be satisfied with her performance on the family front, and he must have been admiring her courage, talent and efforts from above.

However, she deplores the criticism of her own children. She complains that all that her children do is to complain and to criticise. Even in the case of Savita’s marriage, all her children, except the bride herself, express their disapproval of this match. Instead of supporting and admiring her efforts, they criticise her. However, Mrs Mehra is not at all discouraged by their attitude. She holds her ground firmly and continues with same zest and determination. Now she is determined to persuade, and if possible to coerce Lata to accept her choice of a suitable match for her. She is determined to see to it that Lata obeys her.

**Implicature Analysis**

At T-1 position, at the level of ‘what is said’, Lata informs her mother that people were watching her and that they wanted to congratulate her. She further says that if they see her crying like this, they will think it very odd. It seems that she does this in order to take her mother out of her sentimental indulgence in the memories of her hard struggle in dragging the family burden in adverse circumstances. Lata feared that her mother would break into tears. By saying that people were looking at her. Lata therefore seems to comfort, caution and advise Mrs Mehra to wipe her tears and abstain from such public outburst of emotion. One of the tacitly known principles of interactional behaviour is that, in normal circumstances, emotional outburst / breakdown like sighing, shedding tears, etc in public presence is undesirable. Lata’s utterance at T-1 position seems to express the proposition- ‘it is improper of Mrs Mehra to let people see her shedding tears on such an auspicious occasion like Savita’s wedding’. By pointing out the facts to Mrs Mehra, it seems. Lata was implicating that Mrs
Mehra should control her emotional outburst and withhold her tears, especially in view of the fact that people are watching her in that condition.

On the surface level, Lata’s comment serves to bring the situation to her mother’s notice. However, if we try and explore the possible reasons for her stating the obvious fact, it emerges that she did so in order to divert Mrs Mehra’s attention from her sentimental self-indulgence to the needs of the present moment. And she does in fact succeed in fulfilling her goal. However, this is certainly not what she intended to communicate.

At T-2 position Mrs Mehra seems to say that she does not care even if people see her crying, nor does she care for what they would think or feel. Besides, she also suggests another possible interpretation for her being in tears, namely that the guests will think that these were the tears of her excessive happiness. However, her words and her action seem to be at a cross. They contradict each other. Her act of hastily wiping her tears clearly exhibits that despite her assertion to the contrary, she does care for public opinion. That it is only in order to avoid being seen in a ridiculously emotional light that she hastens to wipe her tears. She seems to realise the truth of what Lata says, but is reluctant to openly admit that the sight of her tears is ridiculous or awkward. She tells Lata that everything she does is for the better of future of her children. She is firm in her opinion that Pran is a good, decent, cultured, Khatri boy and that it was the best possible choice available to them. She, therefore, notes with regret that though she has chosen a very good boy for Savita, no one appreciates her efforts. instead all that her children do is to criticise her. She thereby implicates that in the given circumstances her choice of Pran as a suitable boy for Savita is worthy of praise rather than of criticism.

At T-3 position Lata picks on a vulnerable point regarding the groom’s health and expresses her dissatisfaction or disapproval of Mrs Mehra’s choice. She implicates that Pran is not stout and healthy as people would generally expect a man of thirty to be. In fact, as the author says, Pran is thin, lank, dark, gangly, and asthmatic. And this is mutual knowledge shared by members of both families. With this shared background knowledge of Pran’s health condition,
most probably Lata wants to convey that Pran is not perfectly healthy and thereby seems to implicate that he is not the best choice. In other words, she implicates that Mrs Mehra has made a wrong choice.

At T-4 position Mrs Mehra expresses her unhappiness over her children's critical attitude. At the level of 'what is said' her utterance seems to signify that it was only Mrs Rupa Mehra who brought about this good enough marriage with her single-minded devotion and efforts. Responding to Lata’s criticism of Pran’s being very thin and unhealthy, Mrs Mehra produces a long rhetoric about the modern craze for being thin. She tells Lata that being thin is not a demerit or disqualification, neither is it detrimental to their happiness in marital life. Mrs Rupa Mehra seems to implicate that being thin is good rather than bad; that it is the trend of the times. She thus implicates that there is nothing bad about the groom being thin. She assures Lata that Pran and Savita will be happy and that Pran’s being thin will not be a hindrance in their happiness; and that it should not be treated as such. Moreover, in her opinion, if Savita does not complain about it, there is no reason why others should. However, she concludes by saying that if at all Pran is rather thin, Savita will fatten him up soon after their marriage, thus acknowledging her awareness of the fact. She further justifies her decision by pointing out the lack of initiative and action in this matter on the part of the other members of the family and friends. She argues that they did not do anything to find a better boy for Savita, and therefore they have no right to complain. She thus implicates that, instead of criticising, they should have shown interest and chosen a better boy than Pran.

Mrs Mehra’s rhetoric is punctuated at places by a public display of her courtesy. Here there is a fine admixture of Mrs Mehra’s feelings of irritation at her daughter’s attitude on the one hand and the need for public display of courtesy and happiness on the other. Mrs Mehra concludes her session of attending to the guests in T-4 position with the remark that she must go in to check why the bride and the groom were getting delayed. She thus implicates that she is in a hurry and that she must see to it that every rite takes place at the right moment. She is worried lest they miss the auspicious time suggested by the pandits. However,
even in the midst of such hurry, she doesn’t forget to remind Lata once again that she will have to marry a boy of her choice. This part of Mrs Mehra’s utterance at T-4 position serves both as a reminder as well as an imposing insistence.

At T-5 position, in response to her mother’s repeated intimation, Lata utters the same curt, cryptic, ambiguous particle ‘Hmm...’ as discussed above in illustration (1). Once again she strategically points out something striking about her mother’s physical appearance and succeeds in changing the subject. Lata knows that Mrs Mehra is very particular about her public appearance, and she uses this knowledge strategically for her own purposes. She seems to say that with her hanky sticking out of her blouse her mother’s appearance looks odd, and implicate thereby that her mother should take proper care of her appearance from time to time. But her ultimate goal could be to change the direction of the conversation.

Mrs Mehra’s utterance of the particle ‘Oh!’ At T-6 position seems to express her acknowledgement that it does look odd. She worriedly tucks her handkerchief in her blouse and then starts giving instructions for Arun. She asks Lata to inform Arun not simply to stand in a corner talking to his wife and a few friends; that as a host it is his duty to see to it that everyone enjoys the feast and is happy. Her criticism of Arun and Meenakshi’s behaviour implicates her disapproval of their conduct. It is at this point that Aparna interrupts her by tugging at her Sari for attention. This provides occasion for a break in the conversation and with an instruction to Aparna to stay with her mother or with Lata Bua, Mrs Mehra proceeds to look after what is happening at another place that has caused this inordinate delay in the arrival of the bride and the groom for performing the marriage rites.

**Illustrative value of the text**

This conversational exchange illustrates several typical features of implicature analysis. It illustrates, for example, how in the cases where utterances are loaded with implicatures real communication takes place at the level of implicated propositions rather than at the level of the propositions actually expressed by the
interlocutors. In other words it illustrates how the hearer responds to the implicated proposition rather than to the proposition actually expressed by way of ‘what is said’. Moreover, it illustrates how ulterior purposes of the speaker in communicating some proposition may be different from the intention he/she makes, or tries to make, the hearer to understand by means of the implicated proposition. For a speaker may implicate a proposition for the purpose of achieving an ulterior goal.

Consequently, what the hearer or the analyst arrives at is the speaker purported beliefs rather than the intentions that motivate his action. The hearer may or may not be able to guess the speaker’s motivations (the speaker's hidden agenda, so to say) behind the implicated propositions, and even if he/she makes such a guess, it may be right or wrong. Moreover, he/she may or may not think it necessary to make such a guess. Lata’s initial remark at T-1 position may, for example, be said to illustrate how the ulterior purposes of the speaker may be different from the intentions she makes as if to implicate. Here Lata implicates that her mother should control her emotional outburst. However, her real intentions could be to divert her mother's attention from the unpleasant memories of her lonely struggle to cope with the family requirements after her husband's death. And in fact her utterance does serve this purpose. her utterance leads to a change of topic and thereby marks a shift in the direction of the conversation. The conversation now shifts from Mrs Mehra’s self-indulgent memories to the vulnerable points of the marital alliance she has arranged for her elder daughter Savita. Similarly, Lata’s utterance at T-5 position may be intended to serve the ulterior purpose of changing the unpleasant subject.

Incidentally, Mrs Mehra’s utterance at T-4 position illustrates how, occasionally, the speaker has to adjust his/her moods to the requirements of the ongoing interaction. Mrs Mehra is irritated but defensive while talking to Lata. However, in the same turn she has also to respond to the guests. She welcomes them, makes them be comfortable, offers them delicious dishes, encourages them to have more delicacies, praises to them the groom and his family and their kindness and the happiness of the bride and the groom and the overall success of
the alliance in the most genial terms possible. When she turns to Lata once again, she assumes the same nagging, exhorting tone as before. However, she appears a little more enthusiastic in her praise and seems to overdo things. This in effect raises doubts concerning the credibility of her rather overenthusiastic pronouncements. Perhaps she tries to recompense for the doubts expressed by her children and is apprehensive lest the guests entertain similar notions. These shifts in her moods in one single turn show how she manages to address different types of audience and handle different issues simultaneously without allowing herself to be distracted. She shows her presence of mind by adapting her moods to the requirements of each situation. Thus she adopts exhortative mood while pursuing the issue of the search of a suitable boy for Lata, then switches immediately over to the genial spirit required to welcome and entertain the guests and well wishers, and then to the sonorous mood of understanding of the duties and responsibilities required for successful administration of the programme, and once again she reverts to the exhortative mood as she turns to address her daughter. At times her words appear to be mere shallow formalities, but these are necessary on the occasion. Her grasp and command over the entire situation are so perfect that one cannot but appreciate her efforts.

3. 2.1.3 : Conversation Three

Extract selected for analysis

In four years of marriage Meenakshi’s only worthwhile act, in Mrs Rupa Mehra’s eyes, had been to give birth to her beloved granddaughter, Aparna, who even now had found her way to her grandmother’s brown silk sari and was tugging it for attention. Mrs Rupa Mehra was delighted. She gave her a kiss and told her: ‘Aparna, you must stay with your Mummy or with Lata Bua, otherwise you will get lost. And then where would we be?’

‘Can’t I come with you?’ asked Aparna, who, at three, naturally had views and preferences of her own.

‘Sweetheart, I wish you could,’ said Mrs Rupa Mehra, ‘but I have to make sure that your Savita Bua is ready to be married. She is so late already.’ And Mrs Rupa Mehra looked once again at the little gold watch that had been her husband’s first gift to her and which had not missed a beat for two-and-a-half decades.

‘I want to see Savita Bua!’ said Aparna, holding her ground. Mrs Rupa Mehra looked a little harassed and nodded vaguely at Aparna. Lata picked Aparna up. ‘When Savita Bua comes out, we’ll go over there together. shall we, and I’ll hold you up like this, and we’ll both get a good view. Meanwhile, should we go and see if we can get some ice cream? I feel like some too.’
Aparna approved of this, as of most of Lata’s suggestions. It was never too cold for ice-cream. They walked towards the buffet table together, three-year-old and nineteen-year-old hand in hand. A few rose-petals wafted down on them from somewhere.

‘What is good enough for your sister is good enough for you,’ said Mrs Rupa Mehra to Lata as a parting shot.

‘We can’t both marry Pran,’ said Lata, laughing.

(A Suitable Boy, 5)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Aparna : (Tugs her grandmother’s sari for attention)
T-2 Mrs Mehra : (Giving her a kiss) Aparna, you must stay with your Mummy or with Lata Bua, otherwise you will get lost. And then where would we be?
T-3 Aparna : Can’t I come with you?
T-4 Mrs Mehra : Sweetheart, I wish you could, but I have to make sure that your Savita Bua is ready to be married. (Looking at the little gold watch) She is so late already.
T-5 Aparna : (Insistently) I want to see Savita Bua!
T-6 Mrs Mehra : (Nods, feeling a little harassed)
T-7 Lata : (Picks Aparna up) When Savita Bua comes out, we’ll go over there together, shall we, and I’ll hold you up like this, and we’ll both get a good view. Meanwhile, should we go and see if we can get some ice cream? I feel like some too. (Lata and Aparna walk towards the buffet table together.)
T-8 Mrs Mehra : (To Lata as a parting shot) What is good enough for your sister is good enough for you.
T-9 Lata : (Laughing) We can’t both marry Pran.

Textual Background

As in (1) and (2) above

While Mrs Rupa Mehra was eagerly waiting for the bride and the groom to come out fully prepared for performing the marriage rites, she was interrupted by Aparna who wanted to be with her. Mrs Rupa Mehra, however, did not want to be bothered by any such responsibility at the moment. She therefore suggests that Aparna should stay with her mother or with Lata Bua and proceeds to supervise the ceremonial rites. At the same time, however, she makes it a point to remind Lata that she must accept her mother’s advice in the matter of choosing a suitable boy for her marriage.

Significance of the passage

The present interaction shows Mrs Rupa Mehra in the role of a loving grandmother. Aparna is Mrs Rupa Mehra’s three-year-old granddaughter. She is
a pampered child - rather too self-willed and dogmatic for her age. Mrs Rupa Mehra is a practical person. She is a dynamic lady. The present interaction reveals Mrs Mehra’s attempts to exercise her control over the family affairs and, as the head of the family to keep a check on the behaviour of its members. It shows how Mrs Rupa Mehra deals with the self-opinionated Aparna and Lata.

Implicature Analysis

At T-1 position, Aparna’s gesture of Tugging at her grandmother’s sari indicates her desire that Mrs Rupa Mehra should pay attention to what she has to say. She thereby implicates that she wants to speak to Mrs Rupa Mehra. Obviously, Aparna was not accompanied by any elderly person. For, at T-2 position, Mrs Rupa Mehra advises her that she must stay with her Mummy or with Lata Bua, otherwise she will get lost. She thereby cautions or warns her of dreadful consequences following her failure to act upon the advice. By way of this caution, Mrs Mehra implicates that Aparna should not move around alone because there is the possibility of her getting lost. At T-3 position, Aparna, by asking for permission (by way of asking what looks like a rhetorical question), expresses her desire to stay with her grandmother. At T-4 position, Mrs Rupa Mehra says that she would have been happy to allow Aparna to stay with her, but she cannot do so because she was busy with other work. She thereby implicates that she cannot be bothered by having to look after Aparna especially at this moment. She tells Aparna that she had to make sure that Savita is ready to be married. Then she adds, ‘She is so late already.’ By virtue of the word ‘already’ she conventionally implicates that the situation should have been different at the time of utterance. At T-5 position, Aparna says that she too wants to see Savita Bua. As a child, Aparna has natural attraction for seeing a bride. Now that her own aunt is herself bride she insists on seeing her. Mrs Rupa Mehra, as she has no answer to this, feels a little harassed by Aparna’s determination to stay with her. Lata therefore comes forward, picks up Aparna and promises her that when Savita Bua comes out she will pick her up so that both of them could see her better. And then to divert Aparna’s attention she offers to take her to the Ice-Cream stall and see if they could get some Ice
Cream. Lata’s utterance at T-7 position implicates that Aparna should rather go with her than insist on staying with Mrs Rupa Mehra. While Lata was taking Aparna towards the buffet table, Mrs Rupa Mehra tells Lata once again that what was good enough for her sister was good enough for her. Lata laughs away the suggestion by joking about it. ‘We can’t both marry Pran’, she says, thus implicating that her mother’s suggestion was impracticable and hence unacceptable.

**Illustrative value of the text**

The present conversational exchange serves to illustrate how indirect speech acts could be better explained by means of implicature analysis. For example, the speaker in T-2 performs the Indirect Speech Act of prohibiting or threatening, in T-4 that of refusing permission, in T-5 expressing wish or desire, in T-7 that of offering help, in T-8 that of reminding, and in T-9 that of joking. It may also be cited as an illustration of how gestures play significant role in face-to-face interaction. Aparna’s gesture at T-1 position and the gesture of annoyance on the part of Mrs Mehra at T-6 position, for example, illustrate how gestures form a meaningful part conversational interaction, and could be analysed and explained in terms of implicatures.

Mrs Rupa Mehra’s utterance at T-3 position illustrates how certain expressions carry conventional implicatures. Here we see the words ‘but’ and ‘already’ loaded with conventional implicatures. The word ‘but’ in Mrs Rupa Mehra’s utterance at T-4 position, for example, carries the conventional implicature of adverseness of the propositions expressing her wish and her inability to allow Aparna to stay with her. Similarly, the word ‘already’ in ‘She is so late already’ carries the conventional implicature that the situation at the time of the utterance should have been as it was expected by the speaker, viz. that the bride and the groom should have by now been ready for performing the rites.

Mrs Rupa Mehra’s repeated insistence that Lata obey her dictates and Lata’s successive attempts to thwart the maternal imperative and evade discussion on unwanted and undesirable subject illustrate some of the common strategies adopted by interlocutors in day-to-day conversations. Lata’s utterance at T-9
position illustrates how a speaker may laugh an issue away. Here, Lata avoids the subject she dislikes by joking about it and thereby postponing / cutting short the discussion on the topic.

3.2.2 : Cluster Two

3.2.2.1 : Conversation One

Extract selected for analysis

... It was the early winter of 1950, and India had been free for over three years. But freedom for the country did not mean freedom for his younger son, Maan, who even now was being told by his father:

‘What is good enough for your brother is good enough for you.’

‘Yes, Baoji,’ said Maan, smiling.

Mr Mahesh Kapoor frowned. His younger son, while succeeding to his own habit of fine dress, had not succeeded to his obsession with hard work. Nor did he appear to have any ambition to speak of.

‘It is no use being a good-looking young wastrel forever,’ said his father. ‘And marriage will force you to settle down and take things seriously. I have written to the Banaras people, and I expect a favourable answer any day.’

Marriage was the last thing on Maan’s mind; he had caught a friend’s eye in the crowd and was waving at him. Hundreds of small coloured lights strung through the hedge came on at once, and the silk saris and jewellery of the women glimmered and glinted even more brightly. The high, reedy shehnai music burst into a pattern of speed and brilliance. Maan was entranced. He noticed Lata making her way through the guests. Quite an attractive girl, Savita’s sister, he thought. Not very tall and not very fair, but attractive, with an oval face, a shy light in her dark eyes and an affectionate manner towards the child she was leading by the hand.

‘Yes, Baoji,’ said Maan obediently.

‘What did I say?’ demanded his father.

‘About marriage, Baoji,’ said Maan.

‘What about marriage?’

Maan was nonplussed.

‘Don’t you listen?’ demanded Mahesh Kapoor, wanting to twist Maan’s ear. ‘You are as bad as the clerks in the Revenue Department. You were not paying attention, you were waving at Firoz.’

Maan looked a little shamefaced. He knew what his father thought of him. But he had been enjoying himself until a couple of minutes ago, and it was just like Baoji to come and puncture his light spirits.

‘So that’s all fixed up,’ continued his father. ‘Don’t tell me later that I didn’t warn you. And don’t get that weak-willed woman, your mother, to change her mind and come telling me that you aren’t yet ready to take on the responsibilities of a man.’

‘No, Baoji,’ said Maan, getting the drift of things and looking a trifle glum.

We chose well for Veena, we have chosen well for Pran, and you are not to complain about our choice of a bride for you.

Maan said nothing. He was wondering how: to repair the puncture: He had a bottle of Scotch upstairs in his room, and perhaps he and Firoz could escape for a few minutes before the ceremony - or even during it for refreshment.

His father paused to smile brusquely at a few well-wishers, then turned to Maan again.
‘I don’t want to have to waste any more time with you today. God knows I have enough to do as it is... What has happened to Pran and that girl, what’s her name? It’s getting late. They were supposed to come out from opposite ends of the house and meet here for the jaymala five seconds ago.

‘Savita, prompted Maan.

‘Yes, yes,’ said his father impatiently, Savita’. Your superstitious mother will start panicking if they miss the configuration of the Stars; Go and calm her down; Go! Do some good.’

(A Suitable Boy, 6-7)

**Idealised conversational passage**

| T-1 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor | What is good enough for your brother is good enough for you.’ |
| T-2 | Maan | (Smiling) Yes, Baoji. |
| T-3 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor | (Frowning) It is no use being a good-looking young wastrel forever. And marriage will force you to settle down and take things seriously. I have written to the Banaras people, and I expect a favourable answer any day. |
| T-4 | Maan | Yes, Baoji. |
| T-5 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor | What did I say? |
| T-6 | Maan | About marriage, Baoji. |
| T-7 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor | What about marriage? |
| T-8 | Maan | (Nonplussed) |
| T-9 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor | Don’t you listen? ... You are as bad as the clerks in the Revenue Department. You were not paying attention, you were waving at Firoz. ... So that’s all fixed up. Don’t tell me later that I didn’t warn you. And don’t get that weak-willed woman, your mother, to change her mind and come telling me that you aren’t yet ready to take on the responsibilities of a man. |
| T-10 | Maan | (Glumly) No, Baoji. |
| T-11 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor | We chose well for Veena, we have chosen well for Pran, and you are not to complain about our choice of a bride for you. |
| T-12 | Maan | (Remains silent, wondering how to repair the puncture.) |
| T-13 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor | (Smiling brusquely at a few well-wishers, and then turning to Maan) I don’t want to have to waste any more time with you today. God knows I have enough to do as it is. What has happened to Pran and that girl, what’s her name? It’s getting late. They were supposed to come out from opposite ends of the house and meet here for the jaymala five seconds ago. |
| T-14 | Maan | Savita. |
| T-15 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor | (Impatiently ) Yes, yes... Savita. Your
superstitious mother will start panicking if they miss the configuration of the Stars; Go and calm her down; Go! Do some good.

**Textual Background**

This conversation between Maan and his father follows immediately after a similar one between Lata and her mother. In this conversation Mr Mahesh Kapoor is reprimanding his rather obstinate son Maan on the same subject and demanding his obedience and allegiance to parental choice for his bride. The father and son serve as counterfoil (or role-reversed pair) of the mother and daughter of the earlier conversation. Maan is not really bothered by his father’s reproaches. Instead he answers mechanically without paying real attention to what his father was saying. He is more interested in enjoying the present occasion and pleasant company of friends and the sight of young, beautiful girls around. He is given to sensual pleasures and fleeting temptations.

**Significance of the passage**

This extract shows what is going on in the family fold of the other host of the wedding - the Groom’s father, Mr. Mahesh Kapoor, the minister of revenue for the State of Purva Pradesh. It establishes the recurrent theme of parental worries, apprehensions and concerns for their self-willed, headstrong children who assert their individuality and independence. Here parental concern is effectively expressed through repetitive treatment of the same theme with slight variations. Both Lata and Maan are headstrong about their individual preferences. They are somewhat pampered children who suffer on account of their headstrong nature. Their parents are worried lest their progeny fail to settle down satisfactorily or get into trouble due to their headstrong nature and inexperience. Lata and Maan are forcibly subjected to the nagging of their parents and they either ignore or make apparent show of agreeing with their parents’ exhortations. They seem to make a show of consideration for parental wishes, but they have no serious intention of being guided by the parental choices.
Implicature Analysis

Mr. Mahesh Kapoor’s utterance at T-1 position seems to signify that they had chosen a good girl for Pran, and that he did not complain about it. Similarly, when they arrange for Maan’s marriage, he is not supposed to complain. That like Pran, Maan also must accept whatever arrangements his parents will make for his marriage. The very need to explicitly state this to Maan shows Mr. Mahesh Kapoor’s awareness that perhaps Maan will not accept his suggestions without grudge: that he will assert his own individual preferences and demand some freedom for choosing his bride, or that he is going to create problems, that a choice of a bride for Maan is not going to be so straightforward an affair as it was in the case of Pran. This is a kind of hint, a warning to him, as to what they expect of him and what they want him to do. However, very much like Lata, Maan does not want to be bothered by these thoughts, at least not at the present moment. His short response at T-2 position – ‘Yes Baoji’ does not signify the kind of serious attention and understanding of what his father was saying, as it seems to express.

At T-3 position his father scolds him for not taking things seriously, and says that only marriage will force him to settle down. He says that Maan has been nothing but a good-looking young wastrel for a little while too long, and that now it is high time that he settles down in life, takes things seriously, and assumes the responsibilities of a man (i.e. starts behaving like a grown up man). By way of scalar implicature at T-2 position, Mr Mahesh Kapoor implicates that Maan has been behaving like a good-looking young wastrel for a little while too long.

He then tells Maan that he has arranged for a match for him and that the party is likely to accept his proposal.

At T-4 position Maan answers simply by repeating the same mechanical phrase ‘Yes Baoji’ – without really paying attention to what his father was saying or without understanding in the least what it meant. His father realizes that Maan is not serious about what he was saying, that he was not paying attention, and not even properly listening to him. So at T-5 and T-7 positions he demands from Maan to repeat what he had said. Mann's inability to repeat what his father said
shows that he was not listening really. His silence at T-8 position indicates and thus confirms his father’s understanding that he was not paying attention.

At T-9 position his father tells Maan what he was doing, and thereby implicates that he was carefully watching his behaviour and that Maan should better listen carefully to what his father has to say. He then informs him that he has as good as fixed up everything about his marriage and that he was not going to entertain any arguments, suggestions, change of opinion, etc. He even intimates Maan that it is going to be of no use even if he uses his mother as a cover to defend him or to take sides with him for preventing or postponing the proposed marriage.

At T-11 position Mr Mahesh Kapoor says that they chose well for Veena and also for Pran, and, therefore, it goes without saying that they will choose well for Maan as well. So Maan is not supposed to complain about their choice of a bride for him. Here Mr Mahesh Kapoor seems to inform Maan that he will have to marry the girl his father has chosen for him. This is a kind of order, only to be obeyed and not to be argued about.

Maan remains silent, wondering how to repair the puncture. But Maan’s silence at T-12 position is interpreted by his father as a kind of meek acceptance and consent for the proposal.

T-13 reveals how in making public appearance, occasionally one is required to keep aside one’s worries, uneasiness and irritation and wear a mask of pleasantness. This illustrates how often one is forced to assume different faces for different types of audience. Here Mr Mahesh Kapoor smiles brusquely at the well-wishers, and then turning to Maan he says that he has no more time to waste on him on the day, that he already has enough to do as it is. He then wonders at the possible reason for the delay of the bride and the groom. ‘It’s getting late’, he says. ‘They were supposed to come out from opposite ends of the house and meet here for the jaymala five seconds ago.’ In fact, he is worried not so much about the delay in the program as such as about the fact that his wife will start panicking if they miss what he sarcastically calls ‘the configuration of the Stars’. His use of expressions like ‘Your superstitious mother’ and ‘(she) will start panicking’ seem to exhibit his dislike of these traits.
of his wife’s nature. This information is carried by his words and is conveyed by way of incidental transfer of meaning rather than as intentional communication. He seems to claim a difference face for himself. He seems to implicate that she is given to such behaviour, which is no good. He doesn’t like it because, in his opinion, it neither helps the person herself, nor does it do any good to any one else. Here Mr Mahesh Kapoor sends Maan away on the errand to comfort his mother. Mr Mahesh Kapoor’s impatient utterance at T-15 position thus serves as an illustration of how a good deal of information, though it is not actually expressed or implicated, is conveyed simply by way of incidental transfer of meaning.

Illustrative value of the text
This conversation shows how unintentional transfer of meaning influences the course or direction of conversation. It also illustrates how vituperative strategies like scolding, commanding, forcing obedience, or imposing one’s views, opinions or choices on others, etc are used to generate implicatures.

3.2.2.2 : Conversation Two

Extract selected for analysis
Lata, who had heard a part of Maan’s conversation with his father, could not help smiling to herself as she walked past. ‘I see you’re enjoying yourself,’ said Maan to her in English. His conversation with his father had been in Hindi, hers with her mother in English. Maan spoke both well. Lata was struck shy, as she sometimes was with strangers, especially those who smiled as boldly as Maan. Let him do the smiling for both of us, she thought. ‘Yes,’ she said simply, her eyes resting on ‘his face for just a second. Aparna tugged at her hand. ‘Well, now, we’re almost family,’ said Maan, perhaps sensing her awkwardness. ‘A few minutes more, and the ceremonies will start.’ ‘Yes,’ agreed Lata, looking up at him again more confidently. She paused and frowned. ‘My mother’s concerned that they won’t start on time.’ ‘So is my father,’ said Maan. Lata began smiling again, but when Maan asked her why she shook her head. ‘Well,’ said Maan, flicking a rose-petal off his beautiful tight white achkan. ‘you’re not laughing at me, are you?’ ‘I’m not laughing at all,’ said Lata. ‘Smiling, I meant.’ ‘No, not at you,’ said Lata. At myself.’ ‘That’s very mysterious,’ said Maan. His good-natured face melted into an expression of exaggerated perplexity.
‘It’ll have to remain so, I’m afraid,’ said Lata, almost laughing now. ‘Aparna here wants her ice-cream, and I must supply it.’

‘Try the pistachio ice-cream,’ suggested Maan. His eyes followed her pink sari for a few seconds. Good-looking girl in a way, he thought again. Pink’s the wrong colour for her complexion, though. She should be dressed in deep green or dark blue...like that woman there. His attention veered to a new object of contemplation.

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**Idealised conversational passage**

T-1  Maan : (Seeing Lata smiling to herself) I see you’re enjoying yourself.
T-2  Lata : (In awkwardness) Yes.
T-3  Maan : Well, now, we’re almost family. A few minutes more, and the ceremonies will start.
T-4  Lata : (More confidently) Yes. ... My mother’s concerned that they won’t start on time.
T-5  Maan : So is my father.
T-6  Lata : (Smiles again)
T-7  Maan : Well, ... you’re not laughing at me, are you?
T-8  Lata : I’m not laughing at all.
T-9  Maan : Smiling, I meant.
T-10 Lata : No, not at you... At myself.
T-11 Maan : (In exaggerated perplexity) That’s very mysterious.
T-12 Lata : (Almost laughing) It’ll have to remain so, I’m afraid. ... Aparna here wants her ice-cream, and I must supply it.
T-13 Maan : Try the pistachio ice-cream.

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**Textual Background**

This interaction takes place against the background of a similar conversation a short while ago between Lata and her mother in which the mother reprimanded Lata on the same issue of allegiance to parental prerogative for choosing a suitable match for the children. When Lata hears the same kind of conversation going on between Maan and his father, she feels amused. Here Maan was playing more or less the same role as Lata did in the conversation with her mother. Overhearing this conversation, Lata was smiling to herself. Seeing her smile like this makes Maan apprehensive about whether she heard his conversation with his father.

**Significance of the passage**

This repetitive treatment of the theme establishes and asserts the central concerns of both families. The two families are going to be attached to each other by marital alliance in a few minutes time. This passage shows Maan’s tendency (very much like that of Lata) to take his father’s reproaches lightly. He
is more interested in making friends with Lata than keep complaining about his father’s reproaches. Lata seems to like his gallantry and this helps him to forget his father’s chiding.

**Implicature Analysis**

On the surface level, Maan’s initial utterance seems to be a response to the natural meaning he deciphers from what he saw. He had seen Lata smiling to herself. By way of incidental transfer of meaning Maan arrives at the conclusion that she was happy or that she was enjoying herself. By way of phatic communication, simply to make an acquaintance or to keep up or maintain contact, or just to indicate his good intentions he makes it a point to explicitly state his impression about her mental state. He perhaps expected her to be happy at his remark. However, perhaps contrary to his intentions, this sudden appreciation from the one with whom she was hardly acquainted, makes her feel awkward rather than elated. Maan’s observation thus marks his apprehension as well as his desire to make acquaintance and to develop friendly relations with the young and beautiful Lata who was very soon going to become his close relative. They share their parents’ concerns with each other. This reduces the awkwardness of their first meeting, and they start talking in a friendly way. Maan does not know anything about the conversation between Lata and Mrs Mehra. Lata, however, overheard part of the conversation between Maan and his father. Maan suspects that Lata might have heard how his father ticked him off. His utterance at T-7 position could be said to be his attempt to judge whether she knows how his father fired him. Lata behaves as if she does not know anything about what passed between the father and son. At T-3 position, Maan seems to reproach her for being embarrassed at his attempt to talk to her. He seems to implicate that it is unnatural to be so formal, shy or cold towards so close a relative.

His easy manner generates confidence in her, and as if she was compelled to say something to him in response, she makes a statement about her mother’s apprehensions concerning the delay in starting the ceremonies. Her statement at T-4 position is relevant in many respects and could be interpreted in different
ways. In fact, it is difficult to say in which sense Lata really intended it. She might have added it as a complement to what Maan was saying about the ceremonies; or she possibly meant to say that she was smiling at the thought that her mother, just like Maan’s mother, was in a similar state of panic over the delay in the performance of the ceremonial rites. It is also possible that she intended it just for sharing her impression about her mother’s state of mind with a like-minded person like Maan.

The subsequent remarks explicitly reveal Maan’s apprehensions. At T-12 position Lata indicates that she must go and arrange for some ice-cream for her niece. The conversation ends with Maan’s suggestion to Lata that she should try the pistachio ice-cream.

**Illustrative value of the text**

This interaction shows the tendency on the part of Maan and Lata for not being bothered too much by the nagging of parents. It is as if there are general patterns of human behaviour. Here we have pairs of characters exhibiting same traits of behaviour. The elderly persons- Mrs Mehra and Mr Kapoor are vexed about the unruly behaviour of their children. Maan and Lata, on the other hand, tend to take their advice lightly. The reproaches of their parents do not seem to have much effect on them.

This interaction also shows how in conversation it is possible that interlocutors may try to hide certain information from each other. And it is possible that interlocutors may feign ignorance about the secret information which their conversational partners do not wish them to know. Lata, here, may have some idea of what passed between Maan and his father just before they started talking. But she does not give out even the slightest clue about it.

**3.2.3 : Cluster Three**

**3.2.3.1 : Conversation One**

**Extract selected for analysis**

He (*Dr Kishen Chand Seth*) drove to the university the next day in a fury and arrived at Pran Kapoor’s house.

It was three in the afternoon, and hot. Pran was at the department. Lata was attending a lecture on the Metaphysical Poets. Savita had gone shopping. Mansoor, the young
servant, tried to soothe Dr Kishen Chand Seth by offering him tea, coffee, or fresh lime-juice. All this was brushed brusquely aside.

‘Is anyone at home? Where is everyone?’ asked Dr Kishen Chand Seth in a rage. His short, compressed and very jowly appearance made him look a little like a fierce and wrinkled Tibetan watchdog. (Mrs Rupa Mehra’s good looks had been the gift of her mother.) He carried a carved Kashmiri cane which he used more for emphasis than for support. Mansoor hurried inside.

‘Burri Memsahib?’ he called, knocking at the door of Mrs Rupa Mehra’s room.

What? … Who?

‘Burri Memsahib, your father is here.’

‘Oh. Oh.’ Mrs Rupa Mehra, who had been enjoying an afternoon nap, woke into a nightmare. ‘Tell him I will be with him immediately, and offer him some tea.’

‘Yes, Memsahib.’

(A Suitable Boy, 1993: 33)

Idealised conversational passage

T- 1 Dr Seth : (In fury) ‘Is anyone at home? Where is everyone?’
T- 2 Mansoor : (rushes inside the house and knocks at the door of Mrs Rupa Mehra’s room) … Burri Memsahib?
T- 3 Mrs Mehra : What? … Who?
T- 4 Mansoor : Burri Memsahib, your father is here.
T- 5 Mrs Mehra : Oh. Oh. (As if rising from the afternoon nap in a nightmare) Tell him I will be with him immediately, and offer him some tea.
T- 6 Mansoor : Yes, Memsahib. (He goes to the drawing room)

Textual background

Mrs Rupa Mehra’s father, Dr Kishen Chand Seth, retired principal of Brahmpur Medical College, is a man of unpredictable, moody nature. He has his own whims and ways of dealing with the world. Mrs Rupa Mehra had informed him by mail that she would be arriving at Brahmpur in the previous week. He expected her to visit him on her arrival. He, therefore, waited for her visit for a week from the expected date. Then, irritated by the unexpected delay in her visit, he decided to meet her himself. He, therefore, goes to Dr Pran Kapoor’s house to meet his daughter. Mansoor, the young servant who was attending the household temporarily in place of his father, receives him with reverence. However, despite all the politeness, deference and respect shown to him by Mansoor, Dr Seth terrifies everybody in the house with his usual rough manner. His daughter pacifies him somehow and he leaves as abruptly as he had arrived.
Significance of the passage
This extract throws light on the relationship between Mrs Mehra and her father Dr Kishen Chand Seth - a kind of love and hate relationship. Earlier in the text the reader is informed about how Dr Kishen Chand Seth ill-treated Mrs Mehra, especially when she needed his help and support. He was very harsh and unrelenting - very offending and merciless. He didn't hesitate to blame his daughter - make baseless allegations, charge her of flirtatious behaviour, adulterous intentions, etc without ever giving a moment’s thought to how utterly humiliating and offending it could be for his recently widowed daughter, especially when she has come to him in the times of her distress. She left his house and went to Darjeeling to live on the charity of friends and well wishers. Despite the fact, Mrs Mehra seems to have great respect for the old man. Though Dr Kishen Chand Seth is outwardly rash and harsh, he too seems to love his daughter Mrs Rupa Mehra, and is therefore offended at her supposed disrespectful behaviour in not informing him of her arrival. He does not seem to bother whether his harsh words and rough manner offend his daughter.

Implicature Analysis
Dr Kishen Chand Seth’s sudden appearance and his angry outburst of a series of questions at T-1 position frightens Mansoor. His utterances have the form of questions. However, it is obvious that these are not genuine questions. Dr Kishen Chand Seth is certainly not asking for information required by them. Now, if they are not intended as genuine questions, they must be intended to serve some other purpose. The probable point of his utterance could be to express something like surprise or wonder, or it could be to catch attention of the members of the household. For questions are, at least on some occasions, almost conventionally used for these purposes. Here Dr Kishen Chand Seth’s utterance serves the function of an order to the servant to announce his arrival to the members of the household. It is thus an indirect speech act implicating that the servant, Mansoor, should inform the members of the household of the guest’s arrival. Mansoor understands it as such and acts upon the implicated proposition. He rushes to the door of Mrs Rupa Mehra’s room and informs her accordingly. His
action thus indicates his understanding of Dr Kishen Chand Seth’s utterance. Moreover, the very fact that Dr Kishen Chand Seth is satisfied with the action Mansoor has taken is further proof of this being the implicated proposition of Dr Kishen Chand Seth’s utterance at T-1 position.

Mansoor’s utterance at T-2 position, viz. ‘...Burri Memsahib?’ has the form of a vocative for getting the attention of Mrs Rupa Mehra. This conventional vocative, uttered with such excitement and at an odd hour (especially at a time when he would not in normal circumstances disturb her), carries the implicature that some unexpected emergency calls for Mrs Rupa Mehra’s immediate attention. In fact, Mrs Rupa Mehra also understands it in the same spirit. This is evident from the way she responds to Mansoor’s call. Her response at T-3 position - ‘What? ... Who?’ indicates that she has sensed the urgency implicated by the excitement evident in Mansoor’s call. Since Mansoor ratifies her understanding by immediately explaining the reason for his excitement, the proposition she takes his call to implicate, viz. ‘some uncalled for (unexpected) emergency calls for Mrs Rupa Mehra’s immediate attention’, is, in fact, the implicature carried by the utterance.

Mrs Rupa Mehra’s utterance here seems to be a straightforward utterance of a direct speech act of asking, and it is understood as such by Mansoor. For Mansoor immediately tenders the information required by Mrs Rupa Mehra’s questions. ‘Burri Memsahib, your father is here’, he says at T-4 position. At T-5 position Mrs Rupa Mehra gives him instructions. Mansoor’s utterance at T-6 position, viz. ‘Yes, Memsahib’ indicates his uptake of Mrs Rupa Mehra’s instructions. Mansoor then proceeds to carry out his orders.

**Illustrative value of the text**

The present conversation shows how communication at the level of direct and indirect speech acts could in fact be better explained by using the framework of implicature analysis. The speakers here resort to using indirect speech acts for implicating the propositions they intend to communicate. The direct speech acts in T-3 to T-6 positions could be explained in terms of explicatures which represent what in Grice’s framework is called as ‘what is said’, whereas the
indirect speech acts in T-1 and T-2 positions could be explained in terms of implicated propositions. Incidentally, this also illustrates how features of conversational structure play important role in understanding and interpretation of utterances.

3.2.3.2 : Conversation Two

Extract selected for analysis

Dr Kishen Chand Seth veered around towards his daughter. She wilted before him. ‘What kind of daughter do I have?’ he asked rhetorically. Rupa Mehra waited for the answer, and it was not long in coming. ‘Ungrateful!’ Her father bit into an arrowroot biscuit for emphasis. ‘Soggy!’ he added in disgust.

Mrs Rupa Mehra knew better than to protest.

Dr Kishen Chand Seth went on:

‘You have been back from Calcutta for a week and you haven’t visited me once. Is it me you hate so much or your stepmother?’

Since her stepmother, Parvati, was considerably younger than herself, Mrs Rupa Mehra found it very difficult to think of her other than as her father’s nurse and, later, mistress. Though fastidious, Mrs Rupa Mehra did not entirely resent Parvati. Her father had been lonely for three decades after her mother had died. Parvati was good to him and (she supposed) good for him. Anyway, thought Mrs Rupa Mehra, this is the way things happen in the world. It is best to be on good terms with everyone.

‘But I only arrived here yesterday,’ she said. She had told him so a minute ago, but he evidently did not believe her.

‘Hunh!’ said Dr Seth dismissively.

‘By the Brahmpur Mail.’

‘You wrote in your letter that you would be coming last week.’

‘But I couldn’t get reservations, Baoji, so I decided to stay in Calcutta another week.’

This was true, but the pleasure of spending time with her three-year-old granddaughter Aparna had also been a factor in her delay.

‘Have you heard of telegrams?’

‘I thought of sending you one, Baoji, but I didn’t think it was so important. Then, the expense. …’

‘Ever since you became a Mehra you have become completely evasive.’

(A Suitable Boy. 1993-35)

Idealised conversational passage:

T-1 Dr Seth : (Rhetorically) What kind of daughter do I have? Ungrateful! (Almost in disgust) Soggy! You have been back from Calcutta for a week and you haven’t visited me once. Is it me you hate so much or your stepmother?

T-2 Mrs Mehra : But I only arrived here yesterday.

T-3 Dr Seth : (Unbelieving and dismissively) Hunh!

T-4 Mrs Mehra : By the Brahmpur Mail.

T-5 Dr Seth : You wrote in your letter that you would be coming last week.

T-6 Mrs Mehra : But I couldn’t get reservations, Baoji, so I decided to stay in Calcutta another week.
T-7 Dr Seth : Have you heard of telegrams?
T-8 Mrs Mehra : I thought of sending you one, Baoji, but I didn’t think it was so important. Then, the expense…
T-9 Dr Seth : Ever since you became a Mehra you have become completely evasive.

Textual background
As in p. 33
Significance of the passage
As in p. 33

In the present extract Dr Kishen Chand Seth scolds his daughter Mrs Rupa Mehra for her supposed disrespectful behaviour in not informing him of her arrival in Brahmpur or visiting him immediately after her arrival. Mrs Rupa Mehra protests, tells him the facts, gives her reasons and ultimately succeeds in convincing him that she was not at fault.

Implicature Analysis
At T-1 position Dr Kishen Chand Seth says that he has a soggy and ungrateful daughter Mrs Rupa Mehra for her supposed disrespectful behaviour in not informing him of her arrival in Brahmpur or visiting him immediately after her arrival. Mrs Rupa Mehra protests, tells him the facts, gives her reasons and ultimately succeeds in convincing him that she was not at fault.

At T-1 position Dr Kishen Chand Seth says that he has a soggy and ungrateful daughter. He reminds Mrs Rupa Mehra that she arrived in the town almost a week before and that (1) she hasn’t paid visit to him, (2) nor has she informed him of her arrival. He could not simply be pointing out the facts. For, he assumes (1) and (2) to be facts, known to him as well as to his daughter. If this is true then why should he say so? It is common knowledge that generally when someone says something, he says it with some purpose. In other words, the speaker wouldn’t produce an utterance unless he has a point to make? He would be violating the principle of economy (i.e. he would be wasting his effort pointlessly) if his utterance has no point. What could then be the purpose of Dr Kishen Chand Seth’s utterance in producing the utterance when the proposition it expresses is already known to both of them? Obviously, he is making some point other than what he has explicitly stated, which he knows his daughter can understand in the given context. For if it were not possible for Mrs Rupa Mehra to understand the point he was trying to make, he would be guilty of breach of the first sub-maxim of manner- ‘Be clear’. Since this does not seem to be the case here, he must be implicating that she should have paid a visit to him immediately on her arrival in Brahmpur or at least she should have informed him
of her arrival. That this is what the speaker meant and intended the hearer to understand is further supported and strengthened by Mrs Rupa Mehra’s utterance at T-2 position.

At T-2 position Mrs Rupa Mehra, responding to the implicature of her father’s utterance at T-1 position, explains that she arrived just the day before and not a week ago as he said she did. The word ‘only’ in her utterance carries the conventional implicature ‘She did not arrive earlier as supposed by her father’. She thus registers her protest and thereby implicates that she is not guilty of the alleged charges. Dr Kishen Chand Seth’s utterance at T-3 position seems to signify that he doesn’t believe her explanation. He thus implicates that it is his conviction that Mrs Rupa Mehra is telling a lie. Therefore, at T-4 position Mrs Rupa Mehra once again reinforces her defence by providing further proof of the truth of her statement. She gives the exact details of her journey by train. Mrs Rupa Mehra’s utterance cannot simply be an attempt to pass on the information. By giving this information, she seems to implicate that her father’s accusation is misplaced and groundless. Responding to the implicature carried by Mrs Rupa Mehra’s utterance at T-4 position, Dr Kishen Chand Seth provides reasons for his belief. At T-5 position he reminds her that she had informed him by letter that she would be arriving earlier and not the day before. He thereby implicates that she was supposed to arrive one week before, that he still believes she has in fact arrived one week before, and that perhaps she has invented this lie to cover up her unmannerly behaviour.

By way of clarification for her father’s querry Mrs Rupa Mehra, at T-6 position, gives explanation for the discrepancy between the information she communicated by letter and the fact of her arrival the day before. She explains that she changed her earlier plan due to her failure to procure reservations for the said train journey.

At T-7 position Dr Kishen Chand Seth seems to say that there are ways of urgent communication like telegrams, and thereby implicates that Mrs Rupa Mehra should have telegraphically communicated the change in her programme. By way of explanation to her father’s suggestion Mrs Rupa Mehra, at T-8 position.
says that she thought of sending a telegram but did not send it because she did not think it so important and because it was a costly affair.

At T-9 position Dr Kishen Chand Seth says that Mrs Rupa Mehra had become completely evasive ever since she got married to Raghbir Mehra, thereby implicating that he disapproved of her behaviour.

**Illustrative value of the text**

This interaction illustrates how interactants may at times adopt vituperative strategies to achieve their goals. It also illustrates how statements based on inadequate evidence may give rise to misconceptions and lead to misunderstandings. However such misunderstandings are cleared in the course of the ongoing interaction. This is made possible by virtue of the intersubjective architecture of understanding, which is a characteristic feature of face-to-face interaction.

**3.2.3.3 : Conversation Three**

**Extract selected for analysis**

‘Here. Have a biscuit,’ said her father in a conciliatory manner. . Mrs Rupa Mehra shook her head.

‘Eat, fool!’ said her father with rough affection. ‘Or are you still keeping those brainless fasts that are so bad for your health?’

‘It is Ekadashi today.’ Mrs Rupa Mehra fasted on the eleventh day of each lunar fortnight in memory of her husband.

‘I don’t care if it’s ten Ekadashis,’ said her father with some heat. ‘Ever since you came under the influence of the Mehras you have become as religious as your ill-fated mother. There have been too many mismatched marriages in this family.’

(A Suitable Boy, 35-36)

**Idealised conversational passage:**

| T-1  | Dr Seth    | Here. Have a biscuit. |
| T-2  | Mrs Mehra  | (Shakes her head by way of refusal.) |
| T-3  | Dr Seth    | (With rough affection) Eat, fool! Or are you still keeping those brainless fasts that are so bad for your health? |
| T-4  | Mrs Mehra  | It is Ekadashi today. |
| T-5  | Dr Seth    | (With some heat) I don’t care if it’s ten Ekadashis. Ever since you came under the influence of the Mehras you have become as religious as your ill-fated mother. There have been too many mismatched marriages in this family. |

**Textual background**

As in page 35
Significance of the passage
This interaction shows Dr Seth’s rash nature and manner. It shows how, after having had a prolonged argument over the issue of his daughter’s supposed ungratefulness, Dr Seth is in a mood of reconcilement. In fact, it is only when he is satisfied with Mrs Mehra’s explanation that Dr Kishen Chand Seth starts speaking to Mrs Rupa Mehra in a reconciliatory manner.

Implicature Analysis
At T-1 position Dr. Seth offers his daughter a biscuit. The change of tone in Dr Seth’s offer, by way of incidental transfer of meaning (i.e. natural meaning), indicates that he is now in a mood of reconcilement. For, so far in the present conversation, he had been critical of her behaviour.
At T-2 position, Mrs. Mehra nods refusal. By nodding refusal she seems to say that she cannot accept his offer due to some or the other reason. The reason could be anything like, say, that she is not hungry, that she doesn’t want to eat, that she is fasting, or that she is angry, etc. She thereby implicates that her father should continue eating alone, and that he shouldn’t expect her to join him in the breakfast.

Dr. Seth tries to guess the possible reason for her refusal. In his opinion the reason could be that (1) she must be angry with him or that (2) she is keeping a fast. In the first part of his utterance at T-3 position – ‘Eat fool!’ then, he seems to react to (1) and implicate that it is undesirable on the part of his daughter to be so much upset by his harsh words and manner, and in the latter portion of the utterance, on the basis of his guess in (2), he implicates that it is not good on the part of Mrs Mehra to keep a fast. He believes that keeping fasts is harmful for her health. The word ‘still’ in ‘Or are you still keeping those brainless fasts that are so bad for your health?’ carries a presupposition that in the past Mrs Mehra used to keep fasts. The use of the expression ‘those brainless fasts’ indicates Dr Seth’s attitude towards fasts, viz. that keeping fasts is nonsensical.

At T-4 position Mrs Rupa Mehra gives explanation for her not accepting his offer. She points out the fact that it was Ekadashi on that day. She thus implicates that she keeps a fast on Ekadashi, and eating a biscuit is not allowed
when one is keeping a fast; therefore she cannot eat biscuits. Her utterance carries a further, higher level, implicature that she is not really upset.

A person like Dr. Seth, with shared cultural background and knowledge that devout Hindus keep fast on certain days of every week and of every lunar month (Ekadashi being one of them), and the knowledge that Mrs Mehra, being a devout Hindu, used to keep fasts in the past, was certainly in a position to easily calculate the implicated proposition as necessary for making the supposition that she was following the co-operative principle and that her response is consistent with the purpose of the ongoing interaction. It is arguably the case, therefore, that in saying ‘It is Ekadashi today’ Mrs Mehra implicates that she was keeping a fast on that day. Once the hearer arrives at this conclusion, it is easy to arrive at the further implications of the utterance. Using one’s encyclopaedic knowledge, one would automatically infer that eating a biscuit is not allowed when one is keeping a fast, and therefore Mrs Mehra cannot eat biscuits. Mrs Mehra’s utterance - ‘It is Ekadashi today’, could be taken as a relevant response consistent with Dr Seth’s enquiries only when one makes the above suppositions. Moreover, Mrs Mehra knows that her father can work out this proposition. She also knows that he knows that she knows that he can work out this proposition as the intended meaning of her utterance.

Mrs Mehra’s response at T-4 position infuriates Seth. At T-5 position he says in a sarcastic tone that he doesn’t care if it were ten Ekadashis. He gets angry with his daughter for refusing to take his advice and seems to say by way of protest that she is free to do what she likes. He thus implicates that he does not like her practice, and that, in his opinion, being religious is as good as being superstitious. This outburst of rage and irritation is then followed by an impertinent, and to some extent irrelevant, comment- ‘There have been too many mismatched marriages in this family’. This utterance has very little to do with his line of argument so far. Logically speaking, and as the author himself points out, this influence, as is clear from Dr Seth’s own words – ‘like your ill-fated mother’, in his previous utterance has come from her parents’ side than from that of her spouse or his family. This hurting comment reveals that Dr Kishen Chand
Seth doesn’t care for Mrs Mehra’s feelings. In fact, he doesn’t seem to care for other people’s feelings.

Illustrative value of the text
The present interaction illustrates how knowledge of context and cultural background plays important role in communication and how it is used by interactants for planning and interpretation of their utterances. It presents two different attitudes to keeping fasts cherished by persons with shared cultural background (incidentally, by two members of the same family). This accounts for the infinite variety of possible responses to one single thing, happening or event within the in-group members of one cultural entity.

3.2.4 : Cluster Four

3.2.4.1 : Conversation One

Extract selected for analysis
The four members of the syllabus committee of the English Department were seated this afternoon around an oval table in the staff room. It was an unusually warm day. The single window was open (to the view of a dusty laburnum tree), but there was no breeze; everyone looked uncomfortable, but Professor Mishra was sweating in profuse drops that gathered on his forehead, wet his thin eyebrows, and trickled down the sides of his large nose. His lips were sweetly pursed and he was saying in his genial, high-pitched voice, ‘Dr Kapoor, your point is well taken, but I think that we will need a little convincing.’

The point was the inclusion of James Joyce on the syllabus for the paper on Modern British Literature. Dr Pran Kapoor had been pressing this on the syllabus committee for two terms - ever since he had been appointed a member - and at last the committee had decided to agree whether to consider it...

‘Professor Mishra,’ said Pran, ‘I am pleased that the committee has decided to consider this proposal, and I am delighted that it has been placed second on the agenda today and has at last come up for discussion. My main argument is quite simple. You have read my note on the subject’ - he nodded around the table to Dr Gupta and Dr Narayanan - ‘and you will, I am sure, appreciate that there is nothing radical in my suggestion’ He looked down at the pale blue type of the cyclostyled sheets before him.

‘As you can see, we have twenty-one writers whose works we consider it essential for our B.A. students to read in order for them to obtain a proper understanding of Modern British Literature. But there is no Joyce. And, I might add, no Lawrence. These two writers’

‘Wouldn’t it be better,’ interrupted Professor Mishra, wiping an eyelash away from the corner of his eye, ‘wouldn’t it be better if we were to concentrate on Joyce for the moment? We will take up Lawrence at our session next month - before we adjourn for the summer vacation.’

‘The two matters are interlinked, surely,’ said Pran, looking around the table for support. Dr Narayanan was about to say something when Professor Mishra pointed out:
‘But not on this agenda, Dr Kapoor, not on this agenda.’ He smiled at Pran sweetly, and his eyes twinkled. He then placed his huge white hands, palms down, on the table and said, ‘But what were you saying when I so rudely interrupted?’

(A Suitable Boy, 49-51)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Prof Mishra : Dr Kapoor, your point is well taken, but I think that we will need a little convincing.

T-2 Dr Kapoor : Professor Mishra, I am pleased that the committee has decided to consider this proposal, and I am delighted that it has been placed second on the agenda today and has at last come up for discussion. My main argument is quite simple. You have read my note on the subject (nodding around the table to Dr Gupta and Dr Narayanan) and you will, I am sure, appreciate that there is nothing radical in my suggestion. As you can see, we have twenty-one writers whose works we consider it essential for our B.A. students to read in order for them to obtain a proper understanding of Modern British Literature. But there is no Joyce. And, I might add, no Lawrence. These two writers...

T-3 Prof Mishra : (Interrupting) Wouldn’t it be better... wouldn’t it be better if we were to concentrate on Joyce for the moment? We will take up Lawrence at our session next month -before we adjourn for the summer vacation.

T-4 Dr Kapoor : (Looking around the table for support) The two matters are interlinked, surely.

T-5 Prof Mishra : But not on this agenda, Dr Kapoor, not on this agenda... But what were you saying when I so rudely interrupted?

Textual Background

The four-members of the syllabus committee of the English department were sitting around an oval table in the Staff-room in the afternoon. It was an unusually hot day. Everyone looked uncomfortable. They were considering texts for inclusion in the syllabus. The reporting of the conversational interaction begins at the point when the discussion on the first item is over and that on the second item begins. Dr Pran Kapoor proposed that Joyce be included on the syllabus for the paper on Modern British Literature. Pran had been pursuing this matter for two terms ever since he had been appointed a member of the syllabus committee. The committee had at last decided to agree on whether to consider it, and the issue was taken up as item two on the agenda. Pran expresses his satisfaction at the proposal being given topmost priority on the agenda, and on
its having actually come up for discussion. He refers to the note he has given in support of the proposal and starts arguing in favour of the proposal. Professor Mishra, it seems, was not happy with Pran’s proposal. In fact, he expresses his disagreement with Pran in several ways. For, as it is they were hard-pressed with the existing 21 authors on the syllabus for the paper. Professor Mishra therefore argued that if James Joyce comes in, then some author from the list must go out. Professor Mishra, it seems, would consent to the proposal provided the crucial issue regarding identification of proper author for expulsion was settled satisfactorily.

**Significance of the passage**

This section shows professor Mishra’s political and manipulative nature, his love of power as well as his control over departmental activities. Here we see him asserting his authority by way of subtle hints. This exhibits his full control over the proceedings of the syllabus committee of the English department. Pran, a junior member of the department, dares Professor Mishra by pursuing a proposal against his wishes. Professor Mishra, the head of the English department of Brahmput University, is a powerful person. He is a dominating personality - a formidable opponent. In fact, the odd number of authors on the list of syllabus shows that there is nothing sacrosanct about the number of writers prescribed. Therefore, Pran’s proposal that Joyce be added as 22nd author on the list is not entirely out of order. However, Professor Mishra makes a prestige issue out of it and consequently things take a bitter turn.

**Implicature Analysis**

At T-1 position Professor Mishra seems to say that the syllabus committee appreciates Dr Pran Kapoor’s proposal for inclusion of James Joyce on the syllabus for Modern British Literature paper. However, before they finally agreed to whether or not to include Joyce on their Syllabus the committee required some convincing. He thereby implicates that Dr Pran Kapoor, since he had suggested the proposed changes in syllabus, should explain the rationale behind the proposed changes. In other words he requests Dr Pran Kapoor to explain what the proposal entails and in what ways the change was necessary, or
what difference the inclusion or exclusion of James Joyce would make for the concerned course. Professor Mishra thus implicates that Pran should convince the committee why inclusion of Joyce was essential.

The reasoning could be as follows - The syllabus committee was meeting to discuss the possibility of updating their syllabi. There were several proposals for inclusion, deletion or modification in the present syllabi. Dr Pran Kapoor, we are told, had been pursuing this point of inclusion of James Joyce for last two years. Now it has come up for discussion as the second item on the agenda. Dr Pran Kapoor has already put up a note explaining the rationale behind his proposal. The committee, however, doesn’t seem to be entirely convinced of its practicability or feasibility of the proposal. Professor Mishra’s utterance, therefore, seems to be an indirect request to Dr Pran Kapoor for further explanation.

Pran, responding to the implicated proposition, then starts explaining the rationale behind his suggestion. He begins by thanking and expressing his gratefulness to the committee for actually taking up his proposal for discussion. He points out the fact that they have twenty-one writers whose works they consider it essential for their B.A. students to read in order for them to obtain a proper understanding of Modern British Literature. However, he notes with regret (it seems) that there is no Joyce … and no Lawrence. However, he cannot be simply pointing out the facts. In the given context, by making the said observation, he must be suggesting that the paper on Modern British Literature must have some component from Joyce, and also from Lawrence. He also says that there was nothing radical in his suggestion.

Professor Mishra almost immediately interrupts him and suggests that it would be better if they concentrated on Joyce, and that they could probably take up the point of inclusion of Lawrence in their next meeting that is scheduled in the next month. He thus implicates that Dr Pran Kapoor should restrict himself only to the consideration of items on the agenda, and that he should avoid digressions – that he should limit his argument only to the inclusion of Joyce. He asserts his authority and superior status as chairperson of the Committee, exercising his
prerogative of controlling and giving direction to the course of the proceedings of the meeting. He perhaps implicates that the junior members of the department should respect his judgement and be guided by his choice, and that they should not be too opinionated or obstinate; that he had the power to accept or to turn down the proposal if he was not convinced of its worth.

At T-4 position Dr Pran Kapoor tries to protest but at T-5 position Professor Mishra overrules his protest and forces him to forgo any claims for Lawrence. His sharply ironic utterance – ‘... But what were you saying when I so rudely interrupted?’ sounds courteous and obviously polite – but it is ultimately very cutting. It implicates Professor Mishra’s wish that Dr Pran Kapoor should continue with his argument.

Illustrative value of the text

The present conversation illustrates how Professor Mishra, with his outwardly polite and agreeable utterances, very subtly and shrewdly implicates his inclinations by apparently showing his consideration for Pran’s proposal.

2.4.2: Conversation Two

Extract selected for analysis

‘I think we have, as it were, expended enough time on item two,’ said Professor Mishra. ‘Shall we go on to chiasmus and anacoluthia?’ He was referring to a proposal, put forward by himself, that they eliminate too detailed a study of traditional figures of speech for the paper in Literary Theory and Criticism. ‘And then we have the question of symmetrical auxiliaries proposed by the junior member of the committee. Though this will, of course, depend upon other departments agreeing to our proposals. And finally, since the shades of night are falling,’ continued Professor Mishra, ‘I think we should, without prejudice to items five, six, and seven, wind up the meeting. We can take up those items next month.’

But Pran was unwilling to be dissuaded from pressing on with the unresolved question of Joyce. ‘I think we have now collected ourselves,’ he said, ‘and can approach the issue under discussion quite calmly. If I were willing to accept that Ulysses might be a bit, well, difficult for B.A. students, would the committee agree to include Dubliners on the syllabus as a first step? Dr Gupta, what do you think?’

Dr Gupta looked up at the slowly circulating fan. His ability to get speakers on Old and Middle English invited to the departmental seminar depended upon Professor Mishra’s goodwill: outside speakers entailed incidental expenses, and funds had to be approved by the head of the department. Dr Gupta knew as well as anyone what ‘as a first step’ implied. He looked up at Pran and said, ‘I would De willing.’

But he was swiftly interrupted in his sentence, whatever that might have been. ‘We are forgetting,’ Professor Mishra cut in, ‘something that even I, I must admit, did not bear in mind earlier in this discussion. I mean that, by tradition, the Modern British
Literature paper does not include writers who were living at the time of the Second World War.' This was news to Pran, who must have looked astonished, because Professor Mishra felt compelled to explain: 'This is not altogether a matter for surprise. We need the distance of time objectively to appraise the stature of modern writers, to include them in our canon, as it were. Do remind me, Dr Kapoor... when did Joyce die?'

'1941,' said Pran sharply. It was clear that the great white whale had known this all along.

'Well, there you are,' said Professor Mishra helplessly. His finger moved down the agenda.

'Eliot, of course, is still alive.' said Pran quietly, looking at the list of prescribed authors.

The head of the department looked as if he had been slapped across the face. He opened his mouth slightly, then pursed his lips together. The jolly twinkle appeared again in his eyes. 'But Eliot, Eliot, surely -we have objective criteria enough in his case -why, even Dr Leavis -'

Professor Mishra clearly responded to a different drummer from the Americans, reflected Pran. Aloud he said, 'Dr Leavis-, as we know, greatly approves of Lawrence too. ...'

'We have agreed to discuss Lawrence next time,' Professor Mishra expostulated.

Pran gazed out of the window. It was getting dark and the leaves of the laburnum now looked cool, not dusty. He went on, not looking at Professor Mishra: '... and, besides, Joyce has a better claim as a British writer in Modern British Literature than Eliot. So if we -'

'That, my young friend, if I may say so,' cut in Professor Mishra, 'could be considered a species of quibbling.' He was recovering quickly from his shock. In a minute he would be quoting Prufrock.

(A Suitable Boy, 54)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Prof. Mishra : I think we have, as it were, expended enough time on item two. (Referring to a proposal, put forward by himself, that they eliminate too detailed a study of traditional figures of speech for the paper in Literary Theory and Criticism) ... Shall we go on to chiasmus and anacoluthia? ... And then we have the question of symmetrical auxiliaries proposed by the junior member of the committee. Though this will, of course, depend upon other departments agreeing to our proposals. And finally, since the shades of night are falling, I think we should, without prejudice to items five, six, and seven, wind up the meeting. We can take up those items next month.

T-2 Dr Kapoor : I think we have now collected ourselves, and can approach the issue under discussion quite calmly. If I were willing to accept that Ulysses might be a bit, well, difficult for B.A. students, would the committee agree to
include Dubliners on the syllabus as a first step? Dr Gupta, what do you think?

T-3 Dr Gupta : (Looking up at Pran) I would be willing...
T-4 Prof. Mishra : (Interrupting) We are forgetting something that even I, I must admit, did not bear in mind earlier in this discussion. I mean that, by tradition, the Modern British Literature paper does not include writers who were living at the time of the Second World War. (Pran looked astonished.) This is not altogether a matter for surprise. We need the distance of time objectively to appraise the stature of modern writers, to include them in our canon, as it were. Do remind me, Dr Kapoor. ... when did Joyce die?

T-5 Dr Kapoor : (Sharply) 1941.
T-6 Prof. Mishra : (Helplessly. His finger moving down the agenda) Well, there you are.
T-7 Dr Kapoor : (Quietly, looking at the list of prescribed authors) Eliot, of course, is still alive.
T-8 Prof. Mishra : (As if slapped in the face) But Eliot, Eliot, surely -we have objective criteria enough in his case -why, even Dr Leavis -
T-9 Dr Kapoor : Dr Leavis, as we know, greatly approves of Lawrence too. ...
T-10 Prof. Mishra : We have agreed to discuss Lawrence next time.
T-11 Dr Kapoor : ... and, besides, Joyce has a better claim as a British writer in Modern British Literature than Eliot. So if we -
T-12 Prof. Mishra : That, my young friend, if I may say so ... could be considered a species of quibbling.

Textual Background

As above

Significance of the passage

As above

This section shows Professor Mishra’s attempt to dominate his colleagues by suppressing opposition. It also shows Pran’s stubborn and headstrong nature. Pran does not hesitate to expose Professor Mishra’s hypocrisy. Here the reader comes across the hollowness of the high talk of the academicians which provides a bitterly oblique comment on their so-called idealism and principled choices. Failing to answer Dr Pran Kapoor’s cross-questions, Professor Mishra here resorts to vindictive strategies of suppressive technique.
Implicature Analysis

At T-1 position, Professor Mishra says that in his opinion they have already spent a lot of time on item two. Then as a part of formality he seeks the opinion of his colleagues on whether they should proceed to discuss the next item on the agenda. He then reads the whole long list of items yet to be considered. He also says that soon it will be evening and they will have to keep some issues pending and wind up the meeting. He thus implicates that enough is enough and that it is high time they should proceed to the next item. He expects his colleagues to agree with his suggestion. By reading the entire list he implicates that there are many items yet to be discussed. By noting that evening shades are falling, he implicates that they must not get stuck up with any one item, that they must hurry up and finish as many issues on the agenda as possible.

At T-2 position Pran reminds the members that they had agreed upon to discuss the issues involved in item two after tea break. He thereby implicates that instead of rushing to the next item, they must take some decision concerning item two. He modifies his proposal and suggests that if ‘Ulysses’ is so objectionable, ‘Dubliners’ be prescribed as the alternative text. He asks Dr. Gupta for his opinion. Dr. Gupta agrees. But then at T-4 position Professor Mishra comes up with yet another criterion, namely that by tradition, the Modern British Literature paper does not include writers who were living at the time of the second world war. Obviously, this new criterion was introduced in order to put a full stop to the discussion on item-2 on technical ground. Seeing a look of surprise on Pran’s face, Professor Mishra explains that there was nothing surprising about this criterion, because after all one requires objective criteria to evaluate the stature of the modern writers, and to include them in their canon. Then he asks Pran to remind him of the year of Joyce’s death. At Pran’s reply that the Joyce died in 1941, Professor Mishra points to the next item on the agenda. He seems to say that Joyce could not be included on the syllabus for Modern British Literature paper because he does not fit into their criteria, and that he was helpless.
When Professor Mishra suggests that they should move to the next item because James Joyce does not fit into their criterion as he was living at the time of the second world war, Pran has a quick look at the list of the prescribed authors and brings it to their notice that Eliot was still alive and yet he was on the list of the prescribed authors. He thereby seems to implicate that the criterion suggested by Professor Mishra is not a hard and fast rule, and that it is not uniformly followed either meticulously or consistently. He could also be taken to implicate that this criterion could be dispensed with at will. Moreover, he observes that Joyce had a better claim as a British writer in Modern British Literature paper than Eliot. When Pran points out the evidence contrary to the criterion suggested by Professor Mishra, Mishra feels utterly humiliated. However, he tries to justify the inclusion of T.S. Eliot on a different ground. He refers to another so-called ‘objective’ criteria. ‘But Eliot, Eliot, surely - we have objective criteria enough in his case,’ he says. He seems to cite Dr Leavis’ estimate of Eliot in support of their having Eliot, a living author, on their syllabus which is quite against the norms of inclusion. Dr Pran Kapoor refutes this point by pointing out that Dr Leavis, it is well known, greatly approved of Lawrence as well. He thus implicates that if Dr Leavis’ estimate could be cited as a justification for the inclusion of an author on the syllabus, then by the same criterion Lawrence also deserves to be put on the syllabus. However, Professor Mishra reminds Dr Pran Kapoor once again that they had agreed to discuss Lawrence in the next meeting. He retorts that this kind of argument could be considered a species of quibbling.

**Illustrative value of the text**

The present conversational interaction illustrates how speakers generally resort to strategic use of implicatures for doing face work. Implicatures are effectively used for performing FTAs, for example. Speakers generally use implicatures on formal occasions for the purpose of conveying their opposition to the proposals or suggestions made by others. especially when the norms of social behaviour including level of formality required on the occasion, role and status relationship, etc demand politeness. Implicatures thus serve a very significant purpose in communication.
3.2.5 : Cluster Five

3.2.5.1 : Conversation One

Extract selected for analysis

‘I thought you lived from our one meeting to the next.’
Kabir put an arm around her.
‘I do. But we can’t decide everything. I don’t want to disillusion you, but-
‘You are, you are disillusioning me. How long will we have to wait?’
‘Two years, I think. First I have to finish my degree. After that I’m going to apply to
get into Cambridge -or maybe take the exam for the Indian Foreign Service -’
‘Ah -’ It was a low cry of almost physical pain.
He stopped, realizing how selfish he must have sounded.
‘I’ll be married off in two years,’ she said, covering her face in her hands. ‘You’re not a
girl. You don’t understand. My mother might not even let me come back to Brahmpur -
Two lines from one of their meetings came to her mind:
Desert not friendship. Renegade with me
From raptured realm of Mr Nowrojee.
She got up. She made no attempt to hide her tears. ‘I’m going,’ she said”.

(A Suitable Boy, 185)

Idealised conversational passage

T –1 Lata : I thought you lived from our one meeting to the next.
T –2 Kabir : (Putting an arm around her) I do. But we can’t decide
everything. I don’t want to disillusion you, but-
T –3 Lata : You are, you are disillusioning me. How long will we
have to wait?
T –4 Kabir : Two years, I think. First I have to finish my degree.
After that I’m going to apply to get into Cambridge -or maybe
take the exam for the Indian Foreign Service -
T –5 Lata : (Gives out a low cry of almost physical pain) Ah
(Covering her face in her hands.) I’ll be married off in two years.
You’re not a girl. You don’t understand. My mother might not
even let me come back to Brahmpur - (Getting up. In tears) I’m
going.

Textual Background

Lata had intuitively known all along that her mother would never agree to
marrying her daughter off to a Muslim boy. But she was quite sure that Kabir
would stand by her in case of emergency. She was therefore determined to carry
on her affair with Kabir. However, when Mrs Mehra heard about the affair, she
threw the whole house in commotion. She decided then and there to tale Lata
back to Calcutta that very evening. Lata, therefore, went to meet Kabir early in
the morning fully prepared even to the eventuality of possible elopement with
him if he agreed to it. However, to her great distress Kabir disagreed to her proposal of running away.

**Significance of the passage**

This is the last time when Lata and Kabir meet to negotiate the fate of their love. Lata had taken a very bold step in suggesting elopement with Kabir. In fact, she had not considered the possibility that perhaps he might disagree with the suggestion. Here Lata realises the hopelessness of her situation. Kabir’s refusal to support her radical decision brings home to her the impossibility of any kind of settlement with him in future. Forlorn, she returns home resigned to fate and to the will and judgement of her family members.

**Implicature Analysis**

When Lata’s suggestion to run away met with a cold and calculating response from Kabir, she felt frustrated. At T-1 position, therefore, she exclaims in a broken-hearted manner that she thought that he lived from their first meeting to the next. She thereby implicates that she had not expected this kind of response from him, and that she had judged him wrongly. At T-2 position, he reassures her saying that he did live from their first meeting to the next and that he did really love her very much, but then he tries to make her see that this was no small matter, and that however passionately they may feel for each other, it was not in their power to decide everything. Kabir thus implicates that he was not failing her; that he was not falling apart as she thought he was. He thus seems to express his intense desire to please Lata. But he also expresses his awareness of the limits which he cannot possibly transgress. His reassurance, followed by the constraints which prohibit the desired action, however, fails to convince her. For when he says he didn’t want to disillusion her, she interrupts and tells him pointedly that he was in fact disillusioning her. She takes his soberness for shrewdness, and is equally straightforward in her response. When, at T-3 position she asks him how long they will have to wait, Kabir, at T-4 position, states the period to be two years and starts explaining his plans. “First I have to finish my degree. After that I’m going to apply to get into Cambridge - or maybe take the exam for the Indian Foreign Service -”, he says. She responds with an
almost involuntarily low moan – ‘Ah -’ of almost physical pain. It is clear to her that he cares more for his future career than for her feelings now and for her present distress. Her almost involuntary painful cry – ‘Ah -’ at T -5 position seems to be the sign of her final effort to give him up. She realises how hopeless the whole affair is. She tells him that he doesn’t understand the situation because he is not a girl; that she would be married off in two years, and that perhaps they might never meet again. With this she gets up and, profusely in tears, starts walking away. He tries to stop her, but she brushes away all his efforts. Her utterance ‘I’m going’ implicates that she has given up all hope of reconciliation with him. She is certainly not describing her action of leaving the place or leaving him at the moment. It is a parting after they have failed to take a joint decision. And therefore it means that she is leaving him forever. She is implicating perhaps that now that they have let the opportunity to slip out of their hands, she would be helpless and that he would be losing her permanently.

Illustrative value of the text

The utterance at T-1 position here illustrates how the past tense construction stating Lata’s belief is used to implicate, by way of the scalar generalised implicature due to her choice of the expression ‘thought’ rather than ‘knew’, that she no longer thinks so now, and perhaps that now she knows that that no longer was, nor is, the case.

Secondly, it illustrates how the interjective particle –‘Ah!’ at T-5 position expresses by way of what Grice called as ‘meaning-‘ her anguish at the newly dawned state of realisation of the hopelessness of her situation. The subsequent part of the utterance shows the role of the socio-cultural norms in organising information in utterances. Given the socio-cultural discrimination between sexes in the Indian society, Lata’s situation is different than that of Kabir. She thus seems to implicate that Kabir understand how helpless she would be after this opportunity slips from their hands; that the family and social constraints won’t permit her to wait so long, especially when this unfortunate affair leaks out.
3.2.5.2 : Conversation Two

Extract selected for analysis

‘What is it like to write a novel?’ asked Lata after a pause. ‘Don’t you have to forget the “I” or the “one” -?’
‘I don’t know exactly.’ said Amit. ‘This is my first novel, and I’m in the process of finding out. At the moment it feels like a banyan tree.’
‘I see,’ said Lata, though she didn’t.
‘What I mean is,’ continued Amit, ‘it sprouts, and grows, and spreads, and drops down branches that become trunks or intertwine with other branches. Sometimes branches die. Sometimes the main trunk dies, and the structure is held up by the supporting trunks. When you go to the Botanical Garden you’ll see what I mean. It has its own life - but so do the snakes and birds and bees and lizards and termites that live in it and on it and off it. But then it’s also like the Ganges in its upper, middle and lower courses - including its delta - of course.’
‘Of course,’ said Lata.
‘I have the feeling,’ said Amit, ‘that you’re laughing at me.’

(A Suitable Boy, 483)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Lata : (After a pause) What is it like to write a novel? Don’t you have to forget the “I” or the “one” -?
T-2 Amit : I don’t know exactly. This is my first novel, and I’m in the process of finding out. At the moment it feels like a banyan tree.
T-3 Lata : (Without having understood) I see.
T-4 Amit : What I mean is, it sprouts, and grows, and spreads, and drops down branches that become trunks or intertwine with other branches. Sometimes branches die. Sometimes the main trunk dies, and the structure is held up by the supporting trunks. When you go to the Botanical Garden you’ll see what I mean. It has its own life - but so do the snakes and birds and bees and lizards and termites that live in it and on it and off it. But then it’s also like the Ganges in its upper, middle and lower courses - including its delta - of course.
T-5 Lata : Of course.
T-6 Amit : I have the feeling that you’re laughing at me.

Textual Background

After her return from Brahmpur, Lata spent some time with the Chatterjis. She found Amit’s company tolerable. Amit also seemed to care for her. He appreciated her, introduced her to other people and shared views with her frankly on several issues of mutual interest. At least this helped Lata to get out of her despondency and distress over the Kabir Durrani affair. This made her realise that that was not after all the end of everything. Lata was a student of English literature, and Amit was an established poet. Recently he was busy
writing a novel. They felt comfortable in each other's company. They had gone to the presidency College Street and were browsing through the bookstalls. Lata was overwhelmed to see the volume and variety of books concentrated there.

**Significance of the passage**
The present interaction seems rather autobiographical in nature. Here Seth seems to talk about his own opinions and experiences as a novelist using Amit as his mouthpiece. Lata provides the occasion as if she were interviewing Amit. Both of them speak freely and are perfectly at ease. It also shows Amit's growing attraction for Lata, and thereby opens up the possibility of his being considered a probable suitable boy for Lata. In fact, later in the novel, Amit does propose for her hand in marriage.

**Implicature Analysis**
Amit had pointed out to Lata that she was using the general 'one' (the indefinite pronoun) where she should have been using the first person pronoun 'I'. Amit pointed out the idiocy of saying the general 'one' when the speaker actually meant to say the particular 'I'. After a little quibbling over the use of 'one' and 'I', and philosophising about it, Lata asked Amit, at T-1 position, in a friendly way about what it was like to write a novel, and whether the literary artist - a novelist in particular, had to forget the 'I' or the 'one'. Amit tells her that he did not know whether that was the case. He further explains that it was his first novel, and that he was in the process of finding it out. However, he elaborately answers her question - 'how it feels like to be a writer?' At T-2 position he says that 'it feels like a banyan tree'. Amit describes the feel of the process of writing a novel metaphorically. The metaphorical value of the expression is lost upon Lata, but nonetheless, in saying 'I see' in response to his utterance, she makes as if to say that she understood what he meant by the expression. Sensing the need to explain, and out of the need to express himself, perhaps, he elaborates upon what he meant. He then explains at T-4 position what he exactly meant by the figurative expression. Lata seems to listen to him in a detached manner, and that makes him wonder whether she was laughing at him.
Illustrative value of the text
The present interaction illustrates how implicatures arise by way of figures of speech. Amit seems to implicate by way of the figurative expression something about his own experiences of writing a novel. In fact, the apparent falsehood of Amit’s statements - ‘It feels like a banyan tree’ and that ‘it’s also like the Ganges in its upper, middle and lower courses - including its delta - of course’ trigger the search for the probable implicatures. It leads to the possibility of a comparable relationship between ‘the growing of the banyan tree’, the progressive development of the Ganges’ and ‘the progress in the creative act of writing a novel’. Amit seems to suggest that it comes naturally to the writer, just as the banyan tree sprouts and spreads naturally, and that like a massive tree it has its good and bad points. Just as the tree shelters songbirds as well as snakes, a work of art may shelter good or bad thoughts, moral or amoral, beautiful or ugly and hideous images, metaphors, etc. He even goes on to compare it further to the Ganges - growing and spreading in different phases of its course, with so many tributaries joining in and strengthening its force and massive power, both constructive and destructive. He thus seems to suggest that it is difficult to define in concrete terms what the writer does and how the work develops or evolves. It explains how speakers tend to take recourse to figurative language when they fail to capture the complexity of their experiences in concrete terms. Figurative language, by virtue of the fact that it is free from the bondage of the static restricted sense, allows stretching the scope of the force of the utterance to the suggested meanings. It enriches the communicative value of the utterance by making allowance for suggestivity and imaginative processing of information.

3.2.5.3 : Conversation Three

Extract selected for analysis

‘What were you thinking?’ Amit asked Lata after dinner, lingering over his coffee. The other guests were being seen to the door by Pran and Savita, and Mrs Rupa Mehra had gone into her room for a few minutes.

‘That I really liked your reading,’ said Lata. ‘It was very affecting. And I enjoyed the question-and-answer session afterwards. Especially the statistical appendix - and the tearing of the tomes. You should advise Savita to deal as brutally with her law-books.’

‘I didn’t know you knew young Durani said Amit

‘I didn’t know he’d invited you.’
There was a few seconds' pause. Then Amit said: I meant, what were you thinking just now.'

When? 'said Lata'.

'When you were looking at Pran and Savita Over the pudding.'

'Oh.'

'Well, what?'

'I can't remember.' said Lata with a smile.

Amit laughed.

'Why are you laughing?' asked Lata.

'I like making you feel uncomfortable; I suppose.'

(A Suitable Boy, 1261-1262)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Amit : What were you thinking?
T-2 Lata : That I really liked your reading. It was very affecting.
    And I enjoyed the question-and-answer session afterwards.
    Especially the statistical appendix - and the tearing of the tomes.
    You should advise Savita to deal as brutally with her law-books.
T-3 Amit : I didn't know you knew young Durani.
T-4 Lata : I didn't know he'd invited you.
T-5 Amit : (A few seconds' pause) I meant, what were you thinking just now.
T-6 Lata : When?
T-7 Amit : When you were looking at Pran and Savita Over the pudding.
T-8 Lata : Oh.
T-9 Amit : Well, what?
T-10 Lata : (With a smile) I can't remember.
T-11 Amit : (Laughs)
T-12 Lata : Why are you laughing?
T-11 Amit : I like making you feel uncomfortable; I suppose.

Textual Background

The present conversation between Amit and Lata took place when they were left alone by themselves for just a few minutes after the dinner hosted by Pran Kapoor at his house in welcome to Amit Chatterji, the distinguished poet-Guest. Amit had been invited to Brahmpur by Kabir for poetry reading session. The Session was attended by the grand and illustrious personalities like Dr Pran Kapoor, Professor Mishra, Mr Nowroji, and Mr Mukhanaji. Kabir, Lata, and a large number of students, researchers and people interested in literature were also present on the occasion. The Session had been exciting and vibrant, and was followed by all kinds of scholarly and naive questions. Amit was happy and so
were Pran and Lata and Kabir and the audience. Amit was invited for dinner at Pran’s.
Lata was acquainted with Amit by virtue of her family relation to the Chatterjis. Amit was Arun’s brother-in-law. They seemed to like each other. Amit had even presented his anthology of his poems to her, expressing his love for her in the poem addressed to her in dedication. He had given out his signal to her and there was no protest from the other end. Now he took an opportunity to propose Lata. He hoped to surprise her into acceptance by making a sudden proposal. But, to his own surprise, far from acceptance she laughed it away by casually saying that she would take him seriously only in black-and-white. He takes the clue and they relapse into riming in the usual fashion of the Chatterjee family and the issue remains undecided.

**Significance of the passage**
This conversation between Lata and Amit presents a contrast with another conversation later in the novel between Lata and Haresh. It shows the hiatus in the conversation caused by certain inadvertent introduction of unwanted and unpleasant subjects and the interactants’ ability to avert or bypass these issues in the interest of the smooth continuation and goal oriented direction of the conversational activity. It highlights Amit’s ability to establish rapport with Lata and his potential to cope with the emerging unpleasant situations in a much better manner than that of Haresh. It proves Amit’s superiority in this respect over Haresh. Unlike Haresh, Amit is successful in avoiding awkwardness arising out of unpalatable issues, which might cause unpleasantness and threaten breakdown of amiable conversational activity.

**Implicature Analysis**
Lata was quiet over the dinner while the others talked. After the dinner Amit asks Lata at T-1 position what she was thinking. He thus makes the initiating move and opens up a dialogue with Lata. Unaware of his intentions, and thinking that he was seeking her opinion on his performance during the poetry reading session, or fishing for compliments, perhaps, at T-2 position Lata replies by offering her comment on the session. ‘That I really liked your reading. It was
very affecting. And I enjoyed the question-and-answer session afterwards. Especially the statistical appendix - and the tearing of the tomes. You should advise Savita to deal as brutally with her law-books’, she says. She thus compliments him by saying that the session was very interesting and that she was really impressed. Amit had not intended his question at T-1 position as Lata had interpreted it. But then instead of correcting her understanding at this level, he prefers to make an observation – ‘I didn’t know you knew young Durani’. Lata feels offended by his observation. She takes it as an indictment, and answers back with a retort that she didn’t know that Kabir had invited him there. She thus implicates that it was neither expected, nor was it necessary that they know everything about each other. Sensing that his remark had offended her, Amit quickly passes over this unfortunate insertion sequence and, at T-5 position, reverts to his earlier question at T-1 position concerning what she was thinking during the dinner when she was looking at Pran and Savita over the pudding. At T-8 position Lata merely acknowledges it with an interjection – ‘Oh’. She thus tries to withhold the information by giving a vague response. But then Amit persists on asking why she was so silent and what she was brooding over. At T-10 position Lata tells him that she couldn’t remember it. He knows that she is being deliberately vague; that she was trying to hide some uncomfortable thoughts that she had apparently been brooding over. And she knows that he knows it. At T-9 position Amit could therefore be said to implicate his desire to know what was bothering her; and at T-10 position, Lata could be said to implicate that she would rather keep her thoughts to herself. She implicates that she would rather not answer the question. Amit laughs. He seems to implicate that he had intrigued her into confessing that his question had made her feel uncomfortable. Lata asks him what he was laughing at. But instead of revealing the thought that occurred to him, he tells her that he liked to make her feel uncomfortable just to see the change of her mood. He compliments her by saying that it was a great pleasure to be in her company. Amit thus makes light the question and answer from T-1 to T-10 position. But then at T-12 Lata asks
him why he was laughing and T-13 he answers vaguely and evades giving his true opinion.

**Illustrative value of the text**

This conversation illustrates how the ability to tackle delicate issues depends on the speakers’ ability to use language with subtlety and expertise. Much has to be left unstated and yet is understood perfectly well by the interactants. The real conversational activity here seems to take place at the level of implicatures that comprise the hidden core under the cuticle of what is said by virtue of the expressions used.

### 3.2.5.4 : Conversation Four

**Extract selected for analysis**

'Do stop talking like that? Said Lata. 'Ma will come in any minute'.

'You're quite right. In that case: will you marry me?'

Lata dropped her cup. It fell on the floor and broke. She looked at the broken pieces - luckily, it had been empty - and then at Amit.

'Quick' said Amit. 'Before they come running to see what’s happened. Say yes.'

Lata had knelt down; she was gathering the bits of the cup together and placing them on the delicately patterned blue-and-gold saucer.

Amit joined her on the floor. Her face was only a few inches away from his, but her mind appeared to be somewhere else. He wanted to kiss her but he sensed that there was no question of it. One by one she picked up the shards of china.

'Was it a family heirloom?’ asked Amit.

'What? I am sorry' said Lata, snapped out of bet trance by the words.

'Well, I suppose I'll have to wait. I was hoping that by springing it on you like that I'd surprise you into agreeing.’

'I wish '-' said Lata, putting the last piece of the shattered cup onto the saucer.

'What?’ asked Amit.

'I wish I would wake up one day and find I’d been married to someone for six years. Or that I had a wild affair with someone and never got married at all. Like Malati.’

'Don't say that,’ said Amit. 'Ma might come in any minute. Anyway, I wouldn't advise an affair with Malati,' he added.

'Do stop being idiotic. Amit,’ said Lata. 'You're so brilliant, do you have to be so stupid as well? I should only take you seriously in black and white.’

'And in sickness and health.’

Lata laughed: 'For better and for worse,' she added. 'Far worse. I suppose.' Amit’s eyes lit up. 'You mean yes?’

'No, I don't.' said Lata. 'I don't mean anything. And nor, I assume, do you. But why are we kneeling here facing each other like Japanese dolls? Get up. get up. Here comes Ma, just as you said.’

(A Suitable Boy, 1262-1263)
Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Lata : Do stop talking like that? Ma will come in any minute.
T-2 Amit : You're quite right. In that case: will you marry me?
T-3 Lata : (The cup drops from her hand. It falls on the floor and breaks. She looks at the broken pieces - luckily, it had been empty - and then at Amit.)
T-4 Amit : Quick. Before they come running to see what's happened. Say yes.
T-5 Lata : (She kneels down; gathers the bits of the cup together and places them on the delicately patterned blue-and-gold saucer.)
T-6 Amit : (Joins her on the floor. Her face was only a few inches away from his, but her mind appeared to be somewhere else. He wanted to kiss her but he sensed that there was no question of it.)
T-7 Lata : Was it a family heirloom?
T-8 Amit : (Snapped out of bet trance) What? I am sorry.
T-9 Lata : Well, I suppose I'll have to wait. I was hoping that by springing it on you like that I'd surprise you into agreeing.
T-10 Amit : (putting the last piece of the shattered cup onto the saucer) I wish -
T-11 Lata : What?
T-12 Amit : I wish I would wake up one day and find I'd been married to someone for six years. Or that I had a wild affair with someone and never got married at all. Like Malati.
T-13 Lata : Don't say that. Ma might come in any minute. Anyway, I wouldn't advise an affair with Malati.
T-14 Amit : Do stop being idiotic, Amit. You're so brilliant, do you have to be so stupid as well? I should only take you seriously in black and white.
T-15 Lata : And in sickness and health.
T-16 Amit : (Adds laughed) For better and for worse.
T-17 Lata : No, I don't. I don't mean anything. And nor, I assume, do you. But why are we kneeling here facing each other like Japanese dolls? Get up, get up. Here comes Ma, just as you said.

Textual Background

As Above

Of the three rivals – Kabir Durrani, Amit Chatterji and Haresh Khanna – Kabir was out of question. Lata had suggested elopement with him and he had failed her. Lata had forewarned him of consequences and it had no effect on him. She had been formally introduced to Haresh, and, though there was nothing very exciting about their meetings, over the time she had come to like him. He had
invited her family to lunch at Prahapore Club, and in turn, they had invited him to dinner. But the matter was undecided as yet. Meanwhile Amit, guided (or misguided rather) by the force of his emotion and by his sisters’ prodding, decided to make a marriage proposal to Lata. Meenakshi and Kakoli had induced him into believing that he had better chances of being accepted as compared to that cobbler, Haresh Khanna. And, in fact, Amit was certainly superior to Haresh in many respects - in fame, in Polish and sophistication, in education, in family background, and in terms of property. But Lata had her own reasons for preferring Haresh to Amit. She tenders some of them to Malati. Her decision might have appeared in low taste or nonsensical to many. And in the absence of the justification it certainly would have led to speculations.

**Significance of the passage**

Here Amit Chatterji makes a marriage proposal to Miss Lata Mehra. After her frustrating love affair with Kabir, Lata had felt forlorn and dejected for a long time. Her acquaintance with Amit, which gradually grew to familiarity and mutual liking, had helped her come out of her despondent mood. But then it also boosted Amit’s confidence and encouraged him to propose her. Here Lata emerges as a mature girl who knows her mind well and wouldn’t be distracted from her determination so easily by strategic moves of her suitors. She had not yet come out of her infatuation with Kabir (her first love, so to say), and she had been formally introduced to Haresh (her second suitor, identified and approved by her mother). She wouldn’t take rash decisions any more. She therefore takes a very clever stand in tactfully leaving the proposal hanging till she had carefully thought it over and tested the various possibilities and understood its implications. She neither accepts nor refuses the proposal, and she succeeds in granting Amit hope for possible acceptance of the proposal without taking on any overt commitment by forbearing any signals that would discourage him.

**Implicature Analysis**

Amit told Lata that he loved to make her feel uncomfortable just to observe the change of her mood. He also compliments her by saying that it was a great pleasure to be in her company. Lata feels embarrassed by the compliment and, at
T-1 position, asks him to stop talking like that. But then at T-2 Amit straight away proposes to her - 'will you marry me?' he asks. It comes so suddenly and was so unexpectedly that at T-3 the cup drops from her hand and breaks. Instead of answering his question, she starts picking up the broken pieces in silence and looks at them and at Amit alternately. At T-4 he urges her to give him a quick positive answer before anybody rushes in to find out what had happened. But then Lata does not speak. Amit had joined her on the floor to gather the bits of the cup together. Their faces were only a few inches away from each other, but her mind appeared to be somewhere else. He wanted to kiss her but he sensed that there was no question of it. At T-6 he tests her feelings by trying to attribute her distracted manner to the broken crockery, but Lata’s apology at T-7 convinces him that it was not just that. From her silence Amit recollects his answer - 'well, I suppose I will have to wait', he says at T-8 position. She somehow contrives an answer that leaves the issue ambiguously unresolved. ‘I will trust anything only in black and white,’ she says at T-13 position. Her tone has assumed its usual tone of familiarity. This does not discourage Amit. For though Lata playfully told him at T-17 position that she did not mean anything, hoping against hope and taking her words 'she would trust only in black and white’ literally, he does propose her in writing. (But Amit never gets his answer until the news of her engagement with Haresh reaches him.)

Illustrative value of the text
The present interaction reveals Amit’s ability to quickly get over the hiatus that occurred during the conversation. He enlivens her spirit by shock and surprise technique. But then even more important strikes Lata’s maturity in not being daunted by his strategy. She quickly readjusts herself to the situation and avoids a straight answer, thereby displaying a balanced mature thinking. They laugh away the awkwardness of the suspended proposal in playful manner. Implicitness and hinting strategy play major role in this communication.
3.2.6 : Cluster Six

3.2.6.1 : Conversation One

Extract selected for analysis

'Kedarnath Tandon! But of course I know him. He's been showing me around all sorts of places.' Haresh was very pleased. 'In fact, it's because of him in a way that Sunil has lost his shoes. So you're his sala - sorry, I mean Veena's brother. Are you the older one or the younger one?'

Sunil Patwardhan had loomed back into the conversation. 'The elder,' he said. 'The younger one - Maan - was invited too, but his evenings nowadays are otherwise occupied.'

'Well, tell me,' said Pran, turning determinedly towards Sunil, 'is there some special occasion for this party? It's not your birthday, is it?'

'No it's not. And you're not very good at changing the subject. But I'll let you wriggle out of this one because I have a question for you, Dr Kapoor. One of my best students has been suffering because of you. Why were you so harsh -you and your disciplinary committee -what do they call it? student welfare committee? - with the boys who indulged in a little high spirits over Holi?'

'A little high spirits?' exclaimed Pran. 'Those girls looked like they had been dyed in red and blue ink. It's lucky they didn't catch pneumonia. And really, there was a lot of, you know, unnecessary rubbing of colour here and there.'

(A Suitable Boy. 214-215)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Haresh : Kedarnath Tandon! But of course I know him. He's been showing me around all sorts of places. In fact, it's because of him in a way that Sunil has lost his shoes. So you're his sala - sorry, I mean Veena's brother. Are you the older one or the younger one?

T-2 Sunil Patwardhan : The elder. The younger one - Maan - was invited too, but his evenings nowadays are otherwise occupied.

T-3 Pran : Well, tell me is there some special occasion for this party? It's not your birthday, is it?

T-4 Sunil Patwardhan : No it's not. And you're not very good at changing the subject. But I'll let you wriggle out of this one because I have a question for you, Dr Kapoor. One of my best students has been suffering because of you. Why were you so harsh -you and your disciplinary committee -what do they call it? student welfare committee? - with the boys who indulged in a little high spirits over Holi?'

T-5 Pran : (Surprised) A little high spirits? ... Those girls looked like they had been dyed in red and blue ink. It's lucky they didn't catch pneumonia. And really, there was a lot of, you know, unnecessary rubbing of colour here and there.

Textual Background

Mr Haresh Khanna, a young man working with the CLFC in managerial capacity, was staying with his friend and co-Stephanian, Sunil Patwardhan, who
was a lecturer in mathematics in the Brahmpur University. Sunil Patwardhan invited his friend Dr. Pran Kapoor, a lecturer in English, to a dinner with them. While Pran and Haresh Khanna were getting introduced to each other, Sunil joined them saying - ‘Pran is the elder brother of Kedarnath’s wife Veena’. He further added that the younger brother was also invited, but he did not turn up because his evenings were nowadays otherwise occupied. He thereby insinuates at Maan’s affair with Saeeda Bai, which had by now become the talk of the town. Pran felt embarrassed and tried to avoid further discussion on the issue by asking Sunil about the occasion for the party, thereby trying to change the direction of the talk.

**Significance of the passage**

Dr. Pran Kapoor was a member of the student welfare committee. One of Sunil Patwardhan’s best students was threatened with disciplinary action by the committee. Here Sunil Patwardhan tries to use the occasion to persuade Pran to redress the action by indirectly suggesting that students are liable to make such mistakes and that the authorities, considering the humane factor, should not take extreme action against them. Somehow he seems to link Maan’s behaviour with that of the erring students. Maan’s affair with Saeeda Bai has put his family members in an awkward situation. They feel embarrassed whenever the issue crops up in private as well as public places. Here Sunil Patwardhan questions Pran about why the students welfare committee were so harsh with the boys who indulged in a little High spirits over Holi. He seems to accuse Pran of practising double standards - one set of norms for his brother and another for the hostelites. Initially they seem to threaten each other’s face but then eventually they readjust their positions and come out with mutually satisfiable result. To Pran’s satisfaction, Sunil Patwardhan does not touch upon the unpleasant subject concerning Maan, and Sunil Patwardhan is happy to know that Pran had proposed leniency in the matter of the impending disciplinary action against the accused students.
Implicature Analysis

In the initial part of the conversation Pran and Haresh exchange a few turns by way of getting introduced to each other. At T-1 Haresh expresses his happiness to know that Pran was Kedarnath’s brother-in-law, Veena’s brother. He asks Pran whether he was the elder brother or the younger one. However, at T-2 Sunil Patwardhan intervenes and informs Haresh that Pran is Veena’s elder brother. He mentions that he had invited the younger brother as well, and by way of an explanation for his absence at the party he adds - ‘... but his evenings nowadays are otherwise occupied.’

On the face of it this explanation serves as an excuse for Maan’s absence. A strict adherence to the maxim of quantity would require that (i) if the information concerning inviting Maan and his marked absence at the party were unnecessary, by virtue of sub-maxim (b) it need not have been stated at all, and (ii) if at all it was necessary, Sunil should have been more specific about the reason given as the excuse here. Since he has intentionally volunteered the information, it must have some purpose. Moreover, he leaves the information concerning the nature of Maan’s evening engagements vague. These loose ends trigger the inferencing mechanism leading to conjectures about the putative implicatures he might be thought of as communicating. The fact that none of the participants presses for or pursues the missing implicated information, it is clear that they know what Sunil meant by the mere mention or that they are not sufficiently interested in it. In the given context it is clear that Sunil, by way of implicature, was referring to Maan’s notorious affair with Saeeda Bai, and his frequent nocturnal visits to her house. If this is the case, then the absence of further queries from other members only serves to strengthen the belief that the affair is known to them, and that there was no need to discuss it at length. Haresh, being an outsider, cannot be expected to be in the know of the gossip, but then, sensing the unpleasant nature of the information from Sunil’s choice in deliberately leaving it vague, he does not press for it. As for Sunil, he must have avoided the direct mention of the affair in view of the observance of the politeness principle. For to overtly mention it would certainly amount to be
impolite to Maan, and consequently also to his elder brother Pran. In fact, the mere suggestion itself embarrasses Pran and therefore, at T-3 position, he hastens to change the subject by asking Sunil whether there was any special occasion for the party.

Sunil Patwardhan, however, seems to have deliberately picked upon the subject with the ulterior motive of reminding Pran of Maan’s behaviour for pointing out how Pran was guilty of practising double-standards - one set of norms for his brother and another for the hostelites. Dr. Pran Kapoor was a member of the student welfare committee of the University and the committee had threatened some students with expulsion from their hostels and even from the university itself for the alleged charges of what Sunil referred to at T-4 position as ‘indulging in a little High spirits over Holi’. Pran, however, refutes the implied charge of double standards by giving his version of the story (a more accurate one, because it was based on facts and observations rather than on speculations). At T-5 position he tells Sunil how rude and rough the boys had been with the girls. The girls, he says, looked like ‘dyed in red and blue ink, and there was rather too much of the unnecessary rubbing of colour here and there’. Pran thus condemns the rude and unmannerly behaviour of the students and justifies the committee’s decision, while Sunil questions what he believes to be the unnecessary harshness on the part of the committee. They argue over the issue at length.

**Illustrative value of the text**

The present conversational interaction illustrates how participants in a conversation use the conversational principles, their maxims and sub-maxims, for face-work. Normally, participants in a conversation avoid the mention or discussion of mutually unwanted or unpleasant subjects. The mention of such a topic is, in fact, treated as a face-threatening act (an FTA). Sunil Patwardhan’s insinuation at Maan’s notorious affair here can be seen as a face-threatening act, and his explicitly stated promise to let the subject pass without further comment is a face-giving act. It also shows how Pran uses circumlocution as a face saving strategy. Pran contrives to change the subject by diverting the co-interactants’
attention and changing the direction of the talk to a harmless subject - the inquiry concerning the occasion for the party. Sunil's cooperation with him, evident in their marked neglect of the unpleasant subject in the ensuing interaction, illustrates how and why interactants cooperate in saving or enhancing each other's face in mutual interest. It illustrates how the subtle working of face-work is organized and processed at the level of implicatures. Interactants choose to project or suppress information to generate implicatures that serve to perform the intended face-work.

### 3.2.6.2: Conversation Two

**Extract selected for analysis**

Arun turned to Haresh and said: 'What is it you do exactly, Mr Khanna? I understand you've been taken on by Praha's in some sort of position. A managerial position, I presume.'

'Well, not managerial,' said Haresh. 'I am in a supervisory position at the moment, though my previous job was managerial. I decided to take this job because it has more of a future.'

'Supervisory?'

'I am a foreman.'

'Ah! A foreman.'

'Praha usually starts people on the shop floor, not even in supervisory jobs.'

'Hmm.' Arun took another sip of tea.

'James Hawley offered me a managerial job -' began Haresh.

'I could never understand why the Cromarty Group hasn't moved its head office to Calcutta,' said Arun in a distant manner. 'Puzzling that they should wish to remain a provincial concern. Ah well.'

*(A Suitable Boy, 931-932)*

**Idealised conversational passage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>T-1</th>
<th>Arun</th>
<th>What is it you do exactly, Mr Khanna? I understand you've been taken on by Praha's in some sort of position. A managerial position, I presume.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T-2</td>
<td>Haresh</td>
<td>Well, not managerial. I am in a supervisory position at the moment, though my previous job was managerial. I decided to take this job because it has more of a future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-3</td>
<td>Arun</td>
<td>Supervisory?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-4</td>
<td>Haresh</td>
<td>I am a foreman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-5</td>
<td>Arun</td>
<td>Ah! A foreman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-6</td>
<td>Haresh</td>
<td>Praha usually starts people on the shop floor, not even in supervisory jobs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-7</td>
<td>Arun</td>
<td>(Taking another sip of tea) Hmm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-8</td>
<td>Haresh</td>
<td>James Hawley offered me a managerial job -</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-9</td>
<td>Arun</td>
<td>(In a distant manner) I could never understand why the Cromarty Group hasn't moved its head office to Calcutta. Puzzling that they should wish to remain a provincial concern.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ah well.

Textual Background
At the behest of Mrs. Mehra, her son Arun Mehra, who was working with Bentsen Pryce, a British Concern involved in shoe production, decided to make acquaintance with Haresh Khanna. Arun, a typical Brown Sahib in an English set up, contrived the introduction in a grand fashion. He connived a Tea Party at Mr. Khandelwal’s at which he had Haresh invited as a guest. The present interaction reveals their respective attitudes. Arun Mehra tried to maintain distance by authoritative questioning attitude while Haresh was on the defensive. Haresh tries to convince Arun of his better prospects in Praha in future, while Arun is bent on exposing his low position at present.

Significance of the passage
The present interaction reveals Arun Mehra’s snobbish attitude towards Haresh Khanna. Arun just refuses to adopt the culturally envisaged submissive, accommodative and affectionate role of the bride's party. On the contrary he exhibits hostility towards his prospective brother-in-law. Knowing that Arun is Lata’s elder brother, Haresh tries to please Arun, and rise up to his expectations. But Arun, it seems, is bent on underestimating him. Haresh is put off by Arun’s grilling. But he doesn’t back out.

Implicature Analysis
At T-1 position Arun asks Haresh what his position in Praha was. His snobbery was evident in the formulation of the question itself. His words - ‘What is it you do exactly, Mr Khanna? I understand you've been taken on by Praha's in some sort of position. A managerial position. I presume’ - show not so much his curiosity or his desire to know what position Haresh occupied in Praha as his desire to assert his own superiority and to undermine Haresh’s significance by forcing him to comment on his ordinary status in Praha. He seems to implicate that anything beneath the managerial position would not be up to the mark by his standards. At T-1 position Haresh promptly answers - ‘Well, not managerial. I am in a supervisory position at the moment, though my previous job was managerial’. By using the expression ‘at the moment’ he seems to implicate that
it is only the beginning of his career there, and that he is likely to be promoted to the higher rank soon. As for Arun’s implication that managerial status was the minimum expectation for being in a respectable position, Haresh refers to his managerial status in his previous job at CLFC. He justifies his decision to accept this job despite its low status by saying that it has more of a future. This reveals that Haresh is only too conscious of his low status as a foreman in Praha. Arun, however, keeps on grilling him further by expressing wonder. ‘Supervisory?’ he asks at T-3 position. He thus forces Haresh to give an exact answer. ‘I am a foreman’, says Haresh at T-4 position.

‘Ah! A foreman,’ is Arun’s response at T-5 position. Arun thereby implicates that he does not consider it as a satisfactory post. Sensing his disapproval, Haresh hastens to explain, at T-6 position, that Praha usually starts people on the shop floor, not even in supervisory jobs. He thus suggests that it was, in fact, a good start in terms of Praha conventions. But his explanation is met with just an ambiguous monosyllabic ‘Hmm’ from Arun over a sip of tea.

Thus compelled to assert his credentials, Haresh tells him, at T-8 position, that the James Hawley had offered him a managerial job. Arun refuses to be impressed. He offers his comment on the provincial status of the Cromarty Group, which is followed by ‘Ah, well’ - as if he is reluctant to acknowledge Haresh’s credentials as acceptable in good society.

**Illustrative value of the text**

This passage illustrates an interesting play of face work. The face threatening acts on the part of Arun and The face saving acts of Haresh take place at the level of implicatures rather than at the level of obvious comments or overt statements. In this part of the conversation Arun poses to be, and succeeds in creating an impression that he is, an extremely sophisticated, knowledgeable and cultured upper class elite. His sophistication contrasts with Haresh’s simplicity and directness. It makes him look even a bit snobbish. This impression owes a good deal to the suggestive nature of their interaction.
3.2.6.3 : Conversation Three

Extract selected for analysis

When the train steamed into Lucknow Station, Haresh said: 'I would very much like to be of some help to you tomorrow.'

'No, no,' said Mrs Rupa Mehra, almost in a panic. 'The tickets have been reserved already. We don't need any help. They have been reserved by my son-my son in Bentsen Pryce. We'll be travelling very comfortably. You must not come to the station.'

Haresh looked at Lata for a while and was about to ask her something. Then he turned to her mother instead and said: 'May I write to Lata, Mrs Mehra?'

Mrs Mehra was about to agree with enthusiasm. Then, checking herself, she turned to Lata, and Lata nodded, rather gravely. It would have been too cruel to say no.

'Yes, you may write, of course,' said Mrs Rupa Mehra. 'And you really must call me Ma.'

'Now I'd like to make sure that you get to Mr Sahgal's place safely,' said Haresh. 'I'll get a tonga.'

It was pleasant to be taken care of, and the two women allowed Haresh to fuss competently over them.

(A Suitable Boy, 581)

Idealised conversational passage

| T-1 | Haresh : I would very much like to be of some help to you tomorrow. |
| T-2 | Mrs Mehra : (Almost in a panic) No, no. The tickets have been reserved already. We don't need any help. They have been reserved by my son-my son in Bentsen Pryce. We'll be travelling very comfortably. You must not come to the station. |
| T-3 | Haresh : (About to ask something to Lata, but then suddenly turns to her mother instead) May I write to Lata, Mrs Mehra? |
| T-4 | Mrs Mehra : (About to agree with enthusiasm, but then, checking herself, she Looks at Lata as if to get her response) |
| T-5 | Lata : (Nodding rather gravely) |
| T-6 | Mrs Mehra : Yes, you may write, of course. And you really must call me Ma. |
| T-7 | Haresh : Now I'd like to make sure that you get to Mr Sahgal's place safely. I'll get a Tonga. (They allow Haresh to fuss competently over them.) |

Textual Background

After their introduction to, and interview with, Haresh in Kanpur, Lata and Mrs. Mehra were leaving for Lucknow. Haresh offered to accompany them to Lucknow, where he proposed to stay with Simran’s sister and do a bit of business work as well. They were unable to refuse his request, so he too joined them on the journey. The present conversation takes place when they are about
to part from each other at the station. So far, Mrs. Mehra had succeeded in creating an impression on Haresh, her prospective son-in-law, that they were financially well off and that they were used to travelling in saloons, etc. Now she did not want him to know about her financial constraints. So she emphatically declines his offer to help them on board the train on the next day.

**Significance of the passage**
The present interaction marks Haresh’s interest in Lata. The two parties seem to have formed good opinion about each other by now. Haresh, therefore, precautious to avoid any kind of bad impression, tries to spend more time with them and show maximum consideration so that Lata and Mrs. Mehra understand his intentions.

**Implicature Analysis**
At T-1 position Haresh offers to help them on their return journey on the next day. At T-2 position Mrs. Mehra flatly rejects the idea of his coming to the station. Mrs. Mehra, even though she did not afford it, had travelled by first class from Kanpur to Lucknow simply to give Haresh the impression that they were used to a luxurious life. She believed that she had given him the impression that the family was financially well off. Now she did not want him to know that they were travelling by second class from Lucknow to Calcutta. She thought that this would give him an idea that they were financially rather encumbered. She did not want him to get disillusioned by the facts. She feared unpleasant consequences. She, therefore, didn't want him to come. She explained that it was unnecessary and that everything was neatly planned and that they won't need any help. In her anxiousness to avoid an awkward situation, she offers an elaborate explanation and thereby violates the maxim of quantity. Her explanation sounds rather unrealistic. The very fact that she offers too elaborate an explanation carries an aura of uncertainty of the facts she is trying to assert. Haresh senses that Mrs. Mehra is trying to avoid further involvement on his part on the next day. He infers different signals from her explanation. He becomes apprehensive of their response. For he wanted to speak to Lata, but then he checks himself and instead asks Mrs. Mehra if he might write to Lata. This being
a clear indication of his interest in Lata. Mrs. Mehra was quite pleased with his request for her permission. But then she controls her excitement and, instead of enthusiastically agreeing to his suggestion, she looks at Lata for her approval. Lata nods her consent rather gravely, almost as if reluctantly and for the sake of form.

Then at T-3 position Mrs. Mehra consents to the idea. Her utterance - 'yes, you may write, of course,' seems to be rather matter of fact. And lest he misinterpret it as a cold response, she gives it an emotional touch by adding - 'and you really must call me Ma'. She thus implicates her desire that he take it as her signal of their liking him and that he infer it as a favourable response. At T-4 position Haresh offers to take care of their comfort and safety on their way to Mr Sahgal’s and says that he will get a Tonga for them.

**Illustrative value of the text**

This interaction reveals that in matters of great personal interest where things are uncertain and responses ambiguous, people strategically resort to implicatures for expressing their communicative import so that the target party gets the message and yet, due to the ambiguity of the expressions used, it accords the speaker a freedom from explicit commitment to the feelings expressed. This potential makes the conversation rich with suggestive overtones. It poses a challenge to the understanding of both the hearer and the conversation analyst, and thus offers itself as a rich data for analyses.

**3.2.6.4 : Conversation Four**

**Extract selected for analysis**

'Is something the matter?' said Haresh, a little troubled.

'No, let's go in. It's getting a little chilly. If Arun Bhai has left by now it shouldn't be too difficult to get Varun to put on a few film songs. I feel in the mood for them.'

'I thought you were more fond of classical music.'

'I like everything,' said Lata brightly, 'but at different times. And Varun will offer you a drink.'

Haresh asked for a beer. Varun put on a song from Deedar, then left the drawing room; he had instructions from his mother to keep out of the way. Lata's eye fell on the book of Egyptian mythology.

Haresh was more than a little bewildered by her change of mood. It made him feel uneasy. He was being truthful when he wrote in his letters that he had grown to be in love with her. He was sure she too was fond of him. Now she was treating him in a
baffling manner.
The record had run its three-minute course. Lata did not get up to change it. The room was quiet. 'I'm tired of Calcutta,' she said light heartedly. 'It's a good thing I'm going to the Botanical Gardens tomorrow.'

'But I'd set tomorrow aside for you. I planned to spend it with you,' said Haresh.

'You never told me, Haresh.'

'You said - you wrote - that you wanted to spend as much time as possible with me.'

Something had changed in their conversation at a certain point. He passed his hand across his forehead and frowned.

'Well, we still have five days before I leave for Brahmpur,' said Lata.

'My leave will be over tomorrow. Cancel your Botanical trip. I insist!' He smiled, and caught her hand.

'Oh, don't be mean-' said Lata.

He released her hand at once. 'I am not mean,' he said.

Lata looked at him. The colour had left his face, and the laugh too had been wiped away. He was suddenly very angry. 'I am not mean,' he repeated. 'No one has ever said that to me before. Don't ever use that word for me again. I - I am going now.' He got up. 'I'll find my way to the station. Please thank your family for me. I can't stay for dinner.'

Lata looked completely stunned, but did not try to stop him. 'Oh, don't be mean,' was an expression that the girls at Sophia Convent must have used twenty times a day to each other. Some of it had survived - especially in certain moods - in her present-day speech. It meant nothing particularly wounding, and she could not imagine for the moment why he was so wounded.

(A Suitable Boy, 1147-1148)

Idealised conversational passage

| T-1 | Haresh : | (Troubled) Is something the matter? |
| T-2 | Lata : | No, let's go in. It's getting a little chilly. If Arun Bhai has left by now it shouldn't be too difficult to get Varun to put on a few film songs. I feel in the mood for them. |
| T-3 | Haresh : | I thought you were more fond of classical music. |
| T-4 | Lata : | (Brightly) I like everything, but at different times. And Varun will offer you a drink. (The record had run its three-minute course, but she did not get up to change it. The room was quiet). (Light-heartedly) I'm tired of Calcutta. It's a good thing I'm going to the Botanical Gardens tomorrow. |
| T-5 | Haresh : | But I'd set tomorrow aside for you. I planned to spend it with you. |
| T-6 | Lata : | You never told me, Haresh. |
| T-7 | Haresh : | You said - you wrote - that you wanted to spend as much time as possible with me. (He passed his hand across his forehead and frowned.) |
| T-8 | Lata : | Well, we still have five days before I leave for Brahmpur. |
| T-9 | Haresh : | My leave will be over tomorrow. (Smiling and catching her hand) Cancel your Botanical trip. I insist! |
| T-10 | Lata : | Oh, don't be mean. |
T-11 Haresh: (Releasing her hand at once) I am not mean. (Looking seriously affected.)
T-12 Lata: (Looks at him.)
T-13 Haresh: (Very angry) I am not mean. No one has ever said that to me before. Don't ever use that word for me again. I - I am going now. (Getting up) I'll find my way to the station. Please thank your family for me. I can't stay for dinner.
T-14 Lata: (Completely stunned. Does not try to stop him.)

Textual Background

Haresh was invited to dinner by Mrs Mehra at Sunny Park. The present conversation is a part of the tête-à-tête between Haresh and Lata when they were left to themselves into the garden with Mrs. Mehra’s permission. They were in happy mood and their interaction proceeded quite well. But despite the initial good mood, there was apparently dearth of topics they could talk about. Since there was not much to talk about, Haresh happened to mention his meeting with Kabir that afternoon at the stadium. He told her that Mr Durrani wanted to meet someone but was uncertain about his reception when he met him. Lata’s expression changed with this mention of Kabir and she grew thoughtful. Lata looked very withdrawn and unhappy. Haresh had no idea of Lata’s association with Kabir. But he noticed this change in her mood and sensed that something somewhere went wrong. The initial happy mood gradually gave way to the feelings of loneliness and boredom. The tenor of their conversation changed and it grew more and more cantankerous. They started finding fault with each other. Both of them were far from being pleasant. Their talk assumed a nagging and pricking tone rather than the expected loving, emotionally reassuring, promising, dreamy, emotional, romantic one that would have been more appropriate on the occasion. It was clear that things were not going right; that something somewhere had gone wrong.

Significance of the passage

It was the first occasion on which Lata and Haresh were allowed to interact privately. It is interesting to note, however, that this carefully planned and arranged meeting between Lata and Haresh, the most suitable boy identified for her by Mrs Mehra, turns out to be very dry and prosaic and even bitter as
compared to her emotionally vibrant meetings with Kabir, or her lively, imaginative, and richly suggestive interactions with Amit. Haresh felt that Lata was not responding to him in a very courteous manner and Lata felt that Haresh was far from being reasonable. To reassure Lata of his feelings for her Haresh tried to hold her hand, but then he felt insulted by her remark and, without waiting to meet Mrs Mehra, he left the house. They found it hard to tune up with each other and this culminated in a serious hiatus caused by Haresh’s abrupt, in fact very rude and unmannerly, departure from the scene. It threatened almost an abortive and abrupt end of the matter.

**Implicature Analysis**

Haresh was disconcerted right from the beginning of his visit to Sunny Park. He somehow felt that he was not a very welcome visitor there. Arun and Meenakshi had excused themselves and refused to accompany him to dinner. His interaction with Lata was not proceeding along a very cordial note. Now that he noticed her grow suddenly tense and withdrawn, he too grew worried and tense. At T-1, therefore, he asked Lata what was bothering her. He was implicating perhaps his desire to know whether he was responsible for her uneasiness, and whether it was something he said or did that had brought about this change of mood in her. At T-2, Lata, instead of answering his question, suggested that they should go in because it was getting cold, and she also felt like listening to film-songs. Implicating that she was in no mood for conversation.

Haresh implicates by his comment at T-3 position that he did not believe in the truthfulness of the reasons she had given. He seems to complain and accuse her of using false pretext.

At T-4, Lata defends what she said and thereby implicates that these were her genuine feelings and no mere excuses. Moreover, she says that Varun will offer him a drink. She thus strongly expresses her desire to go in, and Haresh has no option but to agree to it.

When they got in, Varun put on the song from ‘Deedar’, offered Haresh a beer, and, as he has been instructed by Mrs Mehra, quickly went out into the drawing room leaving Haresh and Lata together to fend for themselves. When they were
left alone in the room. Lata’s behaviour in not getting up to change the record even when it had run its three-minute course shows that she was not sincere about her stated wish to listen to film-songs. They were silent. As nothing curious or interesting came from Haresh. Lata broke the silence my giving voice to her boredom. ‘I'm tired of Calcutta’, she says. She thus changed the subject from the matters of mutual interest and likes or dislikes to her personal ruminations - to her feeling of boredom of all the things. And then she casually mentions her plan to visit the Botanical Gardens on the next day, which, she implicated, will give her some respite.

At this mention of Lata being busy on the next day, Haresh told her at T-5 position that he had planned to spend the day with her. He thereby implicates that he expected her to keep aside her engagements, and spend the day with him. At T-6, Lata complains that he never told her about this plan. She thus implicates that he should have informed her in advance so that she could have avoided planning anything else on the day. She is surprised at such an unconsulted arrangement and is astonished at his expectation that she should change her pre-planned programme. She wonders how he could be so assured as to assume that she would change her schedule even if she could.

At T-7 position Haresh reminds her that she had written to him saying that she wanted to spend more time with him. He thus implicates that he had planned it according to her wish explicitly stated in her letters, and that he did not think it necessary to be very specific in details; that he assumed that since he had been invited to dinner well in advance, he thought she would set aside some time for him; that he took it for granted that she would be free to spend as much time with him as he could make available.

At T-8 position, Lata suggests that they could make it sometime during the next five days. She implicates that she can't change her plans now, and that if Haresh so desired, they could arrange it at his convenience anytime during the next five days. But then At T-9 position, Haresh tells her that his leave would be over on the next day. He thereby implicates that he too cannot change his schedule because his leave will be over; that if at all they are to materialise the plan, Lata
will have to cancel her Botanical trip. He then catches her hand with a reassuring smile. 'Oh, don't be mean'. Lata snaps the moment he seizes her hand, and then it is all over. Haresh is too enraged and excited to hear anything more. He releases her hand at once. 'I am not mean', he says at T-11 position. He looks seriously affected. He leaves deeply injured and angry and frustrated.

It all happened so suddenly and so unexpectedly that Lata could not even try to prevent him. She still believed that she hadn’t said anything outrageous. 'Oh, don't be mean' was an expression that the girls at Sophia Convent must have used quite often to each other every day. She could not understand how it could so enrage him.

**Illustrative value of the text**

The present interaction illustrates the role of interactants’ psychological mind set in the execution of the ongoing conversational activity and also in its outcome. Haresh, mollified by his inability to trace what exactly went wrong and how to remedy the situation, implicates his desire to get the clues from her. Lata, curtailing the garden tête-à-tête under the pretext of it getting chilly outside and her mood veering to the film music (rather than the that of the intimate talk with Haresh), almost suggests that they have nothing more to say to each other at present. The mention of her proposed trip to the Botanical Garden only aggravates the situation by providing an occasion for both of them to vent their irritation and anger. They don't exchange angry words as such except at the end, but their implicated propositions amount to nothing short of a bitter quarrel. It seems that both Lata and Haresh were mentally ill prepared for the kind of interaction they were heading for. Haresh, aware that he was more at ease talking to Simran than he was while talking to Lata, felt at a loss with subjects and words. Lata, still upset at the thought that Kabir was there in Calcutta wanting (but unable) to meet her, feels out of tune with Haresh. The result is that they cannot concentrate on the task before them. The purpose was lost upon them and it turned out to be a mere give-and-take of information which was unpalatable to either. They were unable to drive out each other’s gloom and lift each other into elevated, lively and interesting talk. The conversation ends on a
very bitter note threatening to the level of complete breakdown of mutual relationship. The final outcome was as much the result of the inward tension building up in their minds through out the interaction as it was the result of Lata’s remark.

3.2.6.5: Conversation Five

Extract selected for analysis

Leaving Lata and Haresh to fend for themselves, Mrs Rupa Mehra marched up to Varun.

'Hello, Ma,' said Kalpana Gaur. 'Many congratulations. What a lovely wedding. And I can't help feeling responsible for it, in a way.'

'Yes,' said Mrs Rupa Mehra shortly.

'Hello, Ma,' said Malati. 'Yes, congratulations are in order from me as well.' Receiving no immediate response, she added, without thinking: 'These Gulab-jamuns are delicious. You must try one.'

This reference to forbidden sweets annoyed Mrs Rupa Mehra further. She glared at the offending objects for a second or two.

'What is the matter, Malati?' she asked with some asperity. You still look a little under the weather - you've been running around so much, I'm not surprised - and, Kalpana, standing in the centre of the crowd is not good for your hot spots; go and sit on that bench there at once, it is much cooler. Now I must have a word with Varun, who is not doing his duties as a host.' And she took him aside.

'You too will marry a girl I choose,' said Mrs Rupa Mehra firmly to her younger son.

'But - but, Ma' Varun shifted from foot to foot.

'A suitable girl, that is what I want for you,' said Mrs Rupa Mehra in an admonitory voice. 'That is what your Daddy would have wanted. A suitable girl, and no exceptions.'

(A Suitable Boy, 1343)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Kalpana Gaur : Hello, Ma. Many congratulations. What a lovely wedding. And I can't help feeling responsible for it, in a way.

T-2 Mrs Mehra : (shortly) Yes.

T-3 Malati : Hello, Ma. Yes, congratulations are in order from me as well. (Receiving no immediate response, she adds without thinking) These Gulab-jamuns are delicious. You must try one.

T-4 Mrs Mehra : (Annoyed, she glares at the Gulab-jamuns. Then with some asperity) What is the matter, Malati? You still look a little under the weather - you've been running around so much. I'm not surprised - and, Kalpana, standing in the centre of the crowd is not good for your
hot spots; go and sit on that bench there at once; it is much cooler. Now I must have a word with Varun, who is not doing his duties as a host.' (To Varun, taking him aside.) You too will marry a girl I choose, said Mrs Rupa Mehra firmly to her younger son.

T-5 Varun : (Shifting from foot to foot) But - but, Ma.

T-6 Mrs Mehra : (In an admonitory voice) A suitable girl, that is what I want for you. That is what your Daddy would have wanted. A suitable girl, and no exceptions.

Textual Background

The occasion is Lata’s marriage with Haresh Khanna. The relationship between Lata and Haresh has gone through its ups and downs. At a certain point, it was even threatened with a complete breakdown. But somehow it survived and now, finally, guests had started pouring in to attend the wedding. Mrs. Mehra was once again busy offering hospitality and criticising and appraising her sons for not doing their best as hosts. The wedding was taking place at Dr Kishen Chand Seth’s house.

Significance of the passage

Mrs Mehra was hosting Lata’s marriage - welcoming the guests and looking after their satisfaction and comfort. Kalpana Gaur and Malati had also arrived. However, Mrs Mehra did not feel like welcoming them. Malati, she believed, was a bad influence on Lata. A tomboy herself, she had inculcated some of her boldness, rashness and irresponsibleness into Lata as well. And as for Kalpana Gaur, she had no grudge against her in the past. She had been very helpful and resourceful, in fact instrumental, in bringing about this alliance - right from the introduction, through the moments of crisis, to the present moment of its happy culmination into marriage. Kalpana Gaur had also helped Varun while he was in Delhi for his IAS interview. She had tremendously boosted his self-confidence and given him some very useful tips for expressing himself in a sophisticated manner. This had its effect and he had faced the interview boldly and got selected. But then the present intimacy between Kalpana and Varun offended her. This was why Kalpana Gaur was not particularly welcome at the wedding. Here we see how the tension of strained relations manifests in the form of a detached and cool treatment on the part of Mrs. Mehra.
Implicature Analysis

At T-1 Kalpana Gaur greets Mrs Mehra and congratulates her for a lovely wedding. By the way she asserts her crucial role in bringing about the fruitful outcome in terms of the engagement and marriage. Kalpana Gaur thereby implicates that she has played a crucial role in bringing about this marriage. Mrs Mehra knew from Haresh’s letters that after the unpleasant happenings on the day he was invited for dinner. Haresh had written to Kalpana Gaur and that she had reprimanded him for being so bad tempered and ill-mannerly, and telling him that Lata meant nothing insulting by her remark, and that it was a commonly used expression among girls; and that it expressed intimacy and trust rather than contempt, in fact. Mrs Mehra, therefore, must have understood the implicated meaning of Kalpana Gaur’s utterance. However, in view of her present outrageous behaviour, Mrs Mehra prefers not to acknowledge the uptake of the implicature, and not to express gratefulness for her services. Her very curt monosyllabic response, ‘yes’ at T-2 position indicates the stiffness of her attitude. Kalpana Gaur’s good offices deserve better appreciation and thanks. But Mrs Mehra, it seems, is in no mood to appreciate her efforts. By withholding or denying appreciation of Kalpana Gaur’s efforts, Mrs Mehra seems to implicate her suspicion regarding Kalpana Gaur’s intentions with regards to Varun and her irritation at Varun’s flirting behaviour. She expects Kalpana Gaur to understand that she considers her to be more harmful than helpful. Mrs Mehra wants Kalpana to understand that Mrs Mehra is not very cordial to her. She Must have searched for the reasons and arrived at this inevitable conclusion.

At T-3 position Malati also greets and congratulates Mrs Mehra enthusiastically, and once again this meets with cool response. Mrs Mehra refuses even to acknowledge her greeting. Mrs. Mehra’s cold silence can only implicate her belief that Malati had caused enough mischief in Lata’s emotional life. She attributes Lata’s involvement with the unsuitable boys like Kabir and Amit to Malati’s influence. Again she seems to implicate her displeasure, anger and dissatisfaction with Malati. She attributes Lata’s bold and irresponsible behaviour to Malati’s influence. Malati Knows this and seems to enjoy Mrs
Mehra’s discomfort at Lata asserting her own identity and individuality - boldly taking decisions and pursuing and cherishing her individual dreams and goals. Mrs Mehra knows that Malati enjoys teasing her like this. This mutually shared awareness of each other’s feelings makes possible the processing and organising of intended meaning such that the signals are mutually intelligible. Malati infers it from the absence of due acknowledgement from Mrs Mehra, and hastens to conclude her interaction with an offer of the Gulab-jamuns.

At T-4 position Mrs Mehra expresses concern for the health of the Malati and Kalpana Gaur, and adopting a maternal role, orders them about sending them away to sit in shade. She thereby avoids further bitterness with them. She almost snatches Varun from them under the pretext that She must now talk to Varun about taking his duties as the host seriously. She then turns to Varun and warns him against any involvement with girls like Kalpana Gaur or Malati, who, in her opinion, are exceptions. She takes Varun aside and straightaway tells him that he too will marry a girl she chooses for him.

At T-5 position the weak-willed Varun fidgets and feebly protests but is unable to assert himself or explain anything.

**Illustrative value of the text**

The novelist makes conscious and careful use of conversations for artistic purposes. For example, this is the second time in the novel that Mrs. Mehra uses the expression 'you will marry a boy/girl I choose'. She had exerted herself and exercised her prerogative of the choice of a suitable boy in the case of her elder daughter Savita, and she did the same in the case of Lata, her second daughter - the most knowledgeable, self-willed and assertive and therefore tough to handle. And now she exhorts her youngest offspring, Varun, to follow her dictates. It certainly highlights and projects a character trait on the part of Mrs Mehra. And when the same tone and sentiment is expressed in exactly similar words by another parent on another occasion but in a similar situation - the formidable task of controlling and guiding the behaviour of a tough, impulsive, equally self-willed son, - it increases in magnitude from its simple status as an individualistic characteristic of Mrs Mehra and is transformed into a characteristic of assertive
and imposing parenthood. This symbolic clash between the individual cases of parent-child relation then becomes symbolic of the universal phenomenon of parent-child relationship – the expectations and behaviour of parents and children in crucial matters like the choice of one’s life partner.)

3.2.7: Cluster Seven

3.2.7.1: Conversation One

Extract selected for analysis

Firoz, after leaning at various angles on various sticks, decided upon one and, without haggling about the price, bought it.

‘And you, what are you doing here? Paying a visit to Tarbuz ka Bazaar?’ he asked.

‘Don’t be disgusting,’ said Maan cheerfully. Tarbuz ka Bazaar was the street of singing girls and prostitutes.

‘Oh, but I forgot,’ said Firoz slyly: ‘Why should you consort with mere melons when you can taste the peaches of Samarkand?’

Maan frowned.

‘What further news of Saeeda Bai?’ continued Firoz, who, from the back of the audience, had enjoyed the previous night. Though he had left by midnight, he had sensed that Maan’s engagement notwithstanding, romance was once again entering his friend’s life. More, perhaps, than anyone else, he knew and understood Maan.

‘What do you expect?’ asked Maan, a little glumly. ‘Things will happen the way they will. She didn’t even allow me to escort her back.’

This was quite unlike Maan, thought Firoz, who had very rarely seen his friend depressed. ‘So where are you going?’ he asked him.

‘To the Barsaat Mahal.’

‘To end it all?’ inquired Firoz tenderly. The parapet of the Barsaat Mahal faced the Ganges and was the venue of a number of romantic suicides every year.

‘Yes, yes, to end it all,’ said Maan impatiently. ‘Now tell me, Firoz, what do you advise?’

Firoz laughed. ‘Say that again. I can’t believe it,’ he said. ‘Maan Kapoor, beau of Brahmpur, at whose feet young women of good families, heedless of reputation, hasten to fling themselves like bees on a lotus, seeks the advice of the steely and stainless Firoz on how to proceed in a matter of the heart. You’re not asking for my legal advice, are you?’

‘If you’re going to act like that – ’ began Maan, disgruntled.

(A Suitable Boy, 90)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Firoz : (In playful banter) And you, what are you doing here?

Pay a visit to Tarbuz ka Bazaar?

T-2 Maan : (Cheerfully) Don’t be disgusting.

T-3 Firoz : (Slyly) Oh, but I forgot. Why should you consort with mere melons when you can taste the peaches of Samarkand?

T-4 Maan : (Frowns.)

T-5 Firoz : What further news of Saeeda Bai?

T-6 Maan : (A little dejectedly) What do you expect? Things will
happen the way they will. She didn’t even allow me to escort her back.

T-7 Firoz : So where are you going?
T-8 Maan : To the Barsaat Mahal.
T-9 Firoz : (Tenderly) To end it all?
T-10 Maan : (Impatiently) Yes, yes, to end it all. Now tell me, Firoz, what do you advise?
T-11 Firoz : (Laughing) Say that again. I can’t believe it. Maan Kapoor, beau of Brahmpur, at whose feet young women of good families, heedless of reputation, hasten to fling themselves like bees on a lotus, seeks the advice of the steely and stainless Firoz on how to proceed in a matter of the heart. You’re not asking for my legal advice, are you?
T-12 Maan : (Disgruntled) If you’re going to act like that - ...

Textual Background
Maan had heard a lot about Saeeda Bai’s professional excellence but he heard her sing for the first time on the occasion of what had by now become almost an annual ritual of the family Holi concert at Prem Nivas. Saeeda Bai had graced him with special attention on the occasion. Firoz, who attended the concert, had noticed this and, knowing Maan quite well, instinctively felt that this marked the beginning of a romantic affair for his friend. Saeeda Bai’s captivating looks, alluring manner, and a rather husky, exceedingly sensual voice and style fascinated Maan so much that he was instinctively attracted towards her person and her art perhaps a little more than he himself understood it. The next day, being Saturday, Saeeda Bai still on his mind, Maan thought of going to Firoz. But then he decided to go to Barsaat Mahal instead. On the way to Barsaat Mahal he suddenly noticed Firoz standing by the pavement stall, inspecting a stick that he wanted to buy for himself. Maan was very happy at this unexpected meeting with Firoz.

Significance of the passage
The present conversation reveals the intimate friendly relationship between Maan and Firoz. They tease, and take liberties with, each other. Through their light hearted banter the reader comes to know their nature as well as their attitudes to life. They share their joys and hopes and fears with each other, thereby revealing their intentions and aspirations.
Implicature Analysis

The initial remark at T-1 position is Firoz’s counter question to Mann’s surprise at finding him there. Here Firoz, teasing Maan, asks him what he could possibly be doing in this part of the city. Dwelling upon his impulsiveness and sensuousness, he jokingly implicates that Maan must be paying a visit to the Tarbuz ka Bazaar (which, incidentally, was notoriously famous as the street of singing girls and prostitutes). By virtue of their intimate relationship and the bantering tone of the accusation, however, Firoz seems to implicate that he was just teasing his friend on a rather vulnerable ground.

Reacting to this implicature, Maan makes a show of being really teased by his friend’s remark and cheerfully ticks him off at T-2 position for being so disgusting and callous with him. ‘Don’t be disgusting’, he says. He thereby implicates his awareness that Firoz could not be sincerely accusing him of such behaviour. The conversation thus continues in the nature of a light hearted and playful banter between the two friends.

At T-3 position Firoz continues unrelentingly in the same vein and says that he had forgotten that, Maan, who could, if he so desired, taste the peaches of Summerkand, had no need to consort with mere Melons. Firoz here hints at Maan’s probable infatuation with Saeeda Bai, who had acquired such fame and was so far above the common singing girls and prostitutes of the Tarbuz ka Bazaar. The expression ‘peaches of Summerkand’ thus metaphorically refers to the superior qualities of Saeeda Bai as compared to the other common singing girls and prostitutes of the Tarbuz ka Bazaar. With the shared background knowledge of what had happened on the previous night, Maan knows what Firoz meant by this oblique reference: and Firoz, on his part knows that Maan knows, or can work out, what he means. And Mann also knows that Firoz knows that Maan knows, or can work out, what he meant by his remark. Maan frowns at Firoz at this hint, but neglecting Maan’s pretended annoyance at T-4 position Firoz asks him whether there was any news of Saeeda Bai. Mann, however, does not seem to be very optimistic about it. At T-6 position he dejectedly says that he has no control over things in this respect. He tells Firoz that Saeeda Bai did not
even allow him to escort her while returning to her house last night. Firoz is
surprised at this unusually glum and depressed response from his friend. So at T-7
position he tenderly asks Maan where he was going. Mann informs him that he
was going to the Barsaat Mahal. But then the reference to Barsaat Mahal revives
the tone of mischievous banter once again. Firoz, now twisting Mann’s
straightforward answer, asks him ‘To end it all?’ His words at T-9 position carry
the implicature to the effect that Firoz was worried whether Maan wanted to go
to Barsaat Mahal to end the matter there, i.e. whether Maan was thinking of
committing suicide. For it was common knowledge that the parapet of the
Barsaat Mahal faced the Ganges and was the venue of a number of romantic
suicides every year. His words - ‘To end it all?’ meet with only a blunt retort at
T-10 position from Maan - ‘Yes, yes, to end it all’. Maan thereby implicates his
annoyance at Firoz’s attitude by mockingly agreeing with his implicated
proposition. Mann then seriously seeks his friend’s opinion and advice in the
matter. However, at T-11 position, to Mann’s displeasure, Firoz takes it as a joke
and avoids the answer. He thus implicates his unwillingness or inability to give
dvice on such an issue. At T-12 position, Mann expresses his unhappiness over
his friend’s evasive response.

**Illustrative value of the text**
The present interaction reveals how a great deal of communicational content is
conveyed by way of hints and insinuations even in a light-hearted banter among
friends. What takes place between the two friends here cannot be understood by
simply analysing the utterances at the semantic level. In understanding
communication thus, one has to apply to the whole of the pragmatic
paraphernalia of implicature analyses to bear upon the utterances. It also
illustrates the role of shared background knowledge in the inferring process. An
utterance involving a particularised implicature, such as T-3 for example, would
be difficult to understand or analyse in the absence of such knowledge.
3.2.7.2 : Conversation Two

Extract selected for analysis

As Maan's footsteps were heard in the gallery outside Saeeda Bai's room, she called out, 'Come in, come in, Dagh Sahib. Sit down and illumine our gathering.'
Maan stood outside the door for a second, and looked at Saeeda Bai. He was smiling with pleasure, and Saeeda Bai could not help smiling back at him. He was dressed simply and immaculately in a well-starched white kurta-pyjama. The fine chikan embroidery on his kurta complemented the embroidery on his fine white cotton cap. His shoes- slip-on jutis of soft leather, pointed at the toe - were also white.

'How did you come?' asked Saeeda Bai.
'I walked.'
'These are fine clothes to risk in the dust.'
Maan said simply, 'It is just a few minutes away.'
'Please-sit down.'
Maan sat cross-legged on the white-sheeted floor.
Saeeda Bai began to busy herself making paan. Maan looked at her wonderingly.
'I came yesterday too, but was less fortunate.'
'I know, I know,' said Saeeda Bai. 'My fool of a watchman turned you away. What can I say? We are not all blessed with the faculty of discrimination. ...'
'But I'm here today,' said Maan, rather obviously.
'Wherever Dagh has sat down, he has sat down?' asked Saeeda Bai, with a smile. Her head was bent, and she was spreading a little white dab of lime on the paan leaves.
'He may not quit your assembly at all this time,' said Maan.

(A Suitable Boy, 109)

Idealised conversational passage

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Textual Background
Ever since Mann heard Saeeda Bai perform at the Holi concert at Prem Nivas, he was fascinated by her art and her beauty. Impressed by her person and her performance, he longed to see her. He tried to visit her house on the following night, but then the watchman did not admit him. He tried again on the second successive night, and to his great pleasure, he was admitted into the house and ushered into the presence of Saeeda Bai.

Significance of the passage
The present interaction marks Maan’s first entry into the house. Here we see Saeeda Bai as a highly experienced and influential courtesan. She charms Maan not only with her physical attractions but also with her excellent sense of sophisticated behaviour and feigned innocence and modesty.

Implicature Analysis
Saeeda Bai’s utterance at T-1 position serves the function of welcoming the guest. She makes Maan feel comfortable by addressing him with terms of endearment and appreciation. ‘Dagh Sahib’ is the nickname given to Maan by Saeeda Bai on the night of Holi performance at Prem Nivas. In addressing Mann by this name Saeeda Bai seems to practice her professional skill and expertise as a courtesan. She thereby implicates her acknowledgement and appreciation of his infatuation with her. Though it is only a part of her profession to please her customers by admiring and complementing them in the best possible manner suitable and desirable to them on a given occasion, for a novice like Mann such a welcome must have had an overwhelmingly enticing and intoxicating effect.

After an exchange of courtesy queries Mann enters into the hall and sits cross-legged on the White sheeted floor. While she was busy with making a pan for him, he looked at her wonderingly. Then at T-9 position he says that he had come the day before as well, and further adds that he was less fortunate that time. Though his utterance has the form of a statement, it certainly is not intended for passing on the information it contains. It serves as a sort of complaint for his not being admitted on the previous occasion. It could also be interpreted as an attempt at eliciting explanation for the kind of treatment he had
received. Responding to the implicated proposition, Saeeda Bai accepts the responsibility for the unfortunate turn of the events, but cleverly attributes it to the foolishness and an utter lack of the sense of discrimination on the part of her watchman. She thereby implicates that she shares Maan’s feelings. Though this is only a purported (and not the real) belief implicated by her, it satisfies Mann. His egotism and self-respect are well taken care of, and he is pleased with this apparently face-enhancing approach. Saeeda Bai’s behaviour here shows her awareness of the role of face-work in maintaining human relations.

Satisfied with her apologetic explanation, Mann lets it go at that and expresses satisfaction with his present success. His utterance at T-11 position - 'But I am here today' - is not simply a superfluously phatic remark. It is a statement of his eagerness to forgo all past unpleasantness in view of the pleasure accorded him at the present moment. His open-mindedness and present-oriented approach is appreciated at T-12 position by Saeeda Bai with the expression - 'Wherever Dagh has sat down, he has sat down?' Mann answers with a witty suggestion at T-13 position that he may never leave - expressing his wish and determination.

**Illustrative value of the text**

The present interaction illustrates the courtesan Saeeda Bai’s subtle ways of influencing and enchanting her customers. As befits the requirements of her profession, she resorts to suggestive expressions and achieves the desired effects by means of implicatures rather than by overt statements. There is total absence of any kind of open declaration of love or emotional attachment on her part - no avowal and no explicit statement, and yet she gets complete hold on Mann's mind and exercises such control over him that she can play with him like a toy.

3.2.7.3 : **Conversation Three**

**Extract selected for analysis**

'Do sit still and listen, Dagh Sahib.' said Saeeda Bai in a coquettish voice. 'You want to be close to me, to understand me, don't you?'

'Yes, yes, of course,'

'Why, Dagh Sahib?'

'Why?' asked Maan incredulously.

'Why?' persisted Saeeda Bai.

'Because I love you.'

'What is love -this ill-natured thing that makes enemies even of friends?' This was too
much for Maan, who was in no mood to get involved in abstract speculations. A sudden, horrible thought struck him: 'Do you want me to go as well?'

Saeeda Bai was silent, then she tugged her sari, which had slipped down slightly, back over her head. Her kohl-blackened eyes seemed to look into Maan's very soul. 'Dagh Sahib, Dagh Sahib!' she rebuked him.

Maan was instantly repentant, and hung his head. 'I just feared that you might want to test our love by distance,' he said. 'That would cause me as much pain as you,' she told him sadly. 'But what I was thinking was quite different.'

She was silent, then played a few notes on the harmonium and said:

'Your Urdu teacher, Rasheed, is leaving for his village in a few days. He will be gone for a month. I don't know how to arrange for an Arabic teacher for Tasneem or an Urdu teacher for you in his absence. And I feel that in order to understand me truly, to appreciate my art, to resonate to my passion, you must learn my language, the language of the poetry I recite, the ghazals I sing, the very thoughts I think.'

'Yes, yes.' whispered Maan, enraptured.

'So you must go to the village with your Urdu teacher for a while - for a month.'

(A Suitable Boy, 354-355)

**Idealised conversational passage**

T-1 Saeeda Bai : (Coquettishly) Do sit still and listen, Dagh Sahib. You want to be close to me, to understand me, don't you?

T-2 Maan : Yes, yes, of course.

T-3 Saeeda Bai : Why, Dagh Sahib?

T-4 Maan : (Incredulously) Why?

T-5 Saeeda Bai : Why?

T-6 Maan : Because I love you.

T-7 Saeeda Bai : What is love - this ill-natured thing that makes enemies even of friends?

T-8 Maan : (With sudden apprehension) Do you want me to go as well?

T-9 Saeeda Bai : (Searching deep into his soul, and rebukes him) Dagh Sahib, Dagh Sahib!

T-10 Maan : (Instantly repentant) I just feared that you might want to test our love by distance.

T-11 Saeeda Bai : (Sadly) That would cause me as much pain as you. But what I was thinking was quite different. (She remains silent for some time, then plays a few notes on the harmonium and says) Your Urdu teacher, Rasheed, is leaving for his village in a few days. He will be gone for a month. I don't know how to arrange for an Arabic teacher for Tasneem or an Urdu teacher for you in his absence. And I feel that in order to understand me truly, to appreciate my art, to resonate to my passion, you must learn my language, the language of the poetry I recite, the ghazals I sing, the very thoughts I think.

T-12 Maan : (Whispers enraptured) Yes, yes.

T-13 Saeeda Bai : So you must go to the village with your Urdu teacher for a while - for a month.
Textual Background

One day Mann returned home late at night. He was fully drunk. He had squandered all the money in he had on whiskey, whores and gambling; and he looked wild. Mr Mahesh Kapoor was working till late that night jotting down points for the discussion on the Zamindari Bill in the Assembly Session. Hearing Maan’s irregular footsteps, he commanded him to his room at once. Maan was no longer in his senses. Mr Mahesh Kapoor hit him hard on the face, poured a glass of cold water over his head, and ordered him to go away from him the very next day. Mann’s rebellious spirit revolted against his father’s tyranny. He decided to leave the house, but he won’t leave Brahmpur. The next morning he went to Saeeda Bai and reported to her what had passed between the father and the son. Saeeda Bai had by now gained a complete hold over Maan. The reader is informed that ‘one tear, one remark that implied that something he had said or done had caused her injury - and Mann’s heart would go out to her. No matter what the cost to himself, he would protect her from the cruel censorious world’. It is in this framework of the relationship that the following interaction takes place.

Significance of the passage

This interaction reveals how Saeeda Bai is a really hard-headed and professional courtesan. She loves Maan sincerely. But then she has also to think of her profession and her income. And Maan was becoming too demanding and too insistent of late. She had already thought over all this quite seriously, but she had not been able to come to any conclusion. It was a tough decision for her. She understands, and has complete hold over, the situation and makes it a point to be pragmatic about it. She would not be excessively encumbered by emotional attachment and undue involvement in her relationship with Mann. She would make use of it only so far as it is useful for her. The moment it becomes taxing and cumbersome to her profession she would seriously rethink of the whole situation, and if necessary, would get over the affair by gradually manipulating circumstances in the safest way without hurting anybody or seriously affecting or damaging the relationship. She handles Maan very tactfully, leads him into a
make-believe world, and succeeds in achieving an effect that all the threats and bullying of his father and all the entreaties and fond admonitions of his mother could not. Despite his rebellious mood, she persuades him to go away for a month. In fact, all through this interaction Saeeda Bai is half serious, half affecting. She it seems is not entirely sure about how she should tackle the issue.

**Implicature Analysis**

At T-1 position Saeeda Bai commands Maan in coquettish voice to sit still and listen. She thereby implicates her irritation at his light-hearted attitude to what she has to say. Maan understands the message and obeys her. Her utterance ‘You want to be close to me, and to understand me, don’t you?’ is a statement ending in a tag question, which serves the semantic function of a request for confirmation of the proposition. At T-2 position Mann responds with the expected answer - ‘Yes, yes, of course’. Then, at T-3 position, in a kind of pseudo-serious manner she asks him why he wanted it to be so. Puzzled by her question, at T-4 position Mann incredulously, and as if he has totally missed the point, repeats her question. His utterance ‘Why?’ implicates his desire to know what point she was trying to make by asking that question, and whether she was asking it seriously. When at T-5 position she confirms that it was a genuine question by repeating - ‘why?’, at T-6 position Mann gives an obvious answer - ‘Because I love you’. But then at T-7 position Saeeda Bai asks him another question - ‘What is love - this ill-natured thing that makes enemies even of friends?’ Her abstract reasoning irritates Maan, and a sudden horrible thought strikes him. He imagines that she too wanted him to go away. At T-8 position, therefore, he tries to get his intuition confirmed. Embarrassed by his question, Saeeda Bai remains silent for a moment. Then recollecting herself, at T-9 position, she looks at him in such a deep searching way and rebukes him. ‘Dagh Sahib, Dagh Sahib!’ she says. Her utterance implicates her indictment of Mann’s thinking. It seems to express her wonder at whether and how Maan could conceive, cherish or entertain such a horrid, impossible thought. Apparently struck by this indictment, Mann suddenly withdraws his accusation, and looking sad and repentant, at T-10 position, he confesses that for a moment he had feared
whether Saeeda Bai wanted to test their love by distance. He thus implicates that the doubt he expressed was not a deep cherished thought but a passing reflection, and that she need not take it seriously. Struck by the emotional, apologetic tenor of his explanation. Saeeda Bai tells him at T-11 position that such a course of action would be as much painful to her as it was for him. But then she assures him that that was not what she had been thinking of. And then, very tactfully, she starts talking about Rasheed going home for a month and about her genuine concern for his learning the language of her heart and of her songs. Maan listens to her enraptured and expresses his agreement at T-12 position. He has clearly failed to understand what Saeeda Bai was hinting at. At T-13 position, therefore, driving home her conclusion Saeeda Bai tells him that the situation demands that he go away at once with Rasheed at least for a month. It is clear that apart from all her expressions of regret and protest, she had very tactfully, and quite effectively, made a point. She had successfully driven home the idea that if need arises, Mann will have to be prepared to leave the town and be away from her for some time. When the most challenging task of giving voice to the notion has been successfully performed, all that remained to be settled was only the mode, the manner, the time and duration of their separation.

**Illustrative value of the text**

The present interaction illustrates how the implicated propositions need not necessarily be the real beliefs of the speaker, and that the hearer might be persuaded to take them for the real ones because there is no way to verify the sincerity of the speaker's thoughts, feelings, beliefs or opinions. Most of the Saeeda Bai’s purported implications are false, or at least insincere in nature. She has decided to get rid of Maan temporarily. She exploits his present circumstances to achieve her goal. Maan, blinded by his passion and infatuation, takes her implicated propositions at their face value and fails to see through her premeditated design. It is thus obvious that Maan is led into an action against his will as a result of the implicated insincere propositions.
He allowed the policeman to search Maan's room. The bed had not been slept in. There was no sign of anything remotely resembling a weapon. 'Have you found anything to interest you?' asked Mr Mahesh Kapoor. He kept thinking back to the searches and arrests that he and Prem Nivas had undergone in the time of the British.

The Sub-Inspector looked around as quickly as possible, apologized profusely, and left. 'If Mr Maan Kapoor does return, would Minister Sahib ask him to come to the Pasand Bagh Police Station? It would be better than the police coming here again,' he said. Mahesh Kapoor nodded. He was stunned, but did not appear to be anything but calm and sarcastic.

When they had left, he tried to console his wife with the thought that there had been some mistake. But Mrs Mahesh Kapoor was convinced that something disastrous had indeed happened - and that Maan, somehow, in his impetuosity, had caused it. She wanted to go at once to the Civil Hospital to see how Firoz was, but Mahesh Kapoor said that it would be best to wait till morning. Anyway, in her state of health, it was perhaps best if she did not see Firoz.

'If he comes home, we can't give him up,' she said.

'Don't be stupid,' said Mahesh Kapoor impatiently. Then he shook his head. 'You must go to bed now.'

'I won't be able to sleep.'

'Well, then, pray,' said Mahesh Kapoor impatiently. 'But keep yourself covered up. Your chest sounds bad. I will call a doctor in the morning.'

'Call a lawyer for him, not a doctor for me,' said Mrs Mahesh Kapoor, who was in tears.

'Can't we get him bail?'

'He hasn't been arrested yet,' said Mahesh Kapoor. Then a thought occurred to him. Though it was the middle of the night, he phoned up the middle Bespectacled Bannerji, and asked him about anticipatory bail.

(A Suitable Boy, 1202)

**Idealised conversational passage**

| T-1 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor : | (Allowed the policeman to search Maan's room) Have you found anything to interest you? |
| T-2 | The sub-inspector : | (Looks around as quickly as possible, apologizes profusely) If Mr Maan Kapoor does return, would Minister Sahib ask him to come to the Pasand Bagh Police Station? It would be better than the police coming here again. (He leaves.) |
| T-3 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor : | (Nods, looking stunned but appearing calm and sarcastic. when the police left, he tries to console his wife with the thought that there had been some mistake.) |
| T-4 | Mrs Mahesh Kapoor : | If he comes home, we can't give him up. |
| T-5 | Mr Mahesh Kapoor : | (Impatiently) Don't be stupid. (Shaking his head) You must go to bed now. |
Textual Background

In a drunken and jealous feat Maan had dangerously stabbed Firoz with a fruit knife at Saeeda Bai’s. Firoz was found lying unconscious on the road near Saeeda Bai’s house. He was picked up by the police and was shifted to the hospital. Baitar House was promptly informed about the incidence and he was taken to the operation theatre. On investigation, the police traced the trail of blood leading to Saeeda Bai’s house. They got the watchman to confess that Firoz, Maan and Dr Bilgrami had been there a little while ago. He did not know what happened upstairs. They also inveigled confession from Saeeda Bai about the quarrel between Firoz and Maan. The SP had ordered the sub-inspector to proceed in the case according to the law. So the sub-inspector went to Mr. Mahesh Kapoor’s house in search of the culprit - Maan.

Significance of the passage

Mr Mahesh Kapoor, an upright minister of revenue, was worried about Maan for some time. Lately he had realised Maan’s worth, and Maan also had shown signs of improvement. He had assumed some responsibility and helped his father fight the assembly election from the rural constituency. Maan’s popularity among the rural masses had amazed Mr Mahesh Kapoor. He knew that Maan and Firoz were intimate friends, and could not understand how it all happened. This was sure to adversely affect his relationship with the Nawab Sahib, and consequently his election from the constituency.

Implicature Analysis

Speaking to the policeman at T-1 Mr Mahesh Kapoor expresses his desire to know whether the police found anything suspicious or any evidence concerning
the suspected event. He thereby implicates his eagerness and annoyance at the happening and at the search. At T-2 the sub-inspector apologizes profusely and leaves, requesting Mr Mahesh Kapoor to send Mann, if he returns home, to Pasand Bagh police station. failing which, he warns, the police would be forced to come back and arrest him there which won't be good considering the family reputation and status of the house. Mr Mahesh Kapoor was annoyed at the threat, but he was too stunned to say anything. He looked calm and sarcastic.

At T-3 Mr Mahesh Kapoor, in an attempt at consoling and reassuring his wife, implicates that he does not believe the accusation to be true and that Maan has done nothing of the sort; that things will be all right and that she should not worry unnecessarily.

At T-4 Mrs Mahesh Kapoor implicates that if Mann comes home she won't allow Mahesh Kapoor to hand him over to the police.

At T-5 Mr Mahesh Kapoor says that her suggestion was stupid, and that in case Mann comes home they will have to hand him over to the police. He expresses concern about her health and advises her to go to bed. He thus implicates that he is worried more about her health than about Maan's arrest.

At T-6 Mrs Mahesh Kapoor implicates that in view of the present calamity it will be impossible for her to be calm and think of her own health.

At T-7 Mahesh Kapoor implicates that their getting worried is useless and that they are helpless. He thereby tries to convince his wife that keeping out of bed and getting exposed to cold would seriously affect her health; that it wasn't good for her. Moreover, it will only invite more trouble and make the situation worse. He reassures her that he will call for a doctor on the next morning.

At T-8 Mrs. Mahesh Kapoor suggests that at the moment Mahesh Kapoor should think of helping Maan and not worry about her health. By way of implicature she suggests that they should try and get him bail.

At T-9 Mr Mahesh Kapoor seems to say that there is no need to think of getting him bail. when he is not even arrested. But then this gives him an idea and, though it was past midnight, he immediately rings up Adv. Bannerji and asks
him about provisions concerning anticipatory bail and whether he could avail of it in the present circumstances.

Illustrative value of the text
The present interaction illustrates how conversationalists express their fears and apprehensions in terms of implicatures rather than in direct statements. Mahesh Kapoor’s utterance at T-1 position, Mrs Mahesh Kapoor’s utterance at T-4 position, and Mahesh Kapoor’s utterance later at T-8 position, serve to express the concerns, desires and apprehensions of the respective speakers. The subject is so delicate and so sensitive that even to think of direct treatment is offending.

3.2.8.2 : Conversation Two

Extract selected for analysis

Firoz's face lit up when he saw his friend. So. You’ve come!' he said. I feel I'm in jail here. I've been asking for you for a week, but the Superintendent won't let messages out. I hope you've brought me some whisky.'

Maan started weeping. Firoz looked so pale - really, as if he had just returned from death.

'Have a look at my scar,' Firoz said, trying to lighten the situation. He pushed the bed sheet down and pulled up his kurta.

'Impressive,' said Maan. still in tears. 'Centipede.'

He went to Firoz's bedside, and touched his friend’s face.

They talked for a few minutes, each attempting to avoid what might cause the other pain except in such a way as would more probably defuse it.

'You're looking well,' said Maan.

'How poorly you lie,' said Firoz. 'I wouldn't take you on as a client. ... These days I find I lack concentration. My mind wanders.' he added with a smile. 'It's quite interesting.'

They were silent for a minute. Maan put his forehead to Firoz's and sighed painfully.

He did not say how sorry he was for all he had done. He sat down near Firoz.

(A Suitable Boy. 1302)

Idealised conversational passage

| T-1  | Firoz : | Firoz's face lit up when he saw his friend. So. You’ve come! I feel I’m in jail here. I’ve been asking for you for a week, but the Superintendent won’t let messages out. I hope you’ve brought me some whisky. |
| T-2  | Maan : | (Starts weeping. Firoz looked so pale - really, as if he had just returned from death.) |
| T-3  | Firoz : | (Trying to lighten the situation) Have a look at my scar. (He pushed the bed sheet down and pulled up his kurta.) |
| T-4  | Maan : | (Still in tears) Impressive. Centipede. (He went to Firoz's bedside, and touched his friend’s face.) You're looking well. |
| T-5  | Firoz : | How poorly you lie. I wouldn’t take you on as a client. |
... (With a smile) These days I find I lack concentration. My mind wanders. It's quite interesting.

(They are silent for a minute. Maan puts his forehead to Firoz's and sighs painfully. He does not say how sorry he was for all he had done. He sits down near Firoz.)

Textual Background
The disastrous, almost fatal, episode of Maan's attack on Firoz gave rise to a series of unpleasant consequences - Firoz's precarious health, Maan's arrest, his mother's death, estrangement with the Nawab sahib, the hostile propaganda among the Muslim voters, the consequent defeat in the assembly election, bitterness all around, etc. This strained the relations between the two households. Maan had been confined into jail and Firoz into a hospital for several days. Firoz was now relieved from the hospital but he was still bedridden. Maan was granted bail and was temporarily free. Maan had lost his mother and had caused a lot of distress to his family. Both of them wanted to meet each other, but it was simply impossible. Firoz somehow contrived to send a note to Maan. And, without further delay, Maan rushed to meet his friend. He had to show Firoz's note to the Nawab Sahib's secretary before he was admitted into the house.

Significance of the passage
The present conversation shows that despite the almost fatal injury Mann had perpetrated to Firoz, their mutual love and trust remains unaffected. It reflects the kind of deep understanding they share. Both had suffered on account of the inexplicable senseless episode, and felt the need to comfort and reassure each other. They speak with great restraint lest something inadvertently said might hurt the other's feelings. It is clear to both of them that it was just an accident and their conscience was clear; that they had nothing to hide from each other or to blame each other for. They understood each other only too perfectly well to harbour any misunderstanding.

Implicature Analysis
Firoz's utterance at T-1 position - 'So you have come?' implicates that he was impatiently waiting for Maan to come for a long time. He said that he wanted to
get out of the house and be free. She asked for some whisky. Mann knew that he had almost fatally injured his friend. His friend’s warm gesture made him feel all the more guilty and miserable and he starts weeping. His behaviour expresses his profound misery at the tormenting feeling that he was responsible for his friend’s precarious condition; that he had almost killed him, and that he was to blame.

Firoz tried to lighten the situation by saying at T-3 position - 'have a look at my wound', and thereby implicating that he was not at all blaming Mann; and that he took it lightly. He thereby seems to implicate that Mann should not torment himself unnecessarily on account of what happened accidentally and unintentionally in a drunken state when Maan was blinded by anger and was not in his senses.

At T-4 position Maan also pretends to take it lightly and jokes about it. He then goes to Firoz's bedside, and touches his face. ‘You're looking well’ he says. He thus tries to comfort and reassure Firoz by saying that his health was improving fast. But then Firoz knows that Maan knew that he was not very well yet but did not want to say so lest it depress his friend further. He therefore tells Maan that he was lying but he was not very clever at telling lies. Then, with a smile, he tells Maan that these days he found he lacked concentration, and that his mind wandered. It was quite interesting, he says. Then the two friends are silent for a minute. Maan puts his forehead to Firoz's and sighs painfully. He does not say how sorry he was for all he had done. He sits down near Firoz. After some time he walks away happy to note that they had not discussed anything awkward. Their brave attempt to humour each other, however, appears pathetic and grotesque rather than happy and lively. It does, however, have an enlivening effect. It lightens the burden on their minds, and each one is reassured of the other’s sustaining friendship.

Illustrative value of the text

The present conversation illustrates how implicatures are attached to the semantic content such that much gets across besides words - even a look, a glance, a nod, a touch communicates the intended thoughts and feelings quite effectively. In fact, the two friends speak very little, and what they speak is not
really very significant. But the depth of their feelings and their concern for each other, their misery for the other’s suffering is effectively communicated by their acts, verbal or otherwise, rather than by the expressions they use to convey them.

3.2.8.3 : Conversation Three

Extract selected for analysis

Maan’s trial came up in a fortnight before the District and Sessions Judge. Both the Nawab Sahib and Mahesh Kapoor were present in the small courtroom. Firoz was one of the first witnesses. The prosecution lawyer, leading him with quiet confidence through the phrases of the statement he had given to the police, was startled when Firoz said:

'And then I stumbled and fell onto the knife.'
'I am sorry,' said the lawyer. 'What was that you said?'
'I said, I stumbled, and fell onto the knife that he was holding in his hand.'

The government advocate was utterly taken aback. Try as he might, he could not shake Firoz’s evidence. He complained to the court that the witness had turned hostile to the state and requested permission to cross-examine him. He put it to Firoz that his evidence was inconsistent with his statement to the police. Firoz replied that. He had been ill at the time of his statement, and that his memory had been blurred. It was only after his recovery that it had sharpened and clarified. The prosecutor reminded Firoz that he himself was a lawyer and that he was, on oath. Firoz, who was still looking pale, replied with a smile that he was well aware of it, but that even lawyers did not have perfect memories. He had relived the scene many times and he was certain now that he had stumbled against something - he thought it might have been a bolster - and had fallen onto the knife that Maan had just wrested from Saeeda Bai. ‘He just stood there. I think he thought he had done it,’ added Firoz helpfully, though he was fixlly aware of the limitations of evidence based on hearsay or the interpretation of the mental state of others. Maan sat in the dock, staring at his friend, hardly comprehending at first what was happening. A look of disturbed amazement spread slowly across his face. ...

The judge saw no reason why a man who had been so badly injured would go out of his way to protect someone who had deliberately inflicted such an injury on him. There was no evidence of collusion among the witnesses, no attempt by the defence to suborn anyone. He was led to the inescapable conclusion that Maan was not guilty. He acquitted Maan of both charges and ordered him released immediately.

(A Suitable Boy, 1310)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 The Prosecutor : (Leading Firoz through the statement the statement he had given to the police with quiet confidence)

T-2 Firoz : And then I stumbled and fell onto the knife.

T-3 The Prosecutor : I am sorry. What was that you said?

T-4 Firoz : I said, I stumbled, and fell onto the knife that he was holding in his hand.

T-5 The Prosecutor : (Taken aback, complains to the court and...
obtains the permission to cross-examine Firoz. But Firoz persisted on asserting and explaining his new statement.)

T-6 Firoz : He just stood there. I think he thought he had done it.

Textual Background
After the incidence of Maan’s attack on Firoz, Maan he had been arrested and confined to jail and Firoz into a hospital for several days. Firoz had now recovered from his injury and Maan had been temporarily acquitted on bail. Maan was subsequently charged with (i) the act of culpable homicide - an act of attempted murder, punishable under section 307 of the IPC, and with (ii) grievous hurt with a deadly weapon. Both these offences were unbailable and carried a possible sentence of imprisonment for life. He had confessed his crime and the statements of the victim and the other witnesses led to the inevitable conclusion that it was an intentional crime. The evidence was quite clear. But then during the past few weeks the heat of the event had cooled and Firoz and his father, the Nawab Sahib, had realised the futility of any revengeful act. It had occurred to them that the situation could be redeemed if they could construe the whole incident as an unfortunate accident due to Firoz’s excitement.

Significance of the passage
The present conversation shows that despite the almost fatal injury Mann had done to Firoz, their mutual love and trust remains unaffected. Firoz planned to redress the past bitterness by changing his statement in the court during Maan’s trial, taking the blame on himself saying that it was he who had fallen on the knife that Maan was holding in his hand.

Implicature Analysis
Firoz implicates by his utterances at T-2, T-4 and T-6 position that Maan had no intention to hurt him. and in fact did not injure him: that it was Firoz himself who had, in the rush and excitement, stumbled on the knife that Maan was holding in his hand and injured himself.

The Prosecutor’s utterance-initial hedged expression - 'I am sorry' at T-3 position, expresses his surprise and disagreement with what Firoz said. And as if
in disbelief, and to confirm whether he had not incorrectly heard or misunderstood him, he asks Firoz to repeat what he had said. But then Firoz, at T-4 position, not only asserts what he had already said but also elaborates upon his statement, making it more and more clear that it was his mistake and not Maan’s. His words 'he just stood there. I think he thought he had done it' at T-6 position clearly implicate that he did not consider it as Maan’s fault.

As for the other evidence contrary to what he said in his revised statement just now, it has been reported, in the narrative that follows, that Firoz explicitly suggested that probably in his drunken state and due to the excitement of the grievous nature of the situation, Mann must have thought or imagined that he had done it - thinking himself responsible he fled and absconded in panic for fear of immediate consequences. This explained how everybody including Maan himself had imagined and believed in something that seemed probable but was not a fact. As a result of this statement Mann was acquitted of both charges and released immediately.

**Illustrative value of the text**

This interaction exemplifies that in conversations it is the speaker purported beliefs, and not the speaker’s real ones, that the hearer or the analyst arrives at as the implicated propositions. For there is no way of knowing what the speaker’s real feelings are. The interactants and the analyst have, therefore, to confine themselves to the speaker implicated propositions. Here even the judge, after examinations and cross-examinations, arrives at a conclusion which is not factual but only a speaker purported fact.

The present interaction also illustrates how it is not only the words used but also the glances, gestures and even silence that could be made to serve as vehicles to carry implicatures. In the courtroom things happened so fast and so unexpectedly that it took even the prosecutor and the culprit and his family members some time to understand their full implication. As for Firoz and his father, the Navab Sahib, they were pretty premeditated, but even they refused to claim anything of the sort even after the judgment was pronounced. The accused and appellant parties avoided looking at each other. They did not express opinion or exchange
views and made it appear perfectly natural. Their glances implicate, their silence implicates. They are understood perfectly well by the concerned target audience. For the prosecutor, the magistrate, the other lawyers and audience in the courtroom the whole proceeding implicates one thing. For the parties involved it means a different thing. The matter appears too sensitive to be disclosed publicly at the moment. It comes about fairly well and every one is convinced that there is no foul play with the law or the under-the-table dealing or manipulation in the case. It only proves the validity of what the Nawab Sahib had said to his son earlier - 'And the same set of facts is open to many interpretations'. This reveals the limitations of implicature analysis.

3.2.8.4 : Conversation Four

Extract selected for analysis

Maan, dressed in a kurta-pyjama, as suited the weather, was standing a little distance away and heard nothing of this conversation. He looked sad, almost unsociable. For a moment he wondered where the harsingar tree was, before he realized that he was in a different garden altogether. Firoz came up to him, and they stood there, silent, for a while. A rose-petal or two floated down from somewhere. Neither bothered to brush it off. Imtiaz joined them after a while, then the Nawab Sahib and Mahesh Kapoor.

'It's all for the best, on the whole;' said Mahesh Kapoor. If had been an MLA, Agarwal would have had to ask me to join his Cabinet, and I would not have been able to stand it.'

'Well,' said the Nawab Sahib, 'whether things are for the best or not, that's how they are.'

There was a pause. Everyone was friendly enough; but no one knew what to talk about. Every topic seemed closed for one reason or another. There was no mention of law or laws, of doctors or hospitals, of gardens or music, of future plans or past recollections, of politics or religion, of bees or lotuses. The judges of the Supreme Court had agreed that the Zamindari Acts were constitutional; they were in the process of writing their judgment, which would be announced to the world at large in a few days. S.S. Sharma had been called to Delhi. The Congress MLAs of Purva - Pradesh had elected L.N. Agarwal as Chief Minister. Astoundingly enough, one of his first acts in office had been to send a firm note to the Raja of Marh refusing government or police protection for any further attempts to salvage the linga. The Banaras people had decided that Maan was no longer a suitable boy; they had informed Mahesh Kapoor of their decision.

All these subjects, and many others, were on everyone's mind-and no one's tongue.

(A Suitable Boy. 1340-1341)

Idealised conversational passage

T-1 Mahesh Kapoor : It's all for the best, on the whole. If I had
been an MLA, Agarwal would have had to ask me to join his Cabinet, and I would not have been able to stand it.

T-2 Nawab Sahib: Well, whether things are for the best or not, that's how they are.

Textual Background
All the old friends from the two families come together on the occasion of Lata’s marriage. However, despite their close familiarity and long-standing, well-sustained friendship they find themselves unable to frankly communicate with each other. Though the occasion was happy and the feelings good, much happened during the past few days that prevented them from talking on any subject.

Significance of the passage
This short exchange bears upon it the imprint of the scars and ravages left by the recent events on the relationship between the two grand old men in the novel. They had been friends right from the beginning and their friendship has sustained though most tough times and testing situations. But the recent happenings are so fresh and overpowering that despite their genuine desire to reassure each other of their unfailing goodwill and trust they are unable to express them.

Implicature Analysis
On the occasion of Lata’s marriage the friends and well-wishers had gathered at Dr Kishen Chand Seth’s house. Mann was standing in the garden. Firoz joins him a little while later. Both were silent. A rose petal floated down from somewhere, but they did not bother to brush it aside. A similar event on the occasion of Pran’s marriage a year or so back had given rise to a jovial and lively conversation between the two friends. Now they are both sullen, it has no effect on them. Imtiaz joins them and then came the Nawab Sahib and Mahesh Kapoor. Mahesh Kapoor breaks the ice by saying at T-1 position that it was all for the best. He thereby implicates that he has no grudge against anything or anybody. He, however, tries to cover up the implication by giving it a totally different and matter of fact turn hoping to divert the conversation along the
dimension of political implications of his being defeated in the recent Assembly
Elections. He talks about how it would have been intolerable for him if Agarwal
had become the chief minister and had invited him to join his ministry.
However, at T-2 position, reacting to the stated as well as implicated
propositions, The Nawab Sahib responds in a fairly detached manner. Without
joining in or refuting what Mahesh Kapoor said and meant, he simply offers a
comment – ‘Well, whether things are for the best or not, that’s how they are’.
Though a tautological expression, his utterance signifies so much and
encompasses such a formidable range of implicatures as would be difficult to
capture in an analyses.

**Illustrative value of the text**
The present interaction illustrates how silence speaks a lot more than words
could possibly express. They are all friendly, but no one knows what to say.
There are a thousand subjects to talk about. In fact, so much has happened in and
to each family, but all these matters somehow pose as unsuitable at the moment.
And as the author points out 'every topic seems closed for one reason or other'.
The almost unnatural silence speaks a lot about what happened in the past and
what is going on in their minds at present. It is beyond expression. To say
anything other than ‘the uneasy state of mind’ could be branded as reading too
much between the lines.
CHAPTER IV: ANALYSIS OF CONVERSATIONS - AN EQUAL MUSIC

4.1 Preliminaries

4.2 Conversational passages

4.2.1 Cluster One
  4.2.1.1 Conversation One
  4.2.1.2.1 Conversation Two - A
  4.2.1.2.2 Conversation Two - B

4.2.2 Cluster Two
  4.2.2.1 Conversation One
  4.2.2.2 Conversation Two
  4.2.2.3.1 Conversation Three - A
  4.2.2.3.2 Conversation Three - B

4.2.3 Cluster Three
  4.2.3.1 Conversation One
  4.2.3.2 Conversation Two
  4.2.3.3.1 Conversation Three - A
  4.2.3.3.2 Conversation Three - B
  4.2.3.4 Conversation Four
  4.2.3.5 Conversation Five

4.2.4 Cluster Four
  4.2.4.1 Conversation One
  4.2.4.2 Conversation Two

4.2.5 Cluster Five
  4.2.5.1 Conversation One
  4.2.5.2 Conversation Two
  4.2.5.3 Conversation Three

4.2.6 Cluster Six
  4.2.6.1 Conversation One
  4.2.6.2 Conversation Two
4.2.6.3 Conversation Three

**4.2.7 Cluster Seven**

4.2.7.1 Conversation One
4.2.7.2 Conversation Two
4.2.7.3 *Conversation Three*
4.2.7.4 Conversation Four

**4.2.8 Cluster Eight**

4.2.8.1 Conversation One
4.2.8.2 Conversation Two

**4.2.9 Cluster Nine**

4.2.9.1 Conversation One