CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

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The analysis of speech acts from the five novels of Khushwant Singh, viz. I shall not hear the nightingale, Burial at sea, The Company of Women, Delhi: A novel and Sunset Club, in terms of the speech act theory presented by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969) offers a new perspective to study literary discourse especially fictional discourse. While studying the conversations of the characters, the speech situation, and the five major speech acts: Assertive, Commissive, Expressive, Directive and Declarative are kept at the center. The study of the linguistic interactions of the characters with the help of speech acts is a novel way of interpreting fictional discourse and understanding the socio-cultural dimension.

These five novels are quite different from each other in depicting the character and incidence. The characters and speech situation in the novel The Company of Women and Burial at Sea is a personal account of protagonist Mohan Kumar and Victor Bhagwan, who are notorious womanizers and greedy businessmen. While in the novel Sunset Club, is a story of three old friends and their experiences in their life. In Delhi: A Novel and I shall not hear nightingale, these are the chronicles of British Raj and their socio-economic effects in the society. The society, characters reflected in all the novels are contradicting each other but it has certain value at depth. All these novels are pole apart as for as themes are concerned. The
study of speech acts has certainly helped to know inner feelings of each character and its significance in the theme.

The highly marked speech acts of the characters selected from these novels have been classified into five major types such as Assertives, Commissives, Expressives, Directives and Declaratives.

These five novels are quite different from each other in depicting the characters and incidents. The characters and speech situation in I Shall not Hear Nightingale and Burial at sea are interwoven on the background of the most gruesome historical event of the British raj in Indian subcontinent. Whereas characters and speech situations in Sunset Club are vivid experiences of the three old people/friends. On the other hand, the novel The Company of Women is a personal account of Mohan Kumar, the protagonist who is a notorious womanizer and a sex addict. The novel deals with the misadventures of Mohan Kumar as far as his sex life is concerned. The society reflected in the novel is highly sophisticated and americanized.

And the last novel Delhi: A novel talks about journey of a city from ancient time to current contemporary world through the eyes of different witnesses.

The social relationship between all the characters from all these novels is of mutual respect as well as self-interest. Thus, these five novels are far different from each other’s in terms of themes are concerned. The study of speech acts helps in revealing the inner layers of the minds of the characters in the respective novels and their intentions behind producing that utterance in that particular context.
5.2. Major Finding

1. The study shows that the socio cultural dimensions are revealed via the utterances used by the characters in the selected novels.

In the novel I shall not hear nightingale, family of SherSingh and their relationship with their servants, with their family friends and British officers etc. talks a lot about, vividness in terms of their approach with all the above. They maintain a decorum when they approach British officers while they converse with their servants they are fearless and manner less too.

In the novel Delhi, most of the characters and their behaviour is controlled by the social status they have achieved. Hence, it is a mixture of full of mannerism as well as manner less behaviour. In the novel the Company of Woman and Burial at Sea where Mohan Kumar and Victor Bhagwan both are at the superior position. Hence, they take full liberty in terms of their behavioral pattern. Their wealth and societal position allows them to behave in any way they think.

While in the novel Sunset Club all the three old friends are beyond their societal status and respect. They follow only one principle, i.e., friendship. While following this, many times they forget whom they are talking. They believe in equality and respect each other’s opinions and intellectual abilities. The linguistic exchanges of the characters reveal their social and cultural ethos. For example, the interaction between the educated Mohan Kumar and Victor Bhagwan (Company of Woman and Burial at Sea) with their staff and servants, interaction between three old friends in Sunset Club, interaction between various characters in Delhi: A Novel and interaction between Sher Singh and their troop in I Shall not hear Nightingale are
nothing but social dilemma in itself. In Indian culture, strangers are often directly asked about their marital status and their means of livelihood to create the feeling of closeness. On the other hand, direct questions would amount in politeness. For normal Indians, it is common practice to ask direct questions. These types of expressions are very common in Indian context.

It is also observed that education and wealth determines the socio-cultural status of the conversational patterns. Socio-cultural status influences the choice of utterances of the characters in the selected novels. The choice of utterances addressed to uneducated and poor addressee are snubbing, threatening and warning. On the other hand, choice of utterances addressed to educated and rich addressee are polite humble and full of honorifics. All those varieties of utterances (speech acts) reveals the socio-cultural dimensions and makes each novel more authentic document in Indian context.

2.

It is observed that the position, education, financial status and social standing of the interlocutors decide the hierarchical relationship in Indian society. The illocutionary force of the utterance of the subordinate person to his superior, the uneducated person addresses to educated person, and the out caste person addresses to socially high class person are always polite apologetic and submissive in nature. On the other hand, the illocutionary force of the utterance by the person in authority, the educated person to uneducated person, and the high class person to out caste person are always an order, command or threat. The illocutionary force and perlocutionary
effect of the utterances itself signals the hierarchical relationship of the conversational partners in the context.

In all the selected five novels, we can observe that all the interlocutors are dominated by position, education and financial status. Their conversations and choice of utterances are nothing but their ability and inability to perform and act in particular situation.

3.

The study also shows that the utterances and its illocutionary and perlocutionary effect used by characters throw light on a man-woman relationship in the novels under consideration. It is noticed that the social class, education, age etc. influence the use of utterances among the men-women interlocutors. For example in the novels like Company of Women and Burial at Sea, where protagonist Mohan Kumar and Victor Bhagawan use different kind of utterances, depending upon to whom they are talking. Mohan Kumar at one hand loves and take care of Sarojini and Susantika because they belong to the higher social class and are highly educated. On the contrary Mohan Kumar exploits Dhanno ad South Indian Nurse because they are socially, economically and educationally backward. Where as in Burial at Sea, protagonist Victor adores and admires Ma Durgeshwari and his daughter Bharti. Where as in the novel I shall not her nightianlge, SherSingh treats his wife Champak as a slave to him and his mother, his sister and lady Taylor, respectfully. Same goes with the novel Sunset Club, BegSaheb treat his wife as uneducated and do not concern for her wellbeing where as Mr.Sharma, treat his sister with full of respect as she is equally educated and economically stable.
It is observed that in the selected novels the illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the utterances show the solidarity and bond of love among interlocutors. For example in the novel *Burial at Sea*, interactions between Victor and his Father Mr. Mattoo. Victor is aware about Mr. Mattoo’s illicit relationship with lady Velerie But he excuses her and many times confesses that she has brought happiness in his father’s life. At this particular time he is not worried about what is morally and ethically correct, but he is more concerned with his father’s happiness. In the same novel Victor confesses his love towards Mahatma Gandhi and despite of all Gandhi’s warnings, teachings and mentoring, he expresses his love towards him. In the novel *Company of Women*, Mohan Kumar’s behavior towards his father is nothing but his attachment to his father and it is revealed through choice of utterances. In both the novels the solidarity and bond of love between the son and father is exceptionally well crafted. In the novel *I shall not hear the Nightingale*, mother-son love is beautifully narrated. When Sher Singh is arrested and his mother meets him in jail, he cries and expresses himself. At this time he asks for her advice and his mother suggests him not to disclose anybody’s name. At that particular point of time Sher Singh is completely frightened and he is about to tell the names of his troop members.

Same love and affection is also observed in the novels of Sunset Club, where Baig Sahib and his wife care for each other irrespective of each other’s likings and disliking habits (smoking and drinking). Mrs. Baig doesn’t like Mr. Baig’s smoking and drinking habits, also she is aware about his illicit
relationships but still she doesn’t objects Mr. Baig and many times expresses her love towards him.

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It is observed that illocutionary and perloutionary effect of the utterances used by characters in the selected novels reveal bureaucratic relationship. The study shows that the authority and responsibility matters a lot, in bureaucratic relationships. The illocutionary force of the utterances of the Victor Bhagawan, Mr. Mohan Kumar, Mr. ButaSingh, Mr. Taylor, Ms. Bharti Bhagwan, all the Nawab’s and Shah’s in novel Delhi are orders and commands to their fellow workers and staff members. The perlocutionary effects of the orders and commands to the junior staff are factual reporting and mutely agreeing. In this bureaucratic set up all the conversations among these interlocutors are nothing but orders and commands and directives etc. And as a perlocutionary effects, the junior staff has to follow it. These conversations show that there are some conventional protocols based upon the shared knowledge of the interlocutors to be obeyed by the subordinates in bureaucratic set up. It shows that a person belonging to the lower class and ready of hierarchy always flatters and ready to take orders from seniors. In all of these novels the type of relationship among interlocutors is quiet significant. Here junior staff accepts the commands and orders and the perlocutionary effect on the part of these staff is obedience and agreement.

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It is noticed that the illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the utterances of the characters expose the relations between powerful vs. powerless in the context of the selected novels. The study shows that the
authority, education, social class, and economic status decide the powerfulness and powerlessness. For example, conversations between Mr. Mohan Kumar and Dhano, Victor Bhagawan and his servant, Mr. Buta Singh and his staff, and Mr. Baig and his servants etc. Through these conversations we can conclude that powerful persons generally rule the powerless persons. In other words, powerful person’s rules and orders powerless persons and in return powerless person apologizes and request and behaves in a fearful manner.

It is discovered that the illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the utterances of the characters reveal the religious aspects in the selected novels. It is evident that all their novels are based on the religious sentiments. Many a times religious sentiments rule the human behaviour and their actions. In fact, in Indian context, religion plays a very important role. Characters from these selected novels many times showed their religious beliefs to perform a certain actions. For example, Mr. Victor Bhagawan on his relationship with Maa Durgeshwari, Mr. Mohan Kumar and his strong beliefs in Hindu religion, Ms. Yasmin and her strong faith in Muslim religion, Sher Singh’s mother and her strong belief in Sikhism, Sher Singh’s servant lady and her frequent visits to Peer Baba dargha, Mr. Buta Singh, Mr. Sharma and Mr. Baigh and their ideology towards Hindu, Sikh and Muslim culture, etc. All these examples reveals that all the interlocutors behave and perform in a particular manner in almost all the situations. This is nothing but result of their immense beliefs on their religion and religious ideologies. In fact, most of the time they forget what is good and what is
bad. They just follow their religion and decide what is good and what is bad in terms of religion.

The study shows that illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the conversations among these characters bring in focus the religious atmosphere and underlines the importance of God and Religion to them. These examples show that their respective religions influence their linguistic behaviors. The control of religion over interlocutor is so strong that every religion has a different style of greetings too. For example, in Delhi :a novel, Lady Alice is bound to change her style of greeting and forced to do it in Muslim style by saying, Assalaam walaikum. And she has to accept it because if she denies, then, there is possible threat to her life.

In the novel Company of Woman, Mr. Mohan Kumar’s father advises him not to eat beef in USA because eating beef is considered as sacrilegious for the Hindus. In the novel, Burial at Sea, Victor Bhagwan is advised by Mahatma Gandhi to behave and live in a particular style because certain things are restricted in Hindu religion, like, drinking, smoking, gambling, illicit affairs, etc. In the novel, I Shall not Hear Nightingale, Sher Singh’s mother advises Sher Singh not to reveal anybody’s name during interrogation. She says, Guru Saheb instructed her that Sher Singh should not reveal anybody’s name otherwise it will be a great sin on his part.

It is also discovered that illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the utterances of the characters in the selected novels reveal gender inequality. In the given context, men assume themselves to be superior and treat their women counter parts as in failure. Our protagonist in the novel, Company of
women, Mr. Mohan Kumar is a gender biased personality. His conversations with all the women companions are nothing but an act of pleasure, i.e., sexual pleasure. Every time he changes the women companion and his feelings towards her changes and remains only at the level of sexual pleasure. In fact, many times his utterances like woman in his bed is worth (Pg. 21), To me sex was the more pressing need then love and companionship (Pg. 108). These utterances shows his true nature and mindset.

Same thing is observed in the novel Delhi, where all the Badhsahs and Nawaabs treat woman as unequal. They treat them as a thing for pleasure that’s why they do not bother about woman and their existence. In fact, when a lady is caught, who is of motherly age to Mr. Nihal Singh, the sepoy to Mr. Hudson Saheb. At that time, Nihal Singh passes lewd comments towards her shows her gender biased nature. Throughout these novels, women are treated and considered as unequal. They are considered as the thing of pleasure. Not only they are treated as unequal, but also they are treated as worthless.

On the contrary to the previous observation, it is also noteworthy to find out that illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the utterances of the selected novels reveal love as a major feeling and emotion.

Love plays very important role in most of characters and their lives. Most of the characters in the selected novels reveal their strong emotion i.e., love at one point of time in their life. All the protagonists from the selected novels shows this emotion very strongly through their utterances. Mr. Mohan
Kumar, Mr. Victor Bhagawan, Mr. Sher Singh, Badshah Shah Jahan, etc., all these protagonist of the novels show their love towards their companions. Most of the time, love and sex operate their life but sometimes they found true love in their relations. This love is not limited to their lady companions only. They show love towards their mother, father, nation, wife, sister and duty or job too. In Burial at Sea, Mr. Victor Bhagawan, shows his love towards Maa Durgeshwari, in the novel company of woman, Mr. Mohan Kumar shows his love towards Ms. Sarojini, Sher Singh, in the novel, I Shall not Hear Nightingale shows his love towards her mother, Mr. Victor Bhagawan shows his love towards his father and countryman, etc.

In short, love is a strongest emotion that is observed in most of the novels in given context. Thus, approach between interlocutors changes from person to person, but the ultimate emotion love controls their behavioral pattern and it is quite expressed through perlocutionary effect observed in the utterances.

It is found and discovered that illicit relations are revealed via illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the utterances of the characters in the selected novels.

In all the selected novels illicit relationship is dominating the theme of the novel. In fact, it acts as crucial stage in most of these novels. Many more incidents and speech situations occur because of illicit relations. The utterances used by interlocutors are dominated by illicit relationship. Mr. Mohan Kumar, Mr. Victor Bhagawan, two protagonists from the novel Company of woman and Burial at Sea reveals their illicit relationship towards woman characters in the novel. Also, at some point of time woman
are trying to take lead for illicit relationship for the sake of money and power. For example, Dhano, Maa Durgeshawari, Ms. Yasmin are seen as advancing their illicit relationship for their personal gain. Their utterances reveal perlocutionary effect of it many a times. It is evident that the speech situation and speech events in the novels are related to illicit relations. Based on illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the utterances, illicit relationship is expressed. There are so many evidences in the selected novels which talks and tells about illicit relationship among interlocutors.

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It is observed that Khuswant Singh, the author of these selected novels has deliberately used specific terms of Indian culture such as addressed terms, honorifics, greetings, abuses, and curses to make the characters in the novels more authentic. This use of terminology is context bound i.e., to say it is strictly observed in Indian context. The main purpose of this type of usage is to make all the characters and speech situations real and authentic.

In the novels the Company of Woman, Burial at Sea, Delhi a novel, Sunset Club and I Shall not hear the Nightingale; we can find many more example of this type usage. This type of usage gives local colour to the novel. It is noticed that the use of greeting and blessings establishes solidarity between the conversational partners. Culture specific use of greeting also makes the novel more real. For example, Sastrikaal, Assalaam Walakum Saheb, Namasteji, etc. reveal the Indianness. It also indicates the solidarity among the interlocutors.
It is discovered that honorifics are sociocultural specifics and show social closeness among the conversational partners. Honorifics are used according to the age status and family relationship of their person addressed. For example in the novel, I Shall not Hear Nightingale and Company of woman, excessive use of Shaeb ji, Sardar ji, etc. The suffix ‘JI’ is used to express deep respect among interlocutors. It also reveals respect and deep bond of love between interlocutors.

It is also noticed that illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect of the abusers and curses are very strong. Abuses and curses are emotional outburst and always aimed to hurt the person addressed. Abuses and curses are cultural specific and used in the selected novels as literal translational from Hindi language to make the speech situation realistic. It is intentionally to recreate an Indian social reality.

5.3. Scope for Further Study

The analysis of the speech acts from the five novels presented here is mainly based on the speech act theory advocated by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). This study analyses selected speech acts in terms of their illocutionary force and perlocutionary effect. Though the speech acts have been widely selected, there is inherent limitation in this selection. This analysis is comprehensive and touches a number of socio-cultural aspects in the life of the characters. Yet, the researcher feels that dealing with a single speech act at a time leaves out a lot of context of situation especially in dealing with a literary discourse. It is felt that this model for analysis could be extended to the whole chunk of interactions so that the whole lot of anaphoric references to the interactions can be dealt with meaningfully.
Analysis of interactions between two or more characters in a cohesive piece of literary interactions can be more rewarding, as it provides the whole context of situation to the speech acts that have to be analyzed. It is felt that it would give insight into how the literary language operates semantically and pragmatically. Khushwant Sing’s other novels may be studied by applying the other concepts in pragmatics such as ‘face saving’ and ‘face threatening’ strategies. One may study the novel of other prominent Indian writers with the help of the principles and theories in pragmatics.