ABSTRACT

The study of Discourse in the field of Communication Studies has been the most recent development. Any written or spoken piece of communication today is considered part of discourse that embraces language and issues related to it. In addition to just looking into language and language in use, Discourse Studies also take into consideration factors such as time, space, objects, beliefs, culture and context.

The present research primarily focuses on Discourse Studies in the Pragmatic perspective. The study of Discourse has been treated as a branch of Pragmatics. It aims at providing an explanatory description of systematic differences between form and function and the relationship between them in any written or spoken piece of communication. Thus, the study of Discourse unfolds as an integrated affair to three concepts – language in use, the communication of belief (cognition) and interaction (in social situation).


The novels selected for the study present a panoramic view of modern-day fiction. They bear a global appeal that reflects on various cultural and socio-political issues, both at the national and international levels. The issues of racism, question of identity, social class disparity and caste conflict, increasing economic inequality, political injustice, gender bias, psychological trauma and related issues have been undertaken by the authors. Analyzing the texts in their respective
contexts with respect to the acting and reacting dramatic personae has helped the researcher configure the parameters of Discourse analysis.

On occasion what individuals utter, they don’t mean but it also happens consistently that the addressee is expected to understand what is not overt in the speech but only hinted. Communication becomes a success if the interlocutor exercises his pragmatic competence to understand the meaning of the unspoken words by judging it from the context. How the hearer sees through the inherent meaning of the speech has been the subject of research. The present study in discourse analysis of the selected novels has elaborated on such intentional and contextual meaning of utterances searching for the rationale of their occurrence.

The thesis is divided into five chapters.

**Chapter I**, the introductory chapter constructs the background for the proposed research. The beginning section of the chapter offers a historical background of the study of Pragmatics and discusses its position and scope in modern Linguistics. The proceeding section introduces the concept of Discourse, its role in culture and communication studies accompanied by a brief overview of the notions of text and context and their relevance in Discourse Studies. The aims and objectives and the methodology of research have been discussed along with the scope and limitations of the study and the rationale for selection of novels. The chapter also offers short narratives of the four novels selected for the research. The background of the study being set, chapter II constructs a detailed theoretical framework of the present study in Discourse Analysis.

**Chapter II** derives a theoretical framework for the present study. It gives a detailed account of the Principle of Cooperation and Principle of Politeness. The
non-observance of the Principle of Cooperation (flouting of maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner), Principle of Politeness (The Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement and Sympathy maxims) has been stated sequentially. The Speech Act theory has been discussed with special explanations on the use of indirect speech acts. The overlapping of maxims has been discussed precisely.

Chapter III examines the non-observance of the Principle of Cooperation and Principle of Politeness in the selected pieces of fictional discourse. Fictional discourses have been systematically sorted and analyzed as per the flouting and non-observance of various maxims of cooperation and politeness.

Chapter IV analyzes the use of indirect speech acts in the dialogues. It analyzes how fictional characters have made use of conversational devices like irony, sarcasm, metaphor, rhetorical questions, circumlocutory speech and euphemism to achieve desired conversational goals.

Chapter V is the concluding chapter that enlists the research findings and the pedagogical implications of the research. It is found that one maxim of cooperation is flouted in order to observe another. Examples have been cited and analyzed in context when in order to become loyal speakers have flouted Quality but observed the Maxims of Politeness. Instances have been mentioned where Maxims of Politeness have been flouted to show off power equations. Speakers use indirect utterances in the form of irony, sarcasm, understatements, hyperbole and rhetorical questions in order to implicate complex emotions. A tradeoff between the principles is observed to be a common phenomenon recurring in the implicatures. Principles tend to overlap with each other as speakers seek to achieve more than one conversational goal in a single piece of conversation.
Above all, context plays a key role in analyzing any piece of conversation for, without an appropriate background, the utterances become ambiguous.

The last chapter also lists pedagogical implications of the present research. The analysis of the fictional discourses has enabled the researcher to comprehend the multi-layered meanings emerging in each piece of dialogue. It has offered a novel analytical perspective to the study of Indian novels in English. Adding a pragmatic viewpoint to the teaching and learning of works of fiction would definitely facilitate a fresh angle to it. Teachers and students of literature would view the fictional works from their socio-cultural perspectives and would be able to redefine the fictional characters through their utterances. More than one interpretation of the fictional work would broaden the scope for the delineation of characters. It also suggests the scope for further research in related fields.

The concluding chapter has been followed by a select bibliography along with a list of web references where the primary and secondary data sources have been duly acknowledged.

A discourse analysis of four selected Indian Novels in English has been attempted in the present research. It has viewed the non observance of the Cooperative Principle and the Principle of Politeness along with the application of the Indirect Speech Acts in the selected fictional discourse. It has been observed that the interlocutors have achieved various conversational goals by exercising the strategies of cooperation, politeness and indirect verbal communication.