CHAPTER II
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2.1 Preliminaries
Pragmatics explains the conversational pattern in interpersonal and social interactions. To quote David Crystal, ‘Pragmatics studies the factors which govern someone’s choice of language when they speak or write.’ (1971:243) As the aim of the present research is to analyze fictional discourse in contexts, it primarily focuses on the theories that explain the reasons behind the culture and context specificity of the fictional dialogues. For a similar reason, defining the principles of conversation and constructing the theory becomes vital. The present chapter is set to outline a comprehensive theoretical framework for the study on discourse. Due to practical constraints the theory will be restricted within the framework of the three primary approaches to Discourse Analysis – Paul Grice’s ‘Principles of Cooperation’, Geoffrey N. Leech’s ‘model of the Principles of Politeness’ and the ‘Speech Act Theory’ proposed and developed by J.R. Searle. The collected data will be analyzed using the parameters of the above mentioned conversational principles.

2.2 Cooperative Principle
Cooperation is an integral part of human interaction. People involved in a conversation, try not to confuse, trick or withhold relevant information from each other in order to be cooperative. Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson’s Theory of Relevance (1986) elaborates and simplifies the key concepts of the Cooperative Principle (1967) proposed by linguistic philosopher Paul Grice. The Principle of Cooperation thrives on the notion of conversational implicature that explains how the meaning of an utterance changes as per the speaker’s intention and the hearer’s understanding. Sperber and Wilson’s Relevance Theory supports the idea that ‘to understand an utterance is to prove its relevance.’ (Grundy, 1995:141) The
Relevance Theory suffices itself as a theory of pragmatic usage of language and studies why utterances are understood to different degrees by different hearers. It accounts for the degree of language understanding and also for failures of understanding. Relevance Theory features the notions of implicature and explicature, implicated premises and implicated conclusions, speaker’s judgement and hearer resources which are essential to the Gricean principle of cooperation. However, the present research will focus primarily on the notion of implicature as a lead to the theory of the Cooperative Principle.

2.2.1 Notion of Implicature

‘Any assumption communicated, but not explicitly so, is implicitly communicated: it is an implicature’ (Sperber and Wilson, 1986: 182). It is unlike an explicature which is an explicitly communicated assumption.

Example:
In a conversation between two friends
   A: ‘Have you started preparing for the exams?’
   B: ‘There is still one whole month to go.’

After hearing B’s response A assumes that B is cooperating with his question but at the same time not accepting that he has not started his preparation for exams as he thinks it too early. His utterance implicates more than what he actually says.

To quote George Yule, ‘Implicatures are primary examples of more being communicated than is said.’ (Yule, 1996:36)

In the article “A new look at literal meaning in understanding what is said and what is implicated,” Raymond W. Gibbs Jr. demonstrates that ‘People recognize a
distinction between what speakers say, or what is said, and what speakers implicate in particular context.’ (2002:476)
Paul Grice’s notion of conversational implicature elucidates the above notions.

2.2.2 Paul Grice’s Notion of Conversational Implicature
Grice’s coinage of the term ‘implicature’ covers any non-conventional meaning that is implied, i.e. conveyed indirectly or through hints and understood implicitly without ever being explicitly stated.
Example:
One friend is heard consoling another friend whose pet has gone missing-
Friend A: ‘Even my pet dog was missing for one whole week.’
Friend B: ‘Not everybody is as lucky as you are.’

The first utterance implicitly suggests that the person’s lost pet was found after one week. He wants to sound hopeful for his friend. As a reply, the second friend suggests that it is also likely that he might not find his pet, though his statement does not sound thoroughly pessimistic.

Grice further distinguishes between the natural and non-natural meaning of utterances. The natural meaning is the conventional meaning which is present on every occasion when an expression occurs. The non-natural meaning is variable and it may vary with occasions. It is otherwise understood as the unconventional meaning that an utterance communicates.

Grice argued that speakers intend to be cooperative when they talk. One way of being cooperative for a speaker is to give as much information as is expected. That is the reason why speakers use implicatures.
In order to interpret the implicatures correctly and relevantly, it is necessary to understand the maxims of the Cooperative Principle. These maxims are recognized ‘as the unstated assumptions we have in conversation.’ (Yule, 1996: 37)

2.2.3 Grice’s Cooperative Principle
Grice looks at the Principle of Cooperation as ‘relating not to what is said but rather, to how what is said is to be said.’ (Grice 1975:46)

His definition of cooperative principle entails from the notion of implicature and the nonconventional meaning of an utterance. It states that ‘make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.’

(Grice, in Grundy, 1995: 37)

Grice states four maxims in the Cooperative Principle.

2.2.3.1 Maxim of Quantity
The Quantity maxim relates to the quantity of information to be provided.

i. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange).

ii. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

(Grice, 1989:26)

Example:
Father to ailing son-

Father: ‘Are you fine today?’

Son: ‘Feeling better after taking the medicine.’

The son cooperates with the father’s question and his reply implicates that even if he doesn’t feel very well, he is on his way to recovery.
2.2.3.2 Maxim of Quality

Try to make your contribution one that is true. The two more specific maxims under this category are-

i. Do not say what you believe to be false.

ii. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

(Grice, 1989:27)

Example:

A caring mother cautioning her child-

‘You will not come first in your sports if you eat unhealthy food like fries.’

The mother understands the wrong consequences of eating fried food. So, she chooses to speak convincingly to the child. She also does not want to be rude to her child.

2.2.3.3 Maxim of Relation

Be relevant.

(Grice, 1989:27)

To quote Geoffrey N. Leech, ‘An utterance is relevant to a speech situation if the utterance can be interpreted as contributing to the conversational goals of the speaker or hearer.’ (1983:94) Conversational goals, according to Leech, mean both the social and personal goals that any piece of conversation aims at.

Example:

A small boy is looking for his toys-

Boy: ‘Mom, have you seen my toys?’

The mother can answer in two ways-

Answer 1: ‘I have kept them in the cupboard.’
Answer 2: ‘You were playing in the garden with them in the morning.’

Answer 1 is direct, highly informative and relevant to the question. However, the second answer is oblique yet relevant as it implicates the possible whereabouts of the toys. Although the mother does not know the answer, she cooperates with her son to help locate the toys.

2.2.3.4 Maxim of Manner
Grice includes the maxim ‘Be perspicuous’ (be clear, be intelligible) under this category.

i. Avoid obscurity of expression
ii. Avoid ambiguity
iii. Be brief(avoid unnecessary prolixity)
iv. Be orderly

(Grice 1989:27)

Example:
In a restaurant between friends-

   Friend A: ‘What would you like to have? Tea or coffee?’
   Friend B: ‘Coffee. Thanks.’

Friend B shows his cooperation by being brief and clear in his response. Hence observes the maxim of Manner.

Grice reviews the rationality behind the observance of the maxims of Cooperation in the following lines

That anyone who cares about the goals that are central to conversation/communication (such as giving and receiving
information, influencing and being influenced by others) must be expected to have an interest, given suitable circumstances, in participation in talk exchanges that will be profitable only on the assumption that they are conducted in general accordance with the Cooperative principle and maxims. (1989: 30)

2.2.4 Non-observance of Maxims

A person has to show some kind of verbal or non-verbal response to indicate that he/she is cooperating with the interlocutor. If he fails in doing so he becomes highly uncooperative. Sometimes people violate the cooperative principle unintentionally. ‘Exploitation of a maxim refers to ‘a procedure by which a maxim is flouted for the purpose of getting in a conversational implicature.’ (Grice, 1989:33) According to Grice, non-observance of maxims occurs in two situations. It happens in a situation when a speaker infringes a maxim or decides to opt out of a maxim.

‘If anyone ostensibly violates any of the conversational maxims, such violation must be explained away as intentionally produced.’ (Blum-Kulka, 1997:59)

A person fails to observe a maxim if he has a hearing problem (cognitive impairment). Sometimes people are not cooperative because they fail to comprehend the message conveyed by their addressers which could be unclear or poor in performance and the result is a communication failure. This is termed as infringing a certain maxim due to certain reason of imperfect linguistic performance. At the other extreme if the speaker chooses not to respond properly, he violates the maxims. In such a case the speaker opts out of a maxim, shows unwillingness to cooperate, sometimes for personal, ethical or may be legal reasons.
When speakers appear not to follow the maxims but expect hearers to appreciate the meaning implied, we say that they are flouting the maxims. (Cutting, 2002:36)

As the speaker flouts a maxim he expects the hearer to infer the implicit meaning of the utterance and not take it on face value. Thus, though the principle is violated, the intended message is conveyed.

Jenny Thomas observes, ‘A flout occurs when a speaker blatantly fails to observe a maxim at the level of generating an implicature.’ (1995: 65) However, it does not fail the principle of cooperation. As one of the maxims is flouted, it ensures the observance of another and the overall cooperative principle is satisfied as the right conversational implicature is generated.

People intentionally flout the maxims of cooperation when they use elements of exaggeration, sarcasm, banter, negation, understatement, irony or metaphors in their conversation. Thorat observes, ‘The constraint of situation and context often forces them to deviate from the norms of conversation’. (2000: 178)

The following section elaborates on the conditions in which a speaker flouts the maxims of cooperation.

### 2.2.5 Overlapping of Conversational Principles and the Relevance Theory

Theoretically, the maxims of cooperation can be studied separately but it is observed that they tend to overlap in real life. For instance, sometimes in order to observe politeness, a speaker may not be true to his statement hence flouts the maxim of quality but observes another like the maxim of manner. Sometimes use of sarcasm doesn’t allow the speaker to be polite. Use of indirect speech acts also
influences the speaker’s observance of the principles of politeness and cooperation.

According to Sperber and Wilson (1995) ‘all maxims can be reduced to the maxim of relation, since relevance is a natural feature of all exchanges in which speakers have the aim of achieving successful communication.’ (Cutting, 2002:41)

As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, the Relevance Theory simplifies Grice’s principles. It asserts that ‘the principle of relevance applies without exceptions, so that it is not a question of communicators following, violating or flouting the principle.’ (Cutting, 2002:41) The Relevance Theory thus states that a conversational implicature depends on the context and the hearer selecting the relevant utterances within that given context. The interpreter of the conversation decides the relevance of the speaker’s utterance based on his socio-cultural background and knowledge of the world. Sperber and Wilson call it the cognitive environment which plays a vital role in understanding the connection between utterances thus reducing the level of ambiguity of the speech situation. The context or the cognitive environment becomes the missing link in interpreting and proving the relevance of an implicature. ‘The Theory of relevance implies that the purpose of communication is not to ‘duplicate thoughts’ but to ‘enlarge mutual cognitive environments.’ (Sperber and Wilson, 1995:193)

However, it is also observed that the relevance of the maxims varies with cultures, countries and communities. Different cultural communities may have different expressions and realizations of the principle of cooperation. In the novel A Passage to India, Edward Morgan Forster observes the idiosyncrasies of the British and Indian characters. On one occasion the two British ladies Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela Quested are invited to tea by an Indian couple Mr. and Mrs. Bhattacharya. What makes the matter interesting was that they were invited the
day when their hosts would not be there to receive them as they had already planned to leave for Calcutta. But when the British ladies expressed their desire to visit an Indian household, the Indian couple happily invited them saying-

‘Yes, yes, you come to us Thursday.’
‘But you’ll be in Calcutta.’
No, no, we shall not.’ He said something swiftly to his wife in Bengali. ‘We expect you Thursday.’
‘Thursday…’ the woman echoed.

(A Passage to India, 1924: 39,40)

On the day of the visit when the British ladies kept waiting for the carriage which never came from the host’s place, they were perplexed at this typical Indian gesture. They were not aware of this typical Indian way of cooperation when being polite is more important than being truthful. The Indian hosts positively flouted quality but preferred it to hurting their English friends’ sentiments. This kind of behavior would be considered impolite and weird in British culture which believes in keeping it straight.

As the research focuses on novels based in the modern Indian cultural background, it becomes fascinating to observe how fictional characters observe or flout the maxims of cooperation under the given socio-cultural and cognitive environments. The following section discusses the Principle of Politeness in detail.

2.3 Politeness Principle

The Principle of Politeness is considered as one of the universal doctrines of human interaction. It differs from group to group, situation to situation and individual to individual. Every society around the world, irrespective of their degree of isolation and socio-economic complexity maintain the politeness
principle. People across cultures exhibit politeness in social interactions and etiquettes while being tactful, generous, modest or sympathetic towards others. The principle highlights the social function of language unlike its linguistically defined representational function. In a Linguistic-Pragmatics context, the disparity between ‘what is said’ and ‘what is implicated’ is well explained through the Principle of Politeness. According to John J. Gumperz, ‘politeness is basic to the production of social order and a pre-condition of human co-operation.’ (Brown and Levinson, 1978:xiii). Factors of social equations such as social distance, social closeness and power relation between speakers are responsible to execute appropriate politeness strategies while communicating in the society. Any given social interaction may happen between persons known to each other or between total strangers. This aspect leads to the elaboration of the concept of face of a speaker.

Watts surveys that

Grice’s Cooperative Principle was the cornerstone of models that explain polite utterances as one way of achieving mutual cooperation or contributing towards the establishment and maintenance of mutual face. (2003:203)

2.3.1 Cultural Significance of Face

The notion of face is vital to the understanding of Politeness Principle in a cultural context.

Face means the public self-image of a person. It refers to that emotional and social sense of self that everyone has and expects everyone else to recognize. (Yule, 1996:60)
Any degree of politeness thus depends on the self’s (speaker) awareness of the other’s (hearer) face or social self-image.

2.3.2 Face Wants

Everybody in society irrespective of age, class and gender is conscious of their public self-esteem or face. Within a given social set up an individual expects his or her social image to be respected. This is called the face want of a person. In simple terms a person always expects polite and sensible behaviour from his or her interlocutor. However, most social interactions offer a combination of FTAs (Face Threatening Acts) and FSAs (Face Saving Acts) to the hearer.

If a speaker’s utterance is in some way proving a threat to his hearer’s public self-image and hence degrading it, it is called a ‘Face Threatening Act’. On the contrary, anticipating an action’s wrong impact on another person’s face if the speaker utters something in time to lessen it, it can be described as a Face Saving Act.

Example:
Friend A getting upset over friend B’s mistake-
He can propose an FTA like-

A: ‘How could you behave so irrationally in the group?’

Or

He can propose an FSA like-

A: ‘My dear friend, I wish you could have behaved a little more rationally in the group. Our friends think so high of you.’

In a social interaction it is very necessary to be tactful about one’s utterance as it involves the reputation of the speaker as well as the hearer which could ultimately make or ruin a relationship. In this attempt it is also necessary for the speaker to...
understand his hearer’s **negative or positive face wants**. A person’s positive face is the need to be connected, to be approved of, liked and accepted by others. Showing solidarity with an attitude of sharing is part of it. A person’s negative face want refers to the desire to be independent and unimpeded in his actions and not to be imposed on by others. Since it involves the social persona of an individual, the concept of face is linked to the fundamental cultural ideas like the kinds of act that threaten face, the nature of the social persona, what sort of persons have special rights to face protection or what kinds of personal styles and social behavior that are appreciated. (As discussed in Brown and Levinson, 1978:13)

In a social conversation it becomes the speaker’s prerogative to prioritize the positive and negative face wants of the addressee. Thus the concepts of **Positive and Negative politeness** emerge when the speaker performs a ‘Face Saving Act’ to save a person’s positive or negative face.

Bruce Fraser in his article “Perspective on politeness” explores that ‘Linguistic politeness must be communicated, that it constitutes a message, a conversational implicature of the sort proposed by Grice.’(1990:228)

Based on Gricean Conversational Principles, Brown and Levinson have derived three major strategies of Politeness. This derivation mainly depends on the relationship between the speaker and the hearer and the potential offensiveness of the message content.

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**Strategies of Politeness**

- **Positive Politeness**
  - (Expression of Solidarity)
- **Negative Politeness**
  - (Expression of Restraint)
- **Off-record Politeness**
  - (Avoidance of Unequivocal Impositions)
2.3.3 Positive Politeness: Expression of Solidarity

A ‘Face Saving Act’ is concerned with the person’s positive face and tends to show solidarity emphasizing both speakers’ common wants and goals is called positive politeness.

‘Positive Politeness is redress directed to the addressee’s positive face, his perennial desire that his wants (or the actions/acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought of as desirable.’ (Brown and Yule, 1978:101)

It is used as a solidarity strategy to develop a comfort level between the speaker and the hearer. Words like ‘let’s’, ‘we’, ‘us’ are chosen to show the sharing of a common goal. It is also considered the heart of familiar behaviour.

Example:

‘Let’s go for a picnic…we will have fun!’

According to Brown and Levinson, Positive Politeness involves three broad methods (where S= Speaker and H= Hearer):

- **S Claiming common ground with H by**
  1. Admiring any of H’s wants
  2. Claiming in-group membership with H
  3. Claiming common perspective/point of view/opinion with H

- **S Conveying to be H’s cooperator by**
  1. Indicating H’s wants and taking them into account
  2. Claiming reflexivity
  3. Claiming reciprocity

- **S Fulfilling H’s want by**
  Giving gifts and extending cooperation to H

(Brown and Levinson, 1978:102)
2.3.4 Negative Politeness: Expression of Restraint

A Face Saving Act oriented towards redressing a person’s negative face (his basic want to maintain territory and self-determination) is called negative politeness. The speaker is expected to recognize and respect the addressee’s negative face wants and his freedom of action unhindered. It centers on H’s wants to be unimpeded which S carries out through self-effacement, formality and restraint. Thus negative politeness is considered the essence of respect behavior. It corresponds to the ritual of avoidance which is derived from Durkheim’s ‘Negative rites’. In Indian culture negative politeness is more elaborately and strategically used than positive politeness. Positive politeness minimizes social distancing. According to Brown, Levinson, the negative politeness strategies are specifically used ‘whenever a speaker wants to put a social brake on to the course of his interaction.’ (1978:130)

Brown and Levinson propose five methods leading to various strategies of negative politeness –

- **Be direct**
  
  Be direct

- **Don’t presume / assume**
  
  Make minimal assumptions about H’s wants, what is relevant to H

- **Don’t coerce H**
  
  1. Give H option not to do act
  2. Minimize threat

- **Communicate S’s want to not impinge (impose) on H**
  
  Dissociate S, H from the particular infringement

- **Redress other wants of H’s, derivative from negative face**

  (Brown and Levinson, 1978:131)
2.3.5 Politeness Bald on Record

In the act of politeness if the speaker makes a suggestion or a request in a straightforward way making use of direct speech acts, it is understood as doing an FTA **bald on record**. It leaves very little scope for the hearer to comprehend the matter other than what the speaker directly means in his utterance. According to Brown and Levinson ‘a bald on record strategy is used whenever S wants to do the FTA with maximum efficiency *more than* he wants to satisfy H’s face, even to any degree.’ (1978:95)

Direct imperatives are widely used to execute FTA bald-on-record. At the same time they can be the most face threatening mode of action.

Example:
Teacher to student-

‘Finish the assignment and submit it in one hour.’

As can be noticed, the hearer becomes bound to act as per the speaker’s desire or else it may be considered impolite and uncooperative.

However, bald-on-record utterances can sometimes be face saving as well. It holds true in case of invitations. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), the firmness of speech in an invitation decides the politeness intended.

Example:
Host to guest over dinner-

‘Please feel free to enjoy a second helping of the dessert.’

Here the directness of the utterance is not forced on the hearer, neither has he to oblige the speaker by accepting the invitation, rather it makes the hearer feel at
home to behave the way he wishes to. The hearer has the option to turn down the invitation without losing face as the speaker offers him a suitable reason alongside to say ‘no’.

Example:
Assistant to boss-

‘Please go through my presentation if you have not much work post lunch.’

Joan Cutting complements, ‘The extent of option-giving influences the degree of politeness.’ (2002:45)

2.3.6 Politeness Bald off Record
In an act of communication if the speaker chooses to keep his communicative intention unclear and leaves it on the hearer to comprehend it to his suitability it is called an FTA bald off record. It is prevalent in cases where the speaker wants to do an FTA without taking the responsibility of doing it. The speaker leaves it on the addressee to decide the interpretation of the utterance.

Example:
Husband and wife go out for dinner to a restaurant-

Wife: ‘This place feels too stuffy.’

(She is hinting that she is not feeling comfortable)

The speaker makes efficient use of indirect speech act so that the illocutionary force is understood by the hearer. Sometimes the Gricean Maxims are flouted when the speaker chooses to go bald off record.
Example:
A friend to another friend-

‘Looks like, this nut is hard to crack.’

The utterance may have two interpretations. The speaker may be commenting on the level of difficulty of a problem or they may be simply enjoying a handful of dry nuts.

The ambiguity of the statement though flouts the maxim of Relation; it allows the speaker to remain obscure. The utterance gets the required effect as the hearer understands the real intent and acts accordingly. He takes cues from the given context to avoid misunderstanding.

The speaker applies this strategy on the addressee in different ways i.e. by hinting, by giving clues, presupposing, understating, overstating, using tautologies, showing contradictions, using rhetorical questions, becoming ambiguous and vague and sometimes by using ellipsis and incomplete sentences.

2.3.7 Geoffrey N. Leech’s Model of Politeness
Leech lists six conversational maxims of Politeness which he put into pairs namely, tact and generosity, approbation and modesty, agreement and sympathy.

2.3.7.1 The Tact Maxim
It is considered ‘the most important kind of politeness in English-speaking society’ (Leech, 1983:107). According to Leech, the Tact Maxim applies to Searle’s directive and commissive categories of illocutions. The maxim is placed on a cost-benefit scale that focuses on the hearer. It follows the principle of minimizing cost to other and maximizing benefit to other. The Tact Maxim
tends to be best realized in case of indirect illocutions as they are higher on the degree of politeness.

Example:

A Boss asking his subordinate-

‘Mr. Sam, could you help me in compiling the data though I know that it has already been a hectic day for you?’

The utterance is an indirect polite request where the boss poses to be very polite to his employee as he needs a favour. He could have used a direct imperative such as-

‘Mr. Jo, come and help me in compiling the data after you are done with your work.’

The above alternative is more direct hence less polite. On the other hand the previous utterance is more indirect, hence more polite. Indirectness in speech increases the degree of optionality and its force also diminishes that suits the hearer. Consequently, it maximizes benefit to other.

2.3.7.2 The Generosity Maxim

Cutting calls it the flip-side of the Tact Maxim as it focuses on the speaker. It also applies to Searle’s directive and commissive categories of illocutions and follows the principle of minimize benefit to self and maximize cost to self.

Example:

Elder brother to the younger one-

‘You can take my bike for a day if you want to visit your friend.’
In a situation where the hearer is hesitant to ask for favour, the speaker volunteers and offers help without sounding impolite. The utterance implies benefit to the hearer and cost to the speaker. Though self-centered, unlike the other-centered Tact Maxim, the Maxim of Generosity aims at ‘absolute politeness rather than relative politeness.’ (Leech, 1983:133-134)

2.3.7.3 The Approbation Maxim
The Approbation Maxim stands on the guiding principle of minimize dispraise to other; maximize praise to other. This is the second other-centered maxim after the Tact Maxim. This maxim aims at observing politeness by avoiding any kind of disagreement with the hearer while making the hearer feel good by showing solidarity.

Example:
A guest to the hotel manager-
   ‘It was one of the most enjoyable stays in my life. You have got very efficient staff.’

The guest is polite enough in thanking the manager by praising his efforts. It can be seen as a strategy to keep the long-term business relationship. The utterance would prove highly encouraging to the manager and he will look forward to entertaining the guest with more care in future.

Leech sometimes mentions the Approbation Maxim as the Flattery Maxim when the approbation is insincere.
Example:
Servant to master-
   ‘You show so much concern for me and my family. You are the best master in the world.’
A servant always wants to be in the good book of the master as it has its own social and monetary benefits. So, he tries to sing praises of the master whenever he gets an opportunity. Sometimes the praises are not genuine hence the approbation becomes insincere and looks more like flattery.

2.3.7.4 The Modesty Maxim
It is the second self-centered maxim after the maxim of Generosity which adheres to the principle of **minimize praise of self; maximize dispraise of self.**

Example:

A person from the audience to the power point presenter-

‘I am sorry to interrupt in the middle of the presentation but I could not quite follow what you are driving at.’

Sometimes the speaker uses the modesty maxim to save the hearer’s face as well as his own.

In another situation the addressee makes use of the maxim to express how obliged he is to the addresser.

Example:

Guest: ‘What a lovely dinner you had prepared, thanks for the wonderful evening.’

Host: ‘Oh! It’s a pleasure having you here. I feel so good that you enjoyed.

By minimizing praise of self, the speaker politely accepts the compliment.
2.3.7.5 The Agreement Maxim

The Maxim of Agreement abides by the principle of **minimize disagreement between self and other; maximize agreement between self and other**. It aligns with the positive politeness strategies of seeking agreement and avoiding disagreements.

Example:
Conversation between a husband and a wife coming out of a theatre-

Wife: ‘It was a wonderful play, wasn’t it?’
Husband: ‘Ah! Absolutely! I thoroughly enjoyed it.’

The hearer is absolutely polite as there is absolute agreement between the speaker and the hearer.

The situation may not be ideal all the time as sometimes the hearer may partially disagree or partially agree with the hearer.

Example:
Between two colleagues-

A: ‘Don’t you think the new computerized system in the office is not so user-friendly?’
B: ‘True, but at the same time it is going to save us a lot of paper work.’

The hearer’s response can still be considered polite, as first; he partially agrees with the speaker and then gives reasons to support his own opinion.
2.3.7.6 The Sympathy Maxim

The Maxim of Sympathy thrives on the principle of minimizing antipathy between self and other; maximizing sympathy between self and other. It primarily includes expressions of condolences and congratulations.

Sometimes speakers choose appropriate euphemisms to sympathize with the hearer. This serves a dual purpose. The speaker succeeds in maintaining politeness without embarrassing the hearer.

Example:
There has been a theft in the house. The neighbor speaking to the owner of the house-

‘I was terribly shocked to know about it.’

The speaker saves the hearer the distress by avoiding mentioning the unfortunate incident explicitly.

Similarly, when someone utters an expression like ‘Hearty congratulations!’ it becomes obvious that the speaker is referring to some good news even if he doesn’t narrate the whole incident.

2.3.7.7 The Consideration Maxim

The maxim of consideration has been originally proposed by Cruse (2000:366) which stands by the principle of minimizing discomfort/displeasure of other; maximizing comfort/pleasure of other. This maxim seconds Brown and Levinson’s positive politeness strategy of making the other feel good.

Example:

A person is complaining of jet lag. His friend says-
‘It’s still good, come and join me in my office and work for 18 hours a day.’

Such a talk helps in minimizing distressing and painful events.

2.3.8 Principle of Politeness in Socio-cultural Context
Politeness is a pragmatic principle. It is the basic form of cooperation which is understood in context. According to Cutting it ‘lies not in the forms and the words themselves, but in their function and intended social meaning.’(2002:51) The degree of politeness varies across culture. In some cultures like in Cuba, being formal to friends creates barriers and thus is not acceptable among friends. In British culture it is observed that people from higher social status also prefer using indirectness and off record politeness strategies while saving face of their subordinates. In Indian culture, strategies of negative politeness are widely used in social circles. The use of honorifics is a dominant phenomenon maintaining social relationships. It is also observed that people of low social status use more indirectness and more negative politeness strategies than the richer counterparts. Bald on record statements are usually seen as the legacy of people in power. Watts observes ‘Impoliteness is intimately connected with the exercise of power.’ (2003:217)

Politeness equates with power differently in different cultures. To understand politeness it is essential to know the linguistic and cultural nuances of a given society. Speakers invariably use politeness strategies to achieve various conversational goals. The present research aims at analyzing the politeness strategies used in the conversational pieces from the selected novels.

The above section elaborated on the Principle of Politeness. The focus has been laid on Brown and Levinson’s derivation of the principle of Politeness. Strategies
of Politeness have been discussed under the subsections of Positive Politeness, Negative Politeness, Politeness- Bald off record and Politeness Bald on record. For the practical purpose of analysis of the fictional data, Geoffrey N. Leech’s model of Politeness has been highlighted. Leech’s proposed maxims of politeness namely the maxims of Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement and Sympathy have been discussed thoroughly. The next section of the present chapter deals with the theory of Speech Acts.

2.4 Speech Act Theory
The Speech Act Theory was first proposed by British philosopher John L. Austin and further elaborated by his American student John R. Searle. Austin’s 1955 William James Lectures on Speech Act Theory presented at the Harvard University got posthumously published in 1962 under the title How to Do Things with Words. Austin’s theory was built against the logical positivist assumptions of understanding language primarily through true-false statements. It gave a new dimension to Pragmatics especially to the study of the non-declarative use of language.

The Oxford Concise Dictionary of Linguistics defines speech act as ‘an utterance conceived as an act by which the speaker does something’. The Speech Act Theory analyzes the role of the utterances in relation to the behaviour of speaker and listener in their interpersonal communication. When a speaker means more than he speaks, it gives rise to a speech act.

In the Pragmatic framework, the meaning of an utterance is judged beyond sentential level. A sentence is a grammatical entity whereas an utterance is a pragmatic entity which is recognized beyond grammatical and syntactic levels. According to Roger Fowler,
Every utterance performs a Speech Act of some kind although this may not be obvious from the surface structure of the sentences concerned. (1981:18).

Soshana Blum-Kulka in her article “Discourse Pragmatics” states that, speech act theory, ‘provides us with a mapping of performable communicative intents specifying the conditions of use necessary for their performance’ (1997:59). She clarifies that to systematize the notions of intended and indirect meanings it provides pragmatic criteria for sorting out different types of direct and indirectness in speech acts.

For example,
(i) Boss: ‘Do you accept your mistakes?’
   Employee: ‘I do.’

(ii) Priest: ‘Do you accept her to be your wife?’
   Bridegroom: ‘I do.’

In (i) the employee’s answer to his boss’s interrogation is straight and a truth-functional statement. He accepts his mistakes and the matter ends.

However, in (ii), the groom’s similar response reveals more than he actually states. The utterance ‘I do’ is speech in action that offers a variety of interpretations such as committed to take care of someone, being loyal and lawful. He is committed to the action through the utterance. This kind of utterance can be referred to as a speech act where the speaker not just says it, he actually does it.
2.4.1 The Performative Verb

As Austin puts it
‘When I say, before the registrar or altar, ‘I do’, I am not reporting on a marriage: I am indulging in it.’ (1962: 6)

Austin calls such utterances performatives; where the utterance is ‘issued to perform an action- it is not normally thought of as just saying something.’ (1962:6-7)

Performatives are Declaratives which are not simply used to declare anything true or false; rather they are used to perform some actions or part of an action. They can only be assessed as felicitous or infelicitous. They are neither true nor false.

Stephen Levinson says

Performatives utterances are identifiable because they have the form of first person indicative of active sentences in the simple present with one of a delimited set of performative verbs as the main verb, which will collocate with the adverb hereby. (1983:232)

For example:
A Priest while christening a baby boy in the church,
‘I (hereby) name the baby Dylan.’
The priest is executing the action of assigning the baby a name as he utters the sentence.

According to Austin Performatives are of two types- explicit performatives and implicit performtives. Utterances in which the illocutionary force is made explicit is called an explicit performative.
For example:
Father to daughter,
   ‘I promise, I’ll come home early today.’
Or
Son to father,
   ‘I admit I have neglected my studies in the past years.’

Certain actions are performed via both the utterances using explicit performatives like ‘promise’ and ‘admit’.

Some utterances do not always have an explicit performative verb yet sound more natural. Such utterances with implied meaning are called implicit performatives.

For example:
Father to daughter,
   ‘I’ll come home early today.’
Or
Son to father,
   ‘I know I have neglected my studies in the past years.’

Though the utterances don’t have any explicit performatives, yet the illocutionary forces of promising and admitting are understood from the contexts respectively.

This entails Austin’s explanation of the constative / performative dichotomy. As Kevin Helion in his online dissertation on *Deconstruction and Speech Act Theory: a Defense of the Distinction between Normal and Parasitic Speech Acts* explains,

A constative reports a state of affairs whereas a performative is a conventional means for bringing one about and often without further
ado. The difference between the performance of a habit and an act of baptism is that in the former case uttering certain words is sufficient to perform the act. (Web Ref. www.e-anglais.com)

To sum up Austin’s notion of Performatives, simply saying ‘I promise…’ counts as promising whereas simply saying ‘I baptize you…’ doesn’t count as baptizing without further activity. In order to baptize someone there must be some concomitant actions performed by a priest or a religious cleric. Without this, the utterance in question would not affect the act of baptism. Similarly, without the proper utterances there would be no baptism. This paves way to the next section which discusses the Felicity Conditions.

2.4.2 Doctrine of Felicity
The concomitant actions mentioned above have been referred to as the Doctrine of Felicity by Austin. Austin’s Doctrine of Felicity conditions as discussed in the William James Lecture II is as follows:

i. There must exist an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, the procedure to include the uttering of certain words, by certain persons in certain circumstances, and further.

ii. The particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedure invoked.

iii. The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and

iv. Completely.

v. … having certain thoughts or feelings or intentions.

(Austin 1962: 14-15)
Austin calls felicitous conditions ‘happy’ or ‘successful’ when the utterances fulfill the felicity conditions and when speech acts fail to observe the same; they are infelicitous-‘unhappy’ or ‘unsuccessful’. However, Austin’s ‘happy’ or ‘successful’ conditions ought to be understood beyond their literal connotation. According to the doctrine, the performatives should conform to the circumstances, the participants along with their feelings and intentions. Only uttering performatives such as ‘I promise’, ‘I do’, ‘I give’, ‘I sentence you’, ‘I bequeath’, or ‘I bet’ is not sufficient condition for the successful execution of the speech act. It should be supported by earnest participants having true intentions to carry out the speech act in genuine speech events.

Example:
On a busy street, if a passerby calls out to another-
‘I sentence you to five years’ rigorous imprisonment’.

It may sound out of place and none of the interlocutors would be affected by the utterance. The effect of the utterance is lost under wrong felicity condition. The same utterance comes alive during a court case trial when the judge, in front of the members of the jury, finds the accused guilty and utters the same verdict. The utterance becomes synonymous to action under the right felicity condition, immediate action is taken against the convict as he accepts the judgement. Thus the speech condition becomes felicitous.

Similarly, in a college if the professor enters a classroom occupied by a group of people from the administration and not the target student group, and starts conducting his usual lecture, he would find no recipients for his utterances. So, the speech condition becomes unhappy or infelicitous due to one way communication.
In a Hindu marriage ceremony if the priest chants the hymns prescribed for the rituals of the auspicious thread ceremony, it certainly violates the correctness factor in the felicity condition.

Similarly, in a Christian marriage, if the priest announces the man and the woman at the altar husband and wife, before their pronouncing ‘I do’ to each other, the act will be infelicitous. The final utterance of the performatve ‘I do’ is a necessary condition to have the wedding institutionalized. Failing which the whole act remains incomplete and the felicity condition is violated.

A speech act is performed in actual situations of language use and according to Searle, speech acts are the basic and minimal units of linguistic communication. The production of a speech act is equally ‘producer’ (speaker) and ‘consumer’ (hearer) oriented as both of them are responsible for the production, understanding, description and comprehension of their utterances. Searle, in *Speech Acts: an Essay in the Philosophy of Language* explains the innate relationship between Linguistics and Pragmatics.

Searle elucidates,

> The unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word or sentence or even the token (roughly: the occurrence) of the symbol, word or sentence, but rather the production or issuance of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of the speech act. (1969:16)

Jacob L. Mey, another proponent of Speech Act Theory expounds:

> ‘Speech acts are actions happening in the world, that is, they bring about a change in the existing state of affairs.’ (1993:111-112)
George Yule, in *Pragmatics* summarizes the notion of speech act:

In attempting to express themselves, people do not only produce utterances containing grammatical structure and words, they perform actions via those utterances. (1996:47)

Speech acts are ‘actions performed via utterances.’ (Yule, 1996: 47)

They get prominence in acts of promise, apology, request, complain, compliment or invitation. The speaker performs speech acts to deliver his/her communicative intention to the hearer. The interpretation of the utterance depends on the circumstances in which the exchange takes place between the speaker and the hearer. The whole surroundings including the speaker’s intention and the hearer’s comprehension gives rise to a *speech event*. Speech events change as per the changes in the circumstances. Likewise, utterances can be interpreted in different ways in different contexts.

To quote Yule’s example:

‘This tea is really cold!’ (Yule, 1996:48)

On a chilly winter day the utterance is a complaint but on a hot summer day the same utterance can be interpreted as praise. As contexts vary, the meaning and interpretation of the utterances also vary. Speech acts are part of speech events and contexts are an integral part of any speech situation. The notion of context has been discussed earlier in chapter one (section 1.3.2).

### 2.4.3 Speech Acts and the ‘Three Dimensional Related Forces’

As per J. L. Austin’s categorization there are three facets to what can be said. They are termed as the ‘three dimensional related forces’- *locution*, *illocution* and *perlocution*. The terms can be explained in the following manner.
2.4.3.1 The Locutionary Force

The **locutionary force** is the basic act of speech producing a meaningful linguistic expression.

This ‘includes the utterance of certain noises [the phonetic act], the utterance of certain words in a certain construction [the phatic act], and the utterance of them with certain meaning in the favourite philosophical sense of that word, i.e. with a certain sense and a certain reference [the rhetic act].’ (Austin, 1962: 92)

Example: ‘I just had my lunch.’

S - V - Compliment.

The above example is a perfectly word ordered and grammatically correct sentence in English. Linguistically it holds meaning even in isolation.

2.4.3.2 The Illocutionary Force

The **illocutionary force** is performed through the communicative force of an utterance. It is the act done in saying. The speaker usually forms an utterance with some kind of function on mind. Illocutionary force expresses the purpose of the speaker’s utterance and shows the intended meaning.

Austin elaborates,

An illocution explains in what way one is using a locution. “For asking or answering a question, giving some information or an assurance or a warning,” etc. (Austin, 1962: 98)

Example:

‘I just had my lunch.’
When the speaker utters this in a situation where lunch is being served he may mean that he is not willing to join or he is just full enough to eat any more. If it is an uninvited situation, he may also utter this to avoid embarrassment.

As it is evident by now that speech is comprehended only in context and it involves both the speaker and the listener that gives rise to speech events, it is well expected that an utterance ought to have a response from the hearer.

2.4.3.3 The Perlocutionary Force

The perlocutionary force is performed with a purpose and intends to have an effect on its hearer. Austin calls it the third dimension. Precisely, it is the act done by saying something.

Austin explicates further,

Saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of an audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons. (Austin, 1962: 101)

For example, the perlocutionary effect of the same utterance ‘I just had my lunch’ on the hearer could be not to force the speaker any more for lunch.

Austin sums it up,

A locutionary act “is roughly equivalent to ‘meaning’ in the traditional sense,” where as illocutionary acts are the “utterances which have a certain ‘conventional’ force” and the perlocutionary act brings certain effect on the hearer “by saying something”. (Austin, 1962: 109)
Discourse analysts like Austin, Searle and Leech have further expanded their research on the second dimension or the illocutionary force as it is the most expressive act of all.

2.4.4 J.L. Austin’s Classification of Illocutionary Speech Acts
Austin classifies Illocutionary acts into five categories;

2.4.4.1 Verdictives
Verdictives are typified by the giving of a verdict or judgment by a jury, arbitrator, examiner or umpire. But they need not be final; they may be an estimate or reckoning or appraisal. It is more of a judicial act as distinct from legislative or executive acts which are exercitives.

For example:
While checking out the results if the teacher says to a certain student, ‘you have failed’, before reacting on the verdict, the student would take the evidence (the marks) into account.

2.4.4.2 Exercitives
Exercitives are delivered while exercising powers, rights or influence.

For example:
After the interview the selection committee says-
‘We appoint you Principal of the college.’

Other examples of Exercitives are voting, ordering, urging, advising, warning etc.
2.4.4.3 Commissives

Commissives are characterized by acts of promising or otherwise undertaking commitments also include declarations or announcements or intention. The speaker is committed to some future actions.

For example:
Father says to son-

‘Dear son, I promise, I will buy you a nice pair of shoes next week when I come back from the tour.’

Other examples are committing, promising, swearing, guaranteeing, oath taking etc.

2.3.4.4 Behavitives

Behavitives, says Austin, ‘are a very miscellaneous group and have to do with attitude and social behaviour.’ Examples are apologizing, criticizing, cursing, blessing, and challenging, etc.

For example:
The teacher telling the student-

‘Congratulations! You have topped the class!’

Or
My ill-tempered friend apologizing-

‘I am really sorry for my immature act.’

2.3.4.5 Expositives

Last in the list are the Expositives which make utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation. They are used in acts of expositions involving the expounding of views, the conducting of arguments.
For example:
An over-enthusiastic viewer is heard commenting during a cricket match-

‘If Sachin maintains this pace, I predict, he would be definitely make his hundredth century in an hour.’

Other Expositives could be arguing, affirming, conceding, postulating, assuming, replying, illustrating etc.

2.4.5 J.R. Searle’s Contribution to the Speech Act Theory
Based on Austin’s Illocutionary acts, Searle developed his classification of speech acts. This theory is based on the principle of expressibility which proposes that, whatever can be meant can be said. It explains that, generally, asking and responding correspond to each other. However, it does not imply the possibility of finding or inventing the exact form of expression to produce the intended effect on the hearer. In other words, this principle does not imply that whatever can be said will be understood or recognized by others.

M. Coulthard, in An Introduction to Discourse Analysis discusses Searle’s analysis of an utterance.

‘According to Searle, an utterance consists of two (not necessarily separate parts), a proposition and a function indicating device which marks the illocutionary force.’ (Coulthard, 1977: 22)

The propositional act carries the content of an utterance and includes the subsidiary acts of referring to someone or something and predicking some property or act of that to which one has referred. Propositional acts are represented by those portions of the sentence which do not include ‘the indication of illocutionary force’. The function indicating device in English could be word
order, stress, intonation contour, punctuation, modals and the set of performative verbs.

Just as a move in a game creates a space of possible and appropriate countermoves, so in a conversation, each speech act creates a space of possible and appropriate response to speech acts. The beginning of a theory of the conversational game might be a systematic attempt to account for how particular “moves”, particular illocutionary acts, constrain the scope of possible appropriate responses.

(Searle, 1992:8)


Searle’s classification of illocutionary speech acts is as follows:

### 2.4.5.1 Assertives

**Assertives** are propositional acts. They commit speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition. Examples are stating, suggesting, boasting, complaining, claiming, reporting etc. Assertives have truth value and they represent the speaker’s belief of the world.

For Example:

Based on the ongoing issue of the Chinese insurgency, someone might claim-

‘China is going to rule the world.’

Or
‘East or West, India is the best!’
(An Indian boasting about his country when India wins a cricket series.)

2.4.5.2 Directives

Directives are intended to produce some effect through action by the hearer. They express what the speaker wants to get done. Directives can be commands, requests, orders, suggestions etc.

For Example:
The teacher calling the student-
   ‘Come here’.
Or
An elder brother suggesting to the younger brother-
   ‘Why don’t you finish your homework fast and run to the playground?’

2.4.5.3 Commissives

Commissives are speaker centered. The speaker commits himself to some future action through commissives. Promises, threats, refusals, pledges etc come under this category.

For Example:
Before going for a commercial break, the show host saying-
   ‘We will be right back’.
Or
A kid trying to pacify his angry mother-
   ‘I promise! I’ll be a good boy and never repeat such mistakes.’
2.4.5.4 Expressives
Expressives are utterances that communicate the speaker’s feelings. They convey various psychological states of mind of the speaker in statements of pleasure and pain like joy, sorrow, happiness, likes, dislikes etc. Other Expressives are praising, blaming, thanking, apologizing, congratulating, pardoning, condoling etc.

For Example:
Captain to the players over the victory-
‘Good job team! Keep up the good work.’
Or
An amateur mountain trekker to his trainer-
‘Night trekking sounds dangerous to me!’

2.4.5.5 Declarations
Declarations are speech acts that change the world via their utterance. The felicity condition should be satisfied when the speaker is performing a declarative. Searle calls them ‘a very special category of speech acts: they are performed, normally speaking, by someone who is especially authorized to do so within some institutional framework. (as quoted in Leech,1983:106)

Other Declaratives are declaring, appointing, pronouncing, sentencing etc.

Example:
The referee of the boxing championship declares the winner by referring to the score card
‘…and the winner is …Mr. X by 6 points.’

The referee’s declaration is the final word in the contest and in that given context everybody (inside the ring and the spectators outside it) accepts it. The same
verdict would carry no value if it is performed outside the stadium albeit the same person speaks it.

The study of Austin and Searle’s classification reflects one major difference in the derivation of the illocutionary force of an utterance. ‘Austin argues it to be the successful realization of the speaker’s intention and Searle calls it the product of the listener’s interpretation of the utterance.’ (Coulthard, 1977: 25)

2.4.6 Primary and Secondary Illocutionary Acts

According to Searle, actions performed through speech acts possess two types of illocutionary acts- **Primary and Secondary illocutionary acts**. In his essay *Indirect Speech Acts*, he elucidates that ‘the secondary illocutionary act is literal; the primary illocutionary act is not literal’. (in Cole and Morgan, 1975:61) Primary illocutionary act indicates the group of utterances which convey a different meaning from the literal meaning expressed by the speech acts. The function of the sentence uttered in conveying the non-literal meaning of the utterance does not directly associate with the form of the sentence.

For Example:
Teacher to student-

‘I am going to talk to your father regarding your absenteeism.’

The above utterance can be viewed as a primary illocutionary act of a Commissive and secondary illocutionary act of a declarative.

Searle holds this view that the speech acts in which ‘two illocutionary forces’ are involved and ‘in which one illocutionary act is performed indirectly by way of performing another’ are indirect speech acts. (in Cole and Morgan, 1975:61)
The example above is an utterance in indirect speech act as an illocutionary act of warning is performed indirectly through a statement.

2.5 Direct and Indirect Speech Acts

Searle, towards 1975, developed the theory of indirect speech acts. Based on his previous hypothesis on listener’s interpretation he illustrates how listeners correctly interpret primary performatives or indirect speech acts.

Speech acts are of two types- **Direct** and **Indirect Speech Acts**. In English the three basic structural forms i.e. declarative, interrogative and imperative perform the three basic communicative functions i.e. statement, question, and command/request respectively. A direct relationship between structure and function gives rise to direct speech act.

For example:
Someone inquires-

‘What is your name?’

Structurally the sentence is an **interrogative** and it performs the general communicative function of **questioning** and knowing one’s name.

Or

I inform my friend, ‘I go for jogging every day.’

The form of the above sentence is **declarative** and performs the communicative function of a **statement**.

Or

If someone says, ‘Go wash your hands, they are so dirty!’

Structurally the sentence is an **imperative** but it performs the communicative function of a **command**.
Searle (1979) explains the five general communicative functions of speech acts through his five categories of illocutionary acts. (Section 2.4.5) The structure-function relationship may not always be direct. In such a situation an indirect relationship arises between the structural form and the communicative function that gives rise to an indirect speech act.

To quote Peter Grundy who restates Searle’s hypothesis
‘When form and function do not match we call the effect an indirect act.’
(1995:95)

Example:
‘Would you mind if I use your pen, please?’

The above utterance is in the form of an interrogative but it doesn’t function as a question. It is a polite request in the form of an interrogative where the speaker wants the hearer to lend him his pen for some time and not just respond to the interrogative with a yes/no answer.

Example:
‘You are wasting your valuable time by watching TV.’

The structurally declarative sentence above is not a statement but functioning as a polite request where the speaker urges the hearer to invest his time in some better things. Here the addressee is not expected to listen to the speaker, nod and continue watching TV.

Example:
‘Mind your language!’
The utterance above is an imperative but functions as an **indirect warning**. In the middle of a row when the speaker utters this, he expects the addressee to refrain from using abusive language immediately.

The above instances make it clear that indirect speech acts are intended to have an expected effect on the listener and demand immediate action. Indirect speech acts are one of the most common socio-linguistic phenomena found across cultures. In conversational situations they are widely used in the forms of rhetorical questions, circumlocutions, euphemisms, irony, satirical statements, metonymic expressions, exaggerations, understatements, emphatic statements, etc.

In other words, Searle’s ‘Principle of Expressibility’ (whatever can be meant can be said) can be realized through indirect speech acts. Sometimes the speaker says what he doesn’t mean and means what he doesn’t say. By using indirect speech acts he successfully manages to convey what he intends. The addressee has to read between the lines to understand the hidden intent of the speaker through the structurally direct sentences.

Andrew D. Cohen in his article ‘Speech acts’ elaborates on indirect speech acts with examples. He explains that:

> “Sorry about that” may serve as an adequate apology in some situations. In others it may be perceived as a rude, even arrogant, non-apology. In yet other situations, it may not even be intended as an apology in the first place. (1996: 383)

It is an interesting phenomenon to observe why indirect responses play an important role in human communication and how communicative goals are achieved through them. How the hearer decides the direct or indirectness of the speech is the subject of research. Study in Pragmatics elaborates upon such
intentional and contextual meaning of utterances searching for the rationale of their occurrence.

The present section discussed the Speech act theory proposed by J.L. Austin and J. R. Searle. The concepts of Locution, Illocution and Perlocution have been explained precisely. Austin and Searle’s classifications of Speech acts are dealt separately followed by an elaboration on direct and indirect speech acts.

2.6 Conclusion

A theoretical framework for the present study in Discourse Analysis has been outlined in the present chapter. The Principle of Cooperation, Principle of Politeness and the Speech Act Theory have been elaborated separately. The segment on the Principle of Cooperation begins with the notion of Implicature as a lead to Paul Grice’s notion of conversational implicature. Grice’s maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner have been explained in the further subsections. It is followed by a short section on the non-observance and overlapping of maxims.

The next section deals with the notion of the Principle of Politeness followed by a discussion on the cultural significance of Face and Face wants. Concepts of Positive and Negative politeness have been dealt in detail in the following subsections. Politeness on the record and off the record has been briefly discussed. Leech’s model of Politeness along with the maxims of Tact, Generosity, Approbation, Modesty, Agreement, Sympathy and Consideration has been accommodated in the following subsection. The section on Politeness Principle ends with an overview on the concept of politeness in the socio-cultural context.

The theory of Speech Acts has been discussed elaborately in the following section. It begins with the Doctrine of Felicity and the Three Dimensional Related Forces.
(Locution, Illocution and Perlocution) followed by Austin and Searle’s contribution to the Speech Act Theory. The primary and secondary illocutionary acts are discussed briefly. The last subsection discusses the notions of Direct and Indirect Speech Acts.