

**PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF *SELECTED*
DISCOURSE IN DUL JOHNSON'S *ACROSS THE*
*GULF***

PRISCA GODSPOWER OCHULOR

Department of English, Bingham University, Karu,
Nasarawa State, Nigeria.

Email: ladypgodspower@gmail.com

Abstract

In communication, a listener infers or deduces a speakers' intended meaning from utterances beyond the semantic context of the sentence uttered. This type of meaning cannot be captured only from the simple and semantic rules but also with the use of pragmatic principles like Grice's cooperative principles which are not culture bound but universal in interpreting meaning. This paper is a Pragmatic Analysis of selected discourses in Dul Johnson's Across the Gulf. The source of data is the primary text under review. The talks-exchanges were extracted to examine the dialogue collected for analysis. The paper examines utterances in the text arranged in a dialogue form in order to determine and interpret adherence or violation to Grice's maxims using Grice's (1975) cooperative maxims and their implicatures, based on the theoretical framework adopted for the study. The findings show that violation of Grice's maxims is often unintentional as writers make effort through content to capture the realities of life in writing. The study concluded that analysis of a dialogue in a prose work brings a clearer picture of interlocutors' use of language in a practical form and makes the implicature easier to interpret. The paper therefore recommends that creative writers should be encouraged to write as they are inspired

but the knowledge of Grice's maxim will be of great advantage to them.

Keywords: Pragmatic, discourse, analysis, text, novel

Introduction

In every communicative event, discourse is enormously complex due to so many assumptions shared between the speaker and hearer, which are sometimes violated or ignored. It is against this background that the paper undertakes a pragmatic analysis of dialogues in Dul Johnson's *Across the Gulf* (2017).

In many cases, a listener generates meaning from the speakers' utterances beyond the semantic context of the sentence uttered as well as beyond the contextual background. This type of meaning is referred to as implied meaning, which cannot be captured in simple and semantic rules but with the use of pragmatic principles. This is why the paper intends to use Grice's cooperative principles to analyse the selected utterances in Dul Johnson's *Across the Gulf*.

Grundy (2000) identifies pragmatic mapping as general factual knowledge of the context as useful for constructing meaning out of an utterance. Grundy adds that pragmatic interpretation of utterances goes beyond the meaning of lexical components and the structural relations among them. Human language is essentially arbitrary, and because language is a system of arbitrary signs, the form of an expression is generally independent of its meaning except for the association established by convention, (Crystal 1971). When the convention is violated, another meaning is generated beyond the semantic meaning. So, to account for this meaning, some principles need to be applied. It is observed that some utterances in Dul Johnson's *Across the Gulf* are beyond the semantic meaning. The study interprets

and analyses the meanings using pragmatic principles to show that, there are many ways by which meaning can be deduced in a language, and that the violation of grammatical conventions, does not necessarily mean that the sentence is meaningless; rather that meaning can be accounted for in other ways. Attention is therefore given to the interpretation of meaning using Grice (1975), cooperative principle as it works in narrative utterances and then interprets violation in the text with a view to highlighting how maxims are adhered to.

In the world of language users, every utterance has a context, and the interpretation of the utterance outside the context can lead to misunderstanding or displacement of valuable information, which does not portray good and effective use of language. In pragmatics, there are principles that govern interpretation of meaning, despite occasional misinterpretations which are analysed in this study using Grice's (1975) maxims. People in most situations manage to understand utterances, in constructing their utterances. Speakers however are expected to make two-fold assumption that not only will hearers themselves be guided by the convention but also, that hearers will trust speakers to have honoured those conventions in constructing their utterances. There is an unspoken part that people cooperate in communicating with each other, and speakers rely on this cooperation to make conversation efficient. According to Leech (1983) people sometimes deviate from the convention either intentionally or unintentionally.

It is pertinent to highlight why people choose to say or interpret something in one way rather than the other, and also how language is creatively and effectively used, that is, how words and sentences are used meaningfully and structurally.

Across the Gulf

Across the Gulf is a novel by Dul Johnson, a prolific writer and

filmmaker who writes across the genres. The novel *Across the Gulf* draws the picture of ethnic allegiance and tells the stories of war and its effect on people especially family members. The novel focuses on war; there are some themes of love and romance, as well as those of cheating, mistrust and separation. In analyzing the novel pragmatically it must be within the context of use.

Language and Context

Crystal (1971) states that some people find language a fascinating aspect of human behaviour and that they are delighted in examining it from various perspectives. It is of course not for the mere delight in prodding it from different points of view, but most times, they do this in an effort to find answers to problems arising in the course of language use. The study of English is very important because it provides insight into how to analyse languages at many levels. This enhances the study of the smallest units of written language and the phonetic sounds, word formation and the history of word meanings, notations of (standard or formal) and non - standard and 'formal' grammar and pronunciation (and the ethical significance of such distinction).

In learning about the English language, one learns how to think critically, and is able to understand how to study different kinds of language use, how to record and analysis one's own language data with technical precision, how to apply different theories and models, how to research topics and build ideas, and develop advanced insight into the function of the language in the world. In addition, it helps in gaining sophisticated understanding of communication itself (Brown and Levinson 1987). According to Searle (1975), language use is better understood meaningfully when considered within its context, and a word reference may be well understood by placing it in context of use. Lyons (1977)

views the context of utterance as the sum total of every factor that exerts influence on interlocutors and make them to say what they say, and provide some useful clues to arrive at the appropriate meaning of the utterance. Therefore, the paper observes that pragmatic interpretation of an utterance cannot be clear if the interpreter is not aware of the factors surrounding the utterances. Context refers to factors that influence an individual's interpretation of a piece of language. It signifies the pertinent aspect of the physical and social setting of an expression, (Leech, 1999). It is on this basis that pragmatics seeks to 'characterize the features of the speech context, which help determine which position is expressed by a given sentence' (stalnaker, 2014). The meaning of a sentence can therefore be regarded as a function from a context including time, place and possible word into a proposition where a proposition is a function from a possible word into a truth value. Pragmatics aspects of meanings involve the interaction between an expression, context of utterance and the interpretation of such element with that expression (Deuchar, 1998). There will be no meaningful interpretation of utterances without a good knowledge of the context. That is the reason why attention is given on the context for interpreting the meaning of utterances in the selected novel.

Context in Pragmatics

Human language activity unfolds mainly along the two dimensions of the spoken and written words. The former is commonly known as conversations, while the latter comprises what is often referred to as literature. Halliday (1994) observes that the relationship between the forms of utterances and the types of meaning they can express is a complex one, which is based on the principle that what the speakers say make sense in the context in which they say it. For any utterance interpretation to be successfully done, there is the

need to examine the context of situation within which the speech events occur. The cardinal goal in pragmatic is to explain how utterances convey meaning in context and in a particular situation, how context contributes to the encoding and decoding of meaning.

Hymes (1971) identifies a number of features of context as particulars, topic, setting, channel, code and form. Later, 'key' and 'purpose' were added according to Osaisanwo (1976). Leech (1983) characterizes context as "any background knowledge assumed to be shared by the speaker and the hearer and which contributes to the hearers interpretation of what the speaker means by a given utterance". The conversation in the context in *Across the Gulf* will be analysed in a dialogue form to bring out meaning of the utterances in selected textual conversation.

Dialogues, Conversations

Dialogue is generally considered to be a conversational game embedded in an action framework (Vernant 1997). The participants are engaged in a dialogue with the intention of achieving several goals. Every dialogue has an interactional side and interlocutionary side, to which a third level is added, that of the knowledge constructed or exchanged in the course of the dialogue. The role of this newly-built shared knowledge is to influence either the interlocutory side or the receiver's side according to Vernant (1997). The action that is undertaken and which must both achieve and satisfy its goal is a combined action, it develops simultaneously in the word and between the participants. This also means that during the dialogue, the participants must agree on the conditions for achieving these goals. Black (2008) sees dialogue as a complex net of dialogical goals (such as persuasion, deliberation information sharing, etc.) which represent the communication purposes that the interlocutors intend to

achieve through their utterances. The pragmatic analysis centres on a pivotal element in the interpretation of an utterance which is the context in which it is uttered, presenting it in a dialogue, drawing appropriate inferences from conversation which is an essential ingredient for interpreting utterances. To understand utterances, one must be skilled at reading between the lines in order to interpret appropriately or create implicature. Meaning of utterances can be deduced by a reader, writer or listener when both understands the context of situation in which a conversation is made.

In this context, a conversation can be viewed as a series of speech acts- greetings, inquiries, congratulations, comments, invitations, requests, refusal, accusations, denials, promises, farewells (Pratt 1997). To accomplish the work of speech acts, some organizations are essential. The covert architecture of conversation must achieve the following; organize turns so that more than one person has a chance to speak and the turn taking is orderly; allow interlocutors to participate in what will happen next and where there is a choice, how the selection is to be decided, provide a way to repair glitches and errors when they occur. The study looks into some conversation in form of dialogue in the selected utterances in the novel.

Pragmatic Approach

The study aligns with the pragmatic approach as proposed by Grice (1975). The approach formulates conversational behavior in terms of general principles rather than rule and pays attention to context. At the base of the pragmatic approach to conversational analysis is the Grecian cooperative principle. Grice explains how conversation works and his guiding principle is called the cooperative principle, which claims that the speaker and the listener will have mutual expectations of the kind of information that will be shared. The principle emphasizes on the following maxims. Quality

(which demands truthfulness and honesty), Quantity (demand for information as required), Relation (relevance of things brought up), and Manner (lucidity). This principle, when adhered to, enables the speaker and listener to figure out the meaning of certain implication by way of inference.

An Overview of Pragmatics

Recently, pragmatics has expanded widely to include anything relating to the way in which people communicate that cannot be captured by conventional linguistic analysis in a less technical, more communication-oriented terminology. One would perhaps use words such as 'message' and 'language use' rather than Morris 'sign' and 'interpretation' and many theories are now used to account or analyse a language. Pragmatics is a sub-field of linguistics that was developed in the 70's. Although it is a relatively new branch of linguistic, research on it dates back to ancient Greece and Rome where the term pragmatics in Greek means being practical.

The word pragmatics derives via Latin pragmatism, from the Greek (pragmatiskos) meaning, amongst others, 'fit for action', which comes from (pragma) 'deed acts'. Morris defines pragmatics as the study of the relation of signs to interpretation.

Kempson (1975:56) describes pragmatics as the study of general cognitive principles involved in the retrieval of information from an utterance. Yule (1985) sees pragmatics as concerned with 'the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker or writer and interpreted by a listener or reader. Crystal and Varley (1987) define pragmatics as the study of the factors that govern our choice of language (sounds, constructions, words) in social interaction, and the effect of our choice upon others. The goal of pragmatics primarily is to explain how utterances convey meaning in context, how meaning is decoded from utterance in context and in particular

situations, how context contributes to the encoding and decoding of meaning, how speakers and hearers of utterances perceive them, how speakers say one thing and mean something else, how deductions are made in context with respect to what meaning has been encoded in a particular utterance (Amodu, 2011).

In this context, pragmatics is all about using language, changing language and following certain language rules. It is seen as language in use with respect to the environment and observation of certain rules which, when violated intentionally or unintentionally, creates an implication. Consideration is further given to how Dul Johnson uses words in the selected text, considering the setting of his book as well as, how he intentionally or unintentionally violates certain pragmatic rules and/ creates implicature.

Grice's Theory of Implication.

Grice theory of implicature is among the most important and influential contributions to contemporary pragmatics. implicature stands as a paradigmatic example of the nature and power of pragmatic explanation of linguistic phenomena. It is a theory about how people use language. It is suggested that, there is a set of over-arching assumption guiding the conduct of conversation. Grice identifies guidelines as four basic maxims of conversation or general principles underlying the efficient cooperative use of language which jointly express a general cooperative principle and also identified three types of general conversation implicature, namely conventional, scalar and conversational implicature. For the purpose of this paper, the focus is on conversational implicature.

Conversational Implicature

This is a deliberate flout of maxims to convey an additional

meaning not expressed literally. For instance, a response to "did you enjoy the meal?" with following utterance "the aroma is very tantalizing" if the speaker is assumed to be following the cooperative principle, in spite of flouting the maxim of quantity, then the utterance must have an additional non literal meaning, such as "the meal is tasteless" The speaker's desire to fulfill two conflicting maxims will result in his or her flouting one maxim to invoke the other. For instance, a speaker responds to the question, "Where is Goodness?" with the following utterances "she is either eating in the dinning or washing plates in the kitchen". In this case, the maxim of quality and the maxim of quantity are in conflict. A cooperative speaker does not want to be ambiguous, but also does not want to give false information by giving a specific answer in spite of his uncertainty. By flouting the maxim of quantity, the speaker invokes the maxim of quality, leading to the implicature that, the speaker does not have the evidence to give a specific location where he believes Goodness is. The speaker invokes a maxim as a basis for interpreting the utterances. In the following conversation (A) I am very hungry. (B) There are good restaurants all over the streets. The second speaker invokes the 'Maxim of Relevance' resulting in the implicature that "there are good restaurants all over the streets and one can probably go in and eat good food.

Implicature seems to offer some significant functional explanation of linguistic facts than other theories, it also provides some explicit account of how possible to mean (in some general sense) more than what is actually said (ie more than what is literally expressed by the conventional sense of the linguistic expressions uttered). The notion of implicature seems likely to affect substantial simplification in both structure and the content of semantic description.

Implicature or at least closely related concepts seems to be

simply essentials if various basic fact about language are to be accounted for properly examples, particles like "well, anyway, by the way, require some meaning specification in a theory of meaning just like all other words in English, but when it comes to considering their meaning, we find ourselves referring to the pragmatic mechanisms that produce implicature. We also see that syntactic rules appear at least to be sensitive to implicature and that implicature puts interesting constraints on what can be a possible lexical item in natural language. The principles that generate implicature have a very general explanatory power: a few basic principles provide explanations for a large array of apparently unrelated facts. In a pragmatic analysis of dialogues in Dul's selected novel *Across the Gulf*. Using Grice's cooperative maxims, implicature may be generated which this study hopes to interpret in order to bring out better understanding of the utterances in the conversation. Grice claims that people entering into conversation with each other tacitly agree to cooperate towards mutual communication ends, thus obeying the above stated cooperative principle and its regulative convention called maxims. The maxims are of four types (1) Maxim of quantity (2) quality (3) relevance and manner.

The maxim of quality states that "Be appropriately informative". This refers to the idea that the participant in a conversation should be as informative as necessary and should not over-elaborate by giving unnecessary details. Maxim of relevance holds that speakers should organize their utterances in such a way that they are relevant to the ongoing context. The maxim of manner dictates that speakers and writers should avoid ambiguity and obscurity and should be orderly in their utterance. The maxim of quality on the other hand, expects speakers and writers to say or write what they believe to be true and to have evidence for what they say.

The source of data in this study is Dul's novel *Across the Gulf*. The novel mirrors the society's communicative values in relation to expressing love and time of war. Some talk-exchanges in the novel are paired for analysis. The choice of a model for analysis of data in the context of this research has been dictated by the requirement of pragmatic analysis and specifically Grice's (1989) method using descriptive qualitative method of analysis. The selected dialogues are analysed using Grice's maxims to show adherence to, or violations of maxims in the selected talk-exchanges. The procedure of analysis includes describing the context, analysing the data based on Grice's cooperative principle, to analyse the level of adherence of the utterances to the cooperative principles.

The selected characters are presented in a dialogic conversation to reflect the context of the conversation in order to enhance a valid and reliable interpretation of the utterances for effective realization of meaning. For the purpose of the analysis, the selected utterances are identified as dialogue 1 – 10 and the utterances are coded as Utt1, Utt2, Utt3 and so on. In analyzing the data, the selected instances in the conversation are appropriately described and analysed to bring out the pragmatic implicature created in various contexts, and adherence to maxims. The analysis interprets the dialogic conversation, the consequent violation of the maxim, and highlights the conversational implicature derivable from evaluation of the dialogic conversation.

Dialogue One

Ofala and Ifunanya in a romance mood, the night before their wedding day. But they are obstructed by Ofala's cousin Obinna and the following dialogue ensues.

Utt 1 Ifunnaya: Who is that?

- Utt 2 Ofala: My cousin
- Utt 3 Ifunnaya: Your cousin?
- Utt 4 Ofala: Yes, from my father's side.
- Utt 5 Ifunnaya: In this town and I do not know him?
- Utt 6 Ofala: No. But he has been around for a week. He came to honour us.
- Utt 7 Ifunnaya: Ah! How nice! And he has been around for a whole week, yet I have not met him.
- Utt 8 Ofala: It is my fault. He came to represent our uncle, father's younger brother. But it is good that you have not met him (laughing).
- Utt 9 Ifunnaya: Why? He is your cousin you said.
- Utt 10 Ofala: Yes, but he is the taller and fairer version of me, and even more handsome, they say.
- Utt 11 Ifunnaya: You are a coward, Offy
- Utt 12 Ofala: Better to be a coward and have you rather than lose you to someone else. (pg 12)

Utt 1 to Utt 6 are orderly as in any normal talk exchange because, there is always turn taking as a principle of conversational exchange; for example, a question is expected to be followed by an answer. In utt10, the speaker (Ofala) violates the maxim of quality, by giving more information than it is required by talking about the height, colour and handsomeness. On the other hand, the maxim of relevance is also violated because the height, colour, is not a threat to the listener because she loves the speaker with all her heart without minding his physical or financial stand. One could therefore say that the violation has a positive pragmatic effect,

as the interlocutors understood the utterances as jokes.

Dialogue Two

Janbut's father is encouraging him to have interest in farm work through the following conversation

Utt 13 Father: You think this is a dirty job, one day it will save you.

Utt14 Janbut: It is farming I don't like, father, but I love this one you know.

Utt15 Father: What can you make, apart from knives and axes, simple things that even children can make.

Utt16 Janbut: You don't know, father. There is nothing you make that I cannot make. I've made them when you were not around.

Utt17 Father: Really?

Utt18 Janbut: Yes, father. (pg 21)

Dialogue Two

Utt 13 to Utt 18 adhered to all Grice's cooperative maxims. The utterances are direct discussion between son and father, there was no shift from the topic, the information was not more than required, and Janbut said the truth about his feeling towards farming. The utterances are cooperative in nature. The interlocutors share a common knowledge about their interest in life.

Dialogue Three

Ifunnaya is capture by the Nigeria soldiers and was kept under the custody of Janbut being a medical practitioner in the Nigerian Army. And the following conversation ensued.

Utt 19 Janbut: What is happening with you?

- Utt 20 Ifunnaya: Silence.
- Utt 21 Janbut: Are you pregnant.
- Utt 22 Ifunnaya: Yes, sir.
- Utt 23 Janbut: But you don't look it. I'm a medical personnel; a doctor.
- Utt 24 Ifunnaya: But you asked.

In a talk exchange, a question precedes an answer. In Utt 19 the response in U20 is 'silence' which has a lot of Pragmatic effects on the conversation, which may mean that Ifunnaya is not interested in the conversation, or not interested in the man, or not in the mood to talk or sure about the answer to give. In Utt 22, the speaker lies, thereby violation the maxim of quality. One could therefore say that the violation has no positive pragmatic effect, as the speaker in Utt 23 continues pressurising her (Ifunnaya to speak). Ifunnaya thought that her response in Utt 22 can keep Jambut away from talking to her, but it was never so; from the author's comments, he pesters her till she gives in for it. The story had it that they become so closed till the end of the story.

Dialogue Four

Ifunnaya's parents are waiting for her to return at home, not knowing that she has been captured by Nigerian soldiers, his father went out to look for her but was unable to find her, on his return to his house the following conversation ensues.

- Utt 25 Mother: Nnaányi, what is it?
- Utt 26 Father: I cannot pray, that is what.
- Utt 27 Mother: Where is my daughter?
- Utt 28 Father: I am trying to ask God the same question.
- Utt 29 Mother: But I am asking you, Nnaányi!

- Utt 30 Father: I didn't find her, if I did, would I have returned without her.
- Utt 31 Mother: Don't tell me that my daughter is dead Nnaányi, don't tell me Ifunanya is dead.
- Utt 32 Father: Wo-wo-woman, don't wish your daughter dead! Don't! did I tell you I found her corps?
- Utt 33 Mother: You said you didn't find her?
- Utt 34 Father: And...and does that me-ean she is dead? (pg 31/32)

From Utt 25 to Utt 29 violates the maxim of relevance. The maxim holds that speakers should organize their utterances in such a way that they are relevant to the ongoing context. In Utt 25 a man went out in search of her daughter, on arrival the wife noticed that he came back without the daughter and ask 'what is it ?' and the response in Utt 26 "I cannot pray" the answer is not relevant to the question thereby violating the maxim of relevance. The question in Utt 27 is that the speaker wants to know the whereabouts of her daughter. From Utt30 to Utt 34 also violates the maxim of manner, in utt30 the speaker said that "I didn't find her' in utt31 the speaker responded that ' don't tell me that my daughter is dead'. The utterances are not orderly and the maxim of manner dictates avoidance of ambiguity, obscurity and orderliness. ' I did not find her' may mean: she is dead, or she has been captured by soldiers as it is the time of war or eloped because she went out with her fiance that the father is not in total support of the marriage. The utterances in Utt 30 to utt 34 have implied meaning which cannot be interpreted literally without reading through the context,

Dialogue Five

Ifunnaya is been recruited as a health worker working with Janbut and other soldiers. They are traveling on a truck to another village and the conversations ensues.

Utt 35 Janbut: Should I give you a helping hand?

Utt 36 Ifunanya: Or carry me on your back.

Utt 37 Janbut: I'm strong enough to do tha.t

Utt 38 Ifunanya: I know that but I won't let you do it.

Utt 39 Janbut: Not here, perhaps.

Utt 40 Ifunanya: Nor anywhere at all! And by the way, what makes you think that you are stronger than me?

Utt 41 Janbut: Alright. I give up. (pg. 37)

In the above dialogue, there is a violation of the maxim of relevance; the speaker in Utt36 response to Utt 35 is not relevant to the ongoing topic of discussion. Thereby violates the maxim of relevant. The utterance 'or carry me on your back' has implied meaning, the inferences that can be drawn may be that the speaker is trying to say that she is capable of doing her work, or she does not want his(Janbut) assistance or a way stopping the listener from interfering in her matters. From Utt37 to Utt 38 adhered to Grice cooperative maxims, it is a straight forward conversation between two friends. Utt 39 is also a deviation from the topic at hand with an implied meaning which the reader needs to read in-between the lines to draw inferences. From the author's comment Janbut is interested in Ifunnaya, but she is not serious with him. It entails that Utt39 violates the maxim of manner.

Dialogue Six

This dialogue is the conversation between Janbut and Ifunanya in Janbut's room.

- Utt 42 Ifunanya: I am going to my parents, John I am going home, no matter what you say!
- Utt 43 Janbut: We are not quarrelling, Ify, are we?
- Utt 44 Ifunanya: Well, we might end up quarreling if I don't move out of your room. Listen I didn't bargain for this, but I'm becoming too dependent on you.
- Utt 45 Janbut: And is that a bad thing? Are we no longer friends? Am I complaining? Please, be reasonable!
- Utt 46 Ifunanya: You have got all the help you need now. There is no need for me!
- Utt 47 Janbut: Says who? Was that the only reason I needed you?
- Utt 48 Ifunanya: If there was another, or others, I don't know.
- Utt 49 Janbut: You refuse to know.
- Utt 50 Ifunanya: I'm afraid that what I was running away from might happen and I will have myself to blame. The way you look at me these days, John, I'm not comfortable. (pg 47)

In the above dialogue, Utt 42 to Utt 49 adhered to Grice cooperative maxims. The conversation is cooperative, direct question with direct response. There is no much information, no lies added, the interlocutors are friends. In Utt 50, there is violation of the maxim of manner, the utterance is ambiguous with an implied meaning. To get the real meaning of the utterance, the reader needs to read in-between the lines and follows the author's comments to know that the speaker was actually running away from the listener and what she was

actually running away from eventually happens. The pragmatic effects of the utterance in Utt 50 is that the words turn to action before the end of the novel as the speaker continued blaming herself throughout the novel.

Dialogue Seven

Janbut receives a call about his father's death while with Ifunanya and their conversation goes thus;

- Utt 51 Janbut: There is trouble, my dear.
- Utt 52 Ifunanya: What is the problem, John?
- Utt 53 Janbut: It's my father. He's dead.
- Utt 54 Ifunanya: What do you mean dead?
- Utt 55 Janbut: Exactly that. They sent a radio message and made a call.
- Utt 56 Ifunanya: I thought I heard the phone rang in the night
- Utt 57 Janbut: Yes. It was from the office. They were trying to transfer the call to me. But I have no regrets about rejecting it.
- Utt 58 Ifunanya: Why? What are you going to do now? Go home right away.
- Utt 59 Janbut: They have buried him, so I will take my time.
- Utt 60 Ifunanya: Buried him? Without you?
- Utt 61 Janbut: My people don't waste time with dead bodies.
- Utt 62 Ifunanya: But you are the first son.
- Utt 63 Janbut: That's never an issue with my people. I don't even count. The elders take the decision.

Utt 64 Ifunanya: I'm not prepared to travel with you – yet.

Utt 65 Janbut: That's okay. In any case, I won't be long. A week or two that's all. And is because the war has ended, otherwise, four days maximum. (pg. 59)

The above dialogue is a total adherence of Grice Cooperative maxims. There was no violation of any maxims. It is a friendly conversation. This means that the conversation is cooperative because the speakers unconsciously honoured maxims convention in constructing their utterances.

Dialogue Eight

Jambut travels home when he heard about his father's death, when he saw Mayer his wife and the following conversation ensure.

Utt 66 Maya: I have missed you, Jambut! why did you have to wait for your father to die before you come back to me?

Utt 67 Jambut : You will never understand, my dear. And it was not for you that they let me come.

Utt 68 Maya: I know, but I am glad that you are here.

Utt 69 Jambut: But I'm here for you, too, you know that.

Utt 70 Maya: Will you go back soon?

Utt 71 Jambut: I have another five days. That's good, is it not?

Utt 72 Maya: Don't know but we 'll see. (pg. 69)

Dialogue eight adheres to the Grice cooperative maxims. It is a friendly conversation between husband and wife. The conversation is a straight forward one, no violation of any of the maxims. There was no much information nor ambiguity, the utterances are cohensive.

Dialogue Nine

Jambut returns to his base while Ifunnaya's husband returns from war, after their wedding Ifunnaya runs to Jambut's {John}house to greet him.

And the conversations:

Utt 73 Ifunnaya: John, why?

Utt 73 Jambut: He has come back.

Utt 74 Ifunnaya: Is that why you did not return when you said you will? Didn't you promise?

Utt 75 Jambut: But you have him now. Is not a reason to be happy?

Utt 76 Ifunnaya: Answer my guestion John; why why did you fail me?

Utt 77Jambut: Reasons beyond my control. Reasons we do not have the

time to go through now or any other time. I guess it was meant to be so Ify.

Utt 78 Ifunnaya: Even so, you could have made it easier for me. We would have had a meaningful conversation over our lives, and what we should do with our lives now and in future. And that would have helped us' or helped me at least.

Utt 78 Jambut: Well we both have our lives and future

in our hands now, more than before. We have enough to do, and enough to think about Ify. And very soon you will start to have children, for your husband and will be a happy and busy woman.

Utt 74 is not the response to Utt 73 thereby violating the maxim of relevance. Utt 76 is also a violation of maxim of relevance because it is not the response to Utt7. Although there are violations, the pragmatic effect is that, the interlocutors understand each other. Utt 77 and 78 adhered to the maxim of quality. Jambut in Utt 78 told her the truth why he didn't come back as they planned. "Reasons we do not have the time to go through now or any other time". The pragmatic effect is that: till the end of the novel, there was no time for them to discuss speaker's reasons for not coming as planned.

Dialogue Ten

The discussion below was after the first night Ifunanya had with her husband Ofala, after their wedding:

- Utt 79 Ifunnaya: You have been awake, Offy.
- Utt 80 Ofala: Hummmnn, not quiite. How are you?
- Utt 81 Ifunnaya: I'm fine, And you? Did nyoun sleep well?
- Utt 82 Ofala: Oh sure. Thank you. I mean thanks to you. I feel happy now and fulfilled.
- Utt 83 Ifunnaya: I am too, thank you very much. It must be broad day now. I can see the light through the door.
- Utt 84 Ofala: I love you Ify, I cannot do without you. Infact it was the thoughts of you, that kept me alive, that protected me from the bullets and bombs of those....

Nigerian Soldiers.

Utt 85 Ifunnaya: Same here Offy. I don't see how I could live my life without

you. Yet I still need to say I'm sorry

From Utt 81 to 86 of the dialogue is Cooperative. It is a very straight forward conversation. In Utt 87 the speaker {Ifunnaya} violates the maxim of relevance by the utterance "Yet I still need to say I'm sorry". The apology is not relevant to the expression of love shared in their first night of sleeping together as husband and wife. Reading through the story, the novel exposed Ifunnaya's unfaithfulness, which she felt internally guilty. The utterance has implied meaning which can only be understood by anyone that followed the story to the end.

Discussion

The analysis of the selected discourses in *Across the Gulf* by Dul Johnson showed that it is not possible for creative writers to adhere to all the conversational maxims in a particular novel. The writers don't usually even work towards adhering to the maxims consciously at all, but a good writer that tries to convince his/her reader to believe in what he/she believes can unconsciously adhere to the maxims to a great extent. It is also necessary to note that creative writers can easily violate one or more maxims in a conversation, especially when mirroring different characters or setting. For instance, in some dialogues, the interlocutors adhere to all maxims making the conversation cooperative while some violate one or more maxims.

It is of interest to note that, adherence and violation of Grice's maxims are very important in English language usage, because the adherence indicates that the interactants in a conversation conform to certain conventions that develop to

cooperative behaviour, and in their social interaction which is expected from every user of English to observe. On the other hand, the violation of the maxims or non-adherence which maybe a style or a choice deliberately made to augment meaning and generate implicatures is expected to be of interest to English language users.

Conclusion

The contribution of pragmatics to the learning of language and literature is undeniable. This study reveals that writers and specifically Dul Johnson who is the focus of this study is most of the times mindful of the cooperative principles especially in creative writing. However, since some conversations as the one analysed in this research involved simulated dialogue, Dul makes efforts through content to capture reality. Also when the title of the work is not relevant to the content or the content is not coherently arranged, it makes the reading boring {Maxim of relevant or manner} with Grice's maxims, a writer can be more focused either in writing fiction, nonfiction, biography, or drama. Discourse is used to explore how meaning can be interpreted in a practical term in any context.

Recommendation.

The study futher recommends that playwrights should have knowledge of Grice's cooperative maxims in order to produce the aesthetic effect which the writing is meant for. It will help a writer to arrange and re-arrange his/her works into mental pictures that are clearer and lasting in the mind of a reader.

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