



A PRAGMA-STYLISTIC STUDY OF HAMID'S "MOTH SMOKE"

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Abstract:

The current research aim to explore the pragma-stylistic features in Hamid's "Moth Smoke," focusing on how illocutionary speech acts, flouting of maxims, and figures of speech reveal implied meanings related to hybridity and power structures. It examines how pragmatic theories function stylistically to construct these meanings. Through qualitative analysis, the researcher analyzed the language use in the novel. The data have been analyzed using Black (2006) Pragma-Stylistics model. The findings of this study reveal that the use of these elements not only enhance the narrative but also serve as a critical lens to examine socio-cultural issues, reflecting characters' cultural and existential identity crises, their struggle to adapt traditional Pakistani heritage with modern western lifestyles, and the social inequalities faced by marginalized individuals belonging to the middle-class. It highlights that Hamid's use of linguistic elements provides insights into characters' inner conflicts and societal dissonance, which contributes to an understanding of contemporary Pakistani society portrayed in the novel.

Keywords: pragma-stylistics, speech act theory, cooperative principles, figurative language, hybridity, power structures.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Language is a tool for communication, enabling people to exchange knowledge, opinions, beliefs, and to express thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Bloch & Trager (1985), in their book "Outline of Linguistic Analysis," defined language as a method of arbitrary vocal symbols through which a social group cooperates. Their definition emphasizes the societal functions of language rather than its communicative function, offering a narrow view of its role in society. Effective communication, whether spoken or written, requires mutual understanding of context and meaning between participants. Communication is an active process, involving both the creation and interpretation of meaning. Yule (1996) notes that:

Communication relies not only on understanding the literal definitions of words but also on recognizing the intended message conveyed by speakers through their utterances. (p.126)

Pragma-Stylistics, a branch of stylistics, integrates pragmatic and stylistic elements for the analysis of literary texts. Stylistics, a field with vast potential, draws inspiration from various linguistic domains to analyze style—the way language is used in a text. Pragmatics, another domain, focuses on conversational patterns and the analysis of meaning in context, forming the foundation for pragmatic stylistics. Pragmatic-stylistics examines how language contributes to the delineation of protagonists and the construction of power structures in literary works (Nørgaard et al., 2010, p. 39).

This research analyzes Hamid's "Moth Smoke" through a pragma-stylistic lens, highlighting how pragma-stylistic elements play a critical role in constructing meaning and interpreting the narrative. It explores how linguistic features such as speech acts, flouting of conversational maxims, and stylistic choices like figurative elements contribute to the novel's portrayal of



power structures and cultural hybridity. The study reveals how Hamid critiques societal norms, navigates the representation of hybrid identities, and portrays the negotiation of power among characters. By emphasizing language use in context, pragma-stylistics offers a pertinent lens to uncover the implicit meanings embedded in the text.

Plot of the Novel “Moth Smoke”

Mohsin Hamid, a renowned British-Pakistani essayist, novelist, and short story writer, is widely celebrated for his contributions to English fiction. Born in Lahore in 1971, he graduated from Princeton University, where he was inspired by acclaimed authors Joyce Carol Oates and Toni Morrison. Hamid's body of work includes four novels, a collection of essays, and several short stories, with notable titles such as "Moth Smoke" (2000), "The Reluctant Fundamentalist" (2007), "How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia" (2013), and "Exit West" (2017). His debut novel, "Moth Smoke" vividly captures Lahore in the late 1990s, exploring issues of unemployment and its impact on youth.

"Moth Smoke," published in 2000, is a contemporary novel that gained significant popularity. Set in Lahore during the late 1990s, it portrays a society marked by intense competition, corruption, drug trade, and clandestine love affairs, particularly among the upper class. The story follows Darashikoh Shezad (Daru), a banker who loses his job and turns to the drug trade to maintain a luxurious lifestyle beyond his means. His romantic involvement with Mumtaz, the wife of his best friend Ozi, disrupts their social circle and leads to moral and personal dilemmas, spiraling him into self-destruction. The novel also delves into Ozi's struggles with his own moral compromises. Through shifting perspectives, "Moth Smoke" explores the psychological turmoil of its characters, especially Daru, representing a generation grappling with identity crises in a rapidly changing Pakistan. The narrative examines themes of cultural identity, power dynamics, moral ambiguity, and post-colonialism, highlighting the stark disparities between Lahore's privileged elite and marginalized individuals. The title metaphorically reflects Daru's self-destructive tendencies, akin to moths drawn to flames.

Statement of the Problem

Many research scholars have extensively analyzed Mohsin Hamid's novel "Moth Smoke" from various literary and linguistic angles. However, a notable gap in the existing research pertains to pragma-stylistic analysis within literary genres. This study aims to fill this void by exploring pragma-stylistic elements in the novel and their significance in revealing implied meanings regarding hybridity, as well as identifying and analyzing themes concerning power structures. By delving into this unexplored territory, the study not only enriches our understanding of linguistic features in literature but also emphasizes the significance of Hamid's work in the literary landscape.

Significance of the Study

This research significantly contributes to the fields of pragmatics, stylistics, and literary studies by addressing a gap through pragma-stylistic analysis of Hamid's "Moth Smoke." By focusing on these linguistic aspects, it reveals how language shapes social constructs like identity and power. By integrating these fields, it provides insights into Hamid's writing style, bridging linguistic analysis and literary interpretation. Beneficiaries include scholars, students, and critics interested in cultural studies, who can enrich their interpretations of contemporary Pakistani literature. Additionally, researchers in linguistics and literary studies can benefit from the framework provided for analyzing similar features in other literary works, thus expanding the scope of literary analysis and enhancing our understanding of language's role in conveying literary messages.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this research are as follows:

- To explore how pragma-stylistic elements such as illocutionary speech acts, flouting of maxims, and figures of speech reveal implied meanings, particularly regarding hybridity in the novel "Moth Smoke."
- To find out the predominant themes regarding power structures represented through illocutionary speech acts, flouting of maxims and figures of speech in the novel "Moth Smoke."

Research Questions

The research questions of this research are given below:

- 1) How do pragma-stylistic elements such as illocutionary speech acts, flouting of maxims, and figures of speech reveal implied meanings particularly regarding hybridity and power structures in the novel "Moth Smoke?"
- 2) What predominant themes regarding power structures are represented through the use of illocutionary speech acts, flouting maxims, or figure of speech used in the novel "Moth Smoke?"

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework serves as a conceptual roadmap guiding the analysis of Hamid's "Moth Smoke" in this research. In this section, the researcher elucidates the key concepts that develop the study's analysis, laying the groundwork for exploration of the novel.

Pragma-Stylistics

Hickey (1993) defines Pragma-stylistics as a subfield of stylistics that integrates pragmatic elements into literary analysis, to provide deeper insights by applying pragmatic concepts to textual interpretation. This approach combines linguistic form and pragmatic interpretation, examining how context and communication styles shape meaning. Building on this framework, Black (2006) explores the role of pragmatic principles, such as speech act theory and politeness strategies, in influencing stylistic features within texts.

This study employs a pragma-stylistic approach to explore how pragmatic elements enhance the interpretation of language in literary texts, revealing the relation between linguistic form and communicative intent. By integrating stylistics and pragmatics, it highlights the symbiotic relationship between language structure and pragmatic function in literary discourse.

Pragmatic theories play a crucial role in deciphering both spoken and written texts, focusing on inferring implicit meanings. This study used two key theories from the field of pragmatics: Speech Act Theory and the Cooperative Principle.

Speech Act Theory, introduced by John L. Austin (1962) and further elaborated by John Searle (1969), examines the intended meaning of a speaker's utterance and its perception by the listener within the context of communication. Austin (1962) defines speech acts as utterances that perform specific actions through language, such as commands, promises, or assertions. Searle categorizes illocutionary speech acts into five types: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. Representatives convey truth based on knowledge, directives prompt action, commissives commit to future actions, expressives convey emotions, and declarations bring about changes in reality through language.

Paul Grice's Cooperative Principle, introduced in his seminal paper "Logic and Conversation" in 1975, highlights the collaborative nature of communication and adherence to conversational maxims. However, Grice (1991) acknowledged instances of non-observance, categorized as flouting, violating, opting out, infringing, and suspending. Flouting, the intentional disregard



of maxims, is of four types: quantity, quality, relation, and manner. Quantity involves providing insufficient or excessive information, quality involves deceptive or ambiguous statements, relation pertains to unrelated responses, and manner involves the deliberate use of vague language, departing from clarity. (Grice, as cited in Thomas, 1995: 64).

Figurative language is a powerful tool that authors use to deviate from literal expressions to create special effects and convey complex ideas more effectively. Arsyani et al. (2019) highlight its ability to communicate deeper meanings and emotions. Perrine's (1977) classification provides valuable tools for literary analysis, categorizing figures of speech by their structural and semantic functions. Similes enhance imagery through comparisons using "like" or "as," metaphors convey symbolic meanings, personification gives human qualities to inanimate objects, hyperbole uses exaggeration for impact, and irony, in its various forms, challenges conventional expectations and prompts critical reflection.

Literary Theories

The researcher applied two theories from the field of literature to present the representation of various themes regarding hybridity and power dynamics through the interactions and shifting dynamics among characters.

The concept of hybridity in postcolonial theory, prominently explored by Homi K. Bhabha, highlights the interplay of cultural dynamics, emphasizing the blending and evolution of cultural elements and identities. Longkumer (2022) emphasizes culture as the foundation of society, embodying shared meanings and practices. Cultural hybridity reflects the transformative impact of cultural encounters, involving adaptation and negotiation. This ongoing process of identity formation is influenced by colonial legacies, ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status, shaping both self-perception and societal perceptions.

Marxism, developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, examines how socio-economic structures shape human experience and consciousness. According to Tyson (2006), it emphasizes capitalism's influence on wealth distribution, power dynamics, and cultural norms, resulting in class conflict between the bourgeoisie and the working class. The bourgeoisie controls political institutions and cultural values, while the working class fights for social change and equality through resistance and collective action.

Related Researches

Rubiyanto and Arini (2016) analyze Khalid Hosseini's "The Kite Runner" using Marxist theory, highlighting socio-economic disparities, power dynamics, and exploitation among characters. Their study offers valuable insights into how character interactions and societal structures in the novel reflect Marxist principles.

Harya (2017) defines figurative language as the use of words or expressions beyond their literal meaning, enhancing contextual understanding in literature. Found in novels, poetry, and drama, it enriches reader experience through vivid imagery and deeper insights into plot and characters..

Javaid, Rabbani & Habib (2021) analyze Daniyal Moenuddin's short stories, focusing on characters' struggles with cultural hybridity and ensuing identity crises amidst globalization, showcasing the poignant quest for belonging and self-identity in divergent cultural landscapes.. Hameed Ullah et al. (2022) analyze Hamid's novel through pragma-stylistic lenses, integrating theories like Implicature and Speech Act Theory, alongside figurative expressions. Their study explores narrative elements such as settings, conflicts, character development, and symbolism to offer a descriptive analysis of selected dialogues, revealing the author's intentions.

Abdullah (2023) argues that communication adheres to cooperative principles, dictating conversational conduct, but individuals may deviate from norms, leading to non-observance of maxims. In dramatic contexts, flouting of maxims, often through figurative language, injects humor and engages audiences.

This study is distinct from the previous conducted researchers, which have primarily focused on the novel's thematic concerns and socio-political critique by applying different literary theories. However, there has been limited exploration of the novel's linguistic dimensions. So, this research addresses this gap by applying Black's Pragma-stylistics model, which combines the analysis of speech acts, conversational maxims, and stylistic features to uncover deeper layers of meaning.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Nature of Research

This study employs a qualitative approach, specifically adopting a descriptive method for a detailed analysis of linguistic and literary elements in Hamid's "Moth Smoke." Through systematic textual analysis, selected passages from the novel are examined.

Model of Analysis

The current study used an integrated pragma-stylistic model, derived from Black's (2006) framework, to analyze the data. This model, comprising two interconnected levels of linguistic examination—pragmatics and stylistics—serves as a fundamental tool for analysis of language use. At the pragmatic level, two theories, Speech Act Theory and Non-Observance of Conversational Maxims, are employed to identify pragmatic elements. Meanwhile, the stylistic level of analysis delves into the impact of stylistic choices through the theory of Figurative language.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, the researcher conducted an analysis of the data organized into two categories: hybridity and power structures. The analysis delves into how these themes are depicted through pragma-stylistic choices, particularly illocutionary speech acts, flouted maxims, and figures of speech in Mohsin Hamid's novel "Moth Smoke." This involved an examination of the text, emphasizing key passages and dialogues that showcase the use of these elements.

Hybridity

In this section, the researcher has examined the theme of hybridity in Mohsin Hamid's "Moth Smoke" through the lens of post-colonial theory. The analysis focused on identifying hybridity using three key pragma-stylistic features: illocutionary speech acts, flouting of maxims, and figures of speech. These linguistic elements are explored to understand how they contribute to the construction of hybrid identities among characters. The representation of hybridity in the novel reflects the complexities of post-colonial Pakistani society, including the blending of Western and Pakistani cultural practices, clashes between modernity and tradition, and the influence of Western ideals.

Illocutionary Speech Acts and Hybridity

Through the lens of illocutionary speech acts, which comprises the various ways in which language is used to perform actions and convey meaning, this analysis explored how hybrid identities contribute to cultural hybridity and identity crises among the characters.

Cultural hybridization means the mix of one culture with another as the individuals from different cultures come into contact with each other. It results in the adoption of their cultural traditions, values, customs, and lifestyles. As in "Moth Smoke," Hamid depicts the fusion of two different cultures—Pakistani and Western cultural elements in characters' behaviors,



lifestyle choices, and consumption patterns. For example, the characters such as Daru, Ozi, and Mumtaz are involved in such practices as they frequently attend Western-style parties and nightclubs, where they involve in the use of alcohol and drugs, merged with traditional gatherings and cultural events.

Then I am inside. I see the familiar faces of Lahore's party crowd and soon I'm caught up in the whole hugging, hand shaking, and cheek kissing scene. Tonight's venue is a mansion with marble floors and twenty-foot ceilings. Rumor has it that the owner made his fortune as a smuggler, which is probably true but could also be social retribution for his recent ascent to wealth. The dance floor is packed. Ozi and Mumtaz are shaking it down to "Stayin' Alive." They make a sexy pair, a welcome new addition to the scene, and I overhear the update passing like a Reuters report: "Aurangzeb and Mumtaz, back from New York, very cool. (Ch.3, pg.27)

In this passage, Daru describes the social gathering attended by him in the company of Ozi and Mumtaz, which provides insights about the culture of Lahore in late 1990's. The illocutionary speech acts used here are representative speech acts that provides information about the setting and characters' actions. As Daru describes the scene at the party, its venue, the participants, the activities going on, and the interaction between people in the event, using a representative speech act of describing. These descriptions represent the social atmosphere of the party, which provides understanding of the characters' social interactions and behaviors. Here, Hamid reflects the fusion of Western-style socializing practices with traditional Pakistani customs. The use of the phrases like "hugging, hand-shaking and cheek-kissing," highlights the Westernized forms of greeting. This blending of cultural practices illustrates the adoption of Western norms in Pakistani social setting, which represents the hybrid nature of the individuals' cultural identities. Additionally, another representative speech act is used in the description of the party venue as a mansion, reflects upon the aspirational lifestyles of Lahore's elite. The rumor about the owner that he is a smuggler, who has made these possessions through it, shows the blurred borderline between legality and illegality in the pursuit of wealth and social status. The scene on the dance floor, where Ozi and Mumtaz are dancing to the song 'Stayin' Alive,' a classic Western disco by Bee Gees, which illustrates the influence of Western culture in their music choices. Their dance moves and song selection reflect their embrace of Westernization form of entertainment among the party crowd. The description of them as a "sexy pair" and "a welcome new addition to the scene" marks their social standing among their peers, and the update about their return from New York highlights their exposure to Western experiences and lifestyle in Pakistani society. This put emphasis on social status, which indicates the role of language in shaping cultural identities and social hierarchies in the party. Identity crises are prevalent among the characters as they confront the clash between tradition and modernity in a rapidly changing society, leading them to question their identities and search for a sense of self and belonging. This clash reflects the tie between traditional norms and the influences of Westernization in societies undergoing rapid and cultural change. In Hamid's "Moth Smoke," the conflict between traditional Eastern and modern Western values is clearly evident in different ways. For example, the characters are seen abandoning the norms of Pakistani culture and adopting the values and customs of Western culture.

When I met Darashikoh Shezad, I didn't know whether I was going to sleep with him, but I knew I wanted to. He seemed the perfect partner for my first extramarital affair. He was smart and sexy, and since he was one of Ozi's best friends, I knew he'd keep his mouth shut. (Ch.10, pg.158)



Mumtaz is having an extramarital affair with Darashikoh Shezad, her husband's best friend. It represents the clash between conventional values of fidelity and modern notions of personal freedom. Traditionally, Pakistani society places a strong emphasis on marital constancy and loyalty, particularly for women who are expected to adhere to strict moral codes and social norms. However, the influence of modernization has challenged these established customs, leading to shifting attitudes towards relationships, gender roles, and sexuality. Mumtaz's decision to have an affair represents a departure from accustomed morals and beliefs, as she seeks fulfillment and freedom outside the confines of her marriage. Here, Mumtaz used a representative speech act of asserting as she conveys factual information about her intentions and desires. She explicitly states her appeal to Daru and her craving to having an intimate relation with him. This assertion shows her attempt to express her thoughts and feelings honestly, regardless of societal standards or moral considerations. An expressive speech act is used as she expresses her feelings for Darashikoh, whom she describes as 'smart and sexy.' It indicates her sentiments of attraction towards him. Additionally, his close association with Ozi characterizes the influence of modernity on Mumtaz's decision-making process.

Flouting of Maxims and Hybridity

Through the perspective of flouting of maxims, this study found out how hybrid nature of identity formation is presented in the form of characters struggle that defy conventional norms. In the novel, Hamid has shown the ritualistic nature of social interactions among Lahore's elite circles as they have adopted the elements of Western culture, which they are practicing along with their traditional customs.

By exploring the clash between tradition and modernity, the novel sheds light on the formation of cultural identity and societal change in a modern world. The affect of westernized ideals has led to this clash, which is particularly evident in the shifting gender roles. Hamid has depicted it in two characters, Daru and Mumtaz, who caught between the conventional expectations of a society and modern wishes. As Mumtaz's desire to pursue a career outside the home challenges the typical notions of motherhood and domesticity. It shows the social shifts towards individual's freedom and gender equality.

I felt neglected, resentful at being the one left at home when I hadn't wanted to have a baby in the first place. Things came to a head when Muazzam was six months old. I decided I wanted to work full time again. Ozi was shocked. He said Muazzam was too young. I said if he felt so strongly he could ask for paternity leave. But he won the argument. He won it with a low blow. He looked at me like I was a stranger and asked if I loved our son at all. The question destroyed me. (Ch.10, pg.152-153)

Mumtaz's determination to start a job after the birth of her son represents a departure from traditional roles of gender and assumptions of society regarding motherliness. Her response to Ozi's concern about Muazzam's age when she chooses to return to work, is seemingly unrelated to his question. She suggests he can ask for paternity leave if he is worried about their son, which diverts the conversation away from Ozi's initial concern. This flouts maxim of relation as her response does not directly address his query about Muazzam. It indicates her struggle to gain independence from fulfilling society's expectations of maternity. Her opinion about Ozi taking leave comes under flouting the maxim of manner. Instead of expressing her desire for equality in a more tactful manner, her response comes across as aggressive and exaggerated, which deviates from the expected norms of polite conversation. Here, her longing for equal equality in their roles as parents, indicates her rejection of typical gender stereotypes and pushing towards modern values.



Power Structures

In this section, the analysis focused on identifying the predominant themes related to the power structures depicted in the novel “Moth Smoke” using Marxist Theory. These themes include: class distinction, economic exploitation, inequality, and class struggle. The researcher analyzed how characters assert or challenge dynamics of power through the use of pragma-stylistic choices, including: illocutionary speech acts and flouting of maxims through the figures of speech. The novel highlights the power imbalances between social classes, the influence of political corruption, and the consequences of societal norms and expectations on individuals.

Illocutionary Speech Acts and Power Structures

Through the use of language, individuals perform various actions and convey their intended message. The researcher analyzed how characters’ assert dominance, social hierarchies, and contest existing power dynamics in their interactions. It explored how language functions as a tool of domination and protest in a society marked by inequality and social stratification.

Economic exploitation and class conflict are central themes in societies characterized by imbalance and stratification, which reflect the unequal distribution of resources and power among individuals from different socio-economic backgrounds. Throughout the novel, characters head towards the difficulties of class system, where power and ruling are unevenly divided based on class. It portrays a society stratified along lines, where characters from affluent backgrounds use economic power and social influence, while those from marginalized communities struggle to make ends meet. In such systems, access to resources, opportunities, and social mobility is often determined by one’s position in the social ranking, which leads to the exploitation of oppressed groups and preserving class-based distinctions. These differences are presented in various forms, including lack of equal opportunities to employment, education and healthcare as well.

I know banking, I say. And I’m hungry for a chance. I’ll work hard.

That’s the problem. Work hard at what? There just isn’t much work these days. Another French inhale. We have more people than we need right now. And the boys we’re hiring have connections worth more than their salaries. We’re just giving them the respectability of a job here in exchange for their families’ business.

I nod. There doesn’t seem to be much for me to say.

I’m meeting with you, to tell you the honest truth, as a favor to your uncle, Butt Saab continues. Unless you know some really big fish, and I mean someone whose name matters to a country head, no one is going to hire to you. Not with the banking sector in the shape it’s in. (Ch.5, pg.53)

Darashikoh’s search for job in the banking sector is an example of the socio-economic disparity, where approach to prestigious jobs depends upon connections and social networks. There is a conversation between Daru and Butt Saab, a friend of Daru’s uncle. They are talking about a job in bank as Daru is looking for such a position. Butt Saab tells him getting this type of job is not possible nowadays without any connection. Daru asserts a fact about his expertise in banking sector by using a representative speech act of asserting. He also employs a commissive speech act by making a promise that he will do his best once he gets a chance. Butt Saab informs him about the lack of any opportunity there at present and the other person sitting with him, also tells that there is no space because of hiring more employers than necessary who have worthy favors. Another representative speech act of informing is used as he further informs about that this meeting is scheduled only on Drau’s uncle insistence and explains the reality of job market these days that there is no chance to get employment in any sector without the



approval of any influential person. Butt Saab's dismissive attitude towards him asserts that references matter more than qualifications or merit, which highlights the presence of favoritism that getting good jobs depends upon familial ties rather than individual merit. It keeps up a cycle of inequality where those with social capital continue to gain wealth and honor at the expense of the less fortunate. Here, Hamid has thrown light on the hurdles individuals face at the margins of society in order to get best opportunities.

The character of Daru represents the struggle of middle class in Pakistani society. His descent into crime drug dealing as a means of financial survival illustrates the desperation and marginalization experienced by individuals on the edge of the society. He used a representative speech act where his assertion regarding generating income from the selling of drugs such as hash, represents the unpleasant nature of his actions but he prioritizes the ease of earning money in dire financial circumstances. By prioritizing his finances over moral values, he gains freedom in the face of economic oppression, which challenges the hegemony of the upper class and their domination over wealth and power.

Making money this way isn't pleasant, but it's easy, and easy money is exactly what I need, even if there isn't enough of it to pay an electricity bill. (Ch.9, pg.144)

Daru's decision to engage in drug dealing represents a defiance of societal norms, embodying the proletariat's struggle against the oppressive forces of capitalism. Following his dismissal from the bank, he faces financial crisis, including the loss of basic amenities like electricity due to unpaid bills, and experiences a decline in social standing among his affluent friend, Ozi. In a competitive society where connections outweigh merit, Daru is left with few options for earning a livelihood, leading him to resort to illegality in order to survive. Alongside Murad Badshah, he enters the illicit drug trade, selling substances such as charas, heroin, and hash within their social circle.

Flouting of Maxims and Power Structures

The researcher has examined instances where characters defy conversational norms, particularly in interactions marked by power imbalances, shedding light on socio-economic issues, power dynamics, and inequality.

Class divisions and economic disparities are ever-present, highlighting the struggles individuals endure to achieve socio-economic progress amidst corruption and institutional dysfunction. Inequities in wealth and essential resources perpetuate cycles of poverty and social status, exacerbating social inequalities.

What's the alternative? You have to have money these days. The roads are falling apart, so you need a pajero or land cruiser. The phone lines are erratic, so you need a mobile. The colleges are overrun with fundos who have no interest in getting an education so you have to go abroad. And that's ten lakhs a year, mind you. Thanks to electricity theft there will always be shortages, so you have to have a generator. The police are corrupt and ineffective, so you need private security guards. It goes on and on. People are pulling their pieces out of the pie, and the pie is getting smaller, so if you love your family, you'd better take your piece now, while there's still some left. That's what I'm doing. And if anyone isn't doing it, because they're locked out of the kitchen.(Ch.12, pg.184-185)

Ozi discusses the harsh realities of contemporary life in Pakistan, where economic pressures compel individuals to prioritize personal gain over communal welfare. The narrator provides a comprehensive overview of the challenges faced by Pakistani society, including issues with infrastructure, education, security, and societal dynamics. This detailed account, while informative, flouts the maxim of quantity, inundating the reader with a plethora of problems.



Metaphorical language is employed, such as the expression "people pulling their pieces out of the pie," vividly depicting the competitive struggle for resources in a society plagued by hardships. This metaphor symbolizes the relentless pursuit of economic gain in a shrinking market, illustrating the cutthroat nature of socio-economic competition. Additionally, Ozi's reference to being "locked out of the kitchen" defies the maxim of manner, employing irony to highlight the barriers faced by marginalized individuals in accessing resources and opportunities. The portrayal of modern necessities, such as expensive vehicles, mobile phones, generators, and private security guards, underscores the economic disparities and corrupt practices prevalent in Pakistani society. This depiction reflects the stark divide in wealth and access to capital among different social classes, revealing the injustices inherent in the struggle for survival.

Murad Badshah and Daru involve in acts of resistance and defiance among oppressed individuals striving for social justice and equality. Here, they are engaged in a conversation about making their plan to rob boutique. Murad explains the reason behind targeting these.

He takes the gun back from me and tucks it away. Botiques. I want to rob high-end, high-fashion, exclusive botiques.

Is he mocking me? Why botiques?

Murad Badshah starts rocking back and forth with excitement as he ticks off the reason on his fingers. "Built on main roads with easy access, rarely more than one guard, good cash-to-patron ratio, small size, risk-averse clientele, high-profile hostage possibilities, little competition. And, as an added bonus, symbolism: they represent the soft underbelly of the upper crust, the ultimate hypocrisy in a country with flour shortages. Botiques are, in a word, perfect.

It can't be that easy or someone else would be doing it.

Murad Badshah smiles. Entrepreneurs tend to ignore that argument. (Ch.13, pg.213-214)

Murad flouts the maxim of quantity by providing excessive information about the strategic reasons for targeting boutiques, highlighting his planning and determination to challenge the hegemony of the upper class. He offers an exhaustive list of factors that make these boutiques ideal targets for their criminal venture, including easy access, low security, and high-profile clientele. The use of hyperbole emphasizes the strategic advantages of attacking such stores. Daru's question about why they should target these boutiques directly challenges the relevance of Murad's choice, flouting the maxim of relation and implying skepticism about the feasibility of their plan. Murad's characterization of boutiques as the 'soft underbelly of the upper crust' is metaphorical; the term 'soft underbelly' implies vulnerability and lack of security, while 'upper crust' refers to the wealthy elite, highlighting the contrast between the luxurious world of high-end boutiques and their perceived weaknesses.

Murad and Daru, characters from marginalized backgrounds, resist dominance through acts of defiance and revolt, focusing on class and power dynamics to illustrate their protest against repressive social hierarchies. Murad flouts the quality maxim by providing a misleading response to Daru, thinking he doubts his experience regarding their theft plan. The maxim of relevance is flouted when Murad gives an irrelevant response during their discussion about looting. Irony is used in his description of boutiques as symbols of hypocrisy, highlighting the stark disparities between the privileged few and the marginalized many in the capitalist system. By targeting stores associated with elites, Murad and Daru position themselves as agents of change, seeking to disrupt existing power dynamics and reclaim their influence in a society with limited opportunities for social mobility, indicating the transformative power of collective action against injustice.



FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Findings of the Study

The findings of this study are organized according to the formulated research questions. To address these questions, the results are categorized into three sections: the analysis of illocutionary speech acts, the flouting of maxims, and the use of figures of speech in the selected data.

Through the analysis of illocutionary speech acts, it is evident that characters use various speech acts to navigate their social positions and power dynamics. Daru's shifting speech acts from assertive declarations to expressions of defiance mirrors his fall from privilege to marginalization, illustrating the instability of power relations and the impact of socio-economic factors on personal interactions and agency. Both Daru and Mumtaz use these speech acts to negotiate their societal roles, highlighting the clash between traditional Pakistani values and the influences of globalization and modernization in Pakistani society.

Furthermore, the examination of flouted conversational maxims unravels the underlying power structures that govern social interactions in the novel. Instances where characters like Daru and Murad Badshah deliberately violate conversational norm, which serve as acts of resistance against oppressive systems of authority. For instance, Daru's use of irony and sarcasm to critique societal norms and challenge the hypocrisy of the elite highlights the subversive potential of linguistic strategies in navigating power differentials. Mumtaz, for instance, strategically employs ambiguity and irony to challenge patriarchal norms and assert her agency in a male-dominated society.

Additionally, the use of figures of speech adds a layer of depth to the understanding of the novel's themes. Through these stylistic choices, Hamid not only deepens the thematic quality of the novel but also prompts readers to critically engage with the socio-political realities of contemporary Pakistan. By using hyperbole, an exaggerated language, , Hamid has highlighted the injustices, inequalities, and abuses of power experienced by marginalized individuals like Daru who get into financial crises after losing the job at the bank. The use of metaphors carried symbolic representation that provides insights into the underlying themes of the novel such as: the clash between two opposite cultures, the struggle for power, and the stratification of society along lines of class and gender.

Conclusion

The present study aimed to highlight the role of language in conveying messages through various pragmatic and stylistic elements, including illocutionary speech acts, flouting of maxims, and figures of speech. These elements helped identifying two key post-colonial aspects: hybridity and power structures. By employing pragma-stylistics approach, which combines principles of pragmatics and stylistics, the study provided a comprehensive framework for understanding how language functions beyond its literal interpretation in literary texts. It underscores the significance of linguistic choices in shaping meaning and revealing implicit messages, thereby enriching readers' understanding of the author's critique of societal norms and the enduring impact of colonial legacies. Through pragma-stylistic analysis, this study investigated how Hamid employed linguistic elements to portray the hybrid nature of his characters and the society they inhabit. It also uncovered the ways in which he has critiqued the capitalist system and highlights the plight of the marginalized. By bridging pragmatics with stylistics, this research not only enhances our understanding of linguistic features in literature but also provides the novel's critical commentary on socio-cultural issues. It highlights the ways



language serves as a medium for exploring and challenging societal norms and individual aspirations in a rapidly changing world.

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