

An Analysis of Conversational Implicatures in a “Ghazal” of Hafiz based on Grice’s Inference Theory

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Abstract

In discourse analysis, Grice’s inference theory – particularly, his ideas on implication – is quite helpful in determining the speaker’s intention as well as discovering and justifying the relations between discourse and its illocutionary force in verbal communication. Likewise, Grice’s verbal implications can be useful in interpreting and analyzing literary texts which are filled with figures of thought and words and sentences which usually have implicit and metaphorical meanings. Following Grice’s inference theory and his cooperative principles, this paper studies the quality of deviation from standard language norms and its transformation into mystical and literary language in a *ghazal* of Hafiz in order to calculate and infer the implicit meanings within a methodic and systematic framework. Therefore, at first, Grice’s theory and concepts such as conversational implicatures are presented and further elaborated on with a discussion of appearance appropriateness in classical rhetoric. Then, adopting a descriptive-analytic method, the first *ghazal* of Hafiz is studied, and the intentions beyond his words are extracted. This analysis shows that this *ghazal* does not feature Grice’s cooperative principles, and has deviated from standard language norms. Thus, Hafiz has used words and sentences in other meanings, and has created a mystical-literary language in a syncretic *ghazal*. The present paper’s main contribution is the justification and explication of Hafiz’s mystical language in the *ghazal* in question using reliable devices in pragmatics.

Keywords: Implication, Hafiz, Mystical Language, Grice, Inference Theory

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Grice's inference theory is one of the best tools for discourse analysis and language pragmatics as it provides us with instructions for textual analysis as well as inferring meaning, and enables us to analyze literary texts within a specific methodical framework as an artistic manifestation of the standard language. The present study investigates the tools Hafiz uses to turn the referential language into emotional-artistic language and how he goes beyond the standard language to create implicit meaning. To this end, the first *ghazal* in his *Divan* is analyzed using Grice's ideas and those of semantics scholars from the past. The present paper hypothesizes that there are meanings beyond the formal meaning of the linguistic elements in this *ghazal*.

2. Theoretical Framework

Grice's inference theory, in which, unlike other types of verbal implications, the context of the text or discourse is of greater importance, has provided the present study with a specific framework to investigate possible meanings existing beyond the formal meaning of the first *ghazal* in Hafiz's *Divan*.

3. Methodology

The present study adopts the descriptive-analytical approach to investigate the conversational implicatures of one of Hafiz's greatest poems.

4. Discussion and Analysis

While Grice recommends avoiding ambiguities in the use of language, Hafiz has taken the opposite way. In this *ghazal*, he has repeatedly employed ambiguous, indirect, and figurative language, which is an important part of his style of poetry and the mystical language. However, he has used mystical, symbolic language in a coherent way so that mystical implications can be detectable.

5. Conclusion

The analysis of the verbal implications employed by Hafiz in the first *ghazal* of his collection of poems, using Grice's inference theory, indicates that Hafiz has deliberately deviated from the rules and norms of standard language, to which Grice refers to as the cooperative principle. Hafiz communicates his mystical messages indirectly through a literary-mystical language. His deviation from the standards has provided his language with the qualities needed for a mystical communication of ideas. These qualities are the logical qualities of conversational implicatures, which help the sender of mystical messages and implications establish successful communication and interaction with the reader.

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