



RESEARCH PAPER**Conversational Analysis of Political Talk Shows by Pakistani Politicians using Discourse Markers**

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ABSTRACT

Flouting of the conversational maxims (Principles) using hedging techniques by the politicians and educationists in the political talk shows is interested to be explored. The present study examined that how the maxim of manner and maxim of relation is ignored by the speakers in media discourse by taking insight from the Grice's cooperative principles; and how maxim of manner and the maxim of relevance are hedged by the speakers. The current study employs the qualitative research design. Twelve socio-political and educational programs were selected for data analysis. The research findings revealed that the maxim of relation and maxim of manner was flouted by the speakers in political talk shows; and female politicians and educationists used hedging technique more than male politicians and educationists. Moreover, study exposed the reasons of flouting of the conversational maxims by the speakers, and also found that female speakers interrupt more than male speakers. On the base of these results some recommendations are presented in the end.

KEYWORDS Conversation, Conversational Principles, Flouting, Hedges, Implicature, Maxims

Introduction

Grice (1975) presented four basic principles of communication to implement hedging patterns. These four Principles of Conversation are known as Maxims of conversation in Pragmatics. Since, Semantics deals with the study of meaning of words literally whereas; pragmatics is the study of the non-literal meanings of the words. According to Kadmon (2001) semantics deals with factual meanings, whereas Pragmatics deals with non-factual meanings of words. Cole (1981) explains that semantic works for the purpose of conventional or real meanings, on the other hand pragmatics concerns with the determination of non-conventional and unreal meanings.

Recanati (2004) elaborated the standard view about the division of labor between semantics and pragmatics. He explains that semantics helps to study of the exact meaning of words and sentences as determined by the rules of the language, whereas pragmatics deals with the speaker meanings about the language utterances of words and sentences.

The researchers observe certain type of motivations behind hedging technique during communicative situations. The researchers try to explore where the use of hedges normally become the cause of breaking the conversational Principles by the politicians and educationists in media discourse.

Another significant feature of the current study is to explore the vague areas of pragmatics and discourse analysis through examining the maxim of relevance and maxim of manner by the participants in political talk shows especially in the context of Pakistan. Discourse is defined as language above the sentence or beyond the sentence. McCarthy (1991) stated that discourse analysis explores the connection of language and the social situation in which language is used. The researchers explored that Pakistani politicians and educationists avoid observing the principle of manner and relevance by giving unclear and irrelevant responses during their communication. Partridge (2006) defines that speakers avoid examining the maxims of conversation by presupposing that audience has the knowledge of the hidden information intentionally.

The reason behind selecting the topic "Hedging by Pakistani Politicians: Media Discourse Analysis" is to see how the conversational maxims are hedged and overlapped by speakers. Normally the act of non-observance of the maxim of conversation intentionally by the speaker is known as overlooking of the maxim of conversation. Non-observance of the conversational maxims is natural among speakers. The researchers examined that how the maxim of manner is overlooked by the Pakistani politicians and educationists by practicing hedging technique and it provides the reason of ignoring the maxim of relation. It is also investigated in this study that how avoiding of the principles of conversation effects the process of communication by giving vague and irrelevant responses. This study also tries to discover the reasons of neglecting the conversational principles by using hedging techniques. The current study works to provide answers of the questions such as;

Literature Review

Literature review summarizes and evaluates the text of writing of the definite theme, and it provides the framework to contemplate about the possible consequence of the innovative research. Moreover, it reveals what has previously done and provides advance concepts for new research, and it also aids researcher in replacing work in larger context to show better results of the research (Ahmad et al., 2023; Sadaf et al, 2024). Following is the literature review of the present study.

Grice (1975) explores the cooperative principles that how speakers and hearers make contact during conversation among each other. The interaction is possible by practicing communication. Grice (1975) observes, "Make your contribution such as it 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 (2004) maintains that conversations are directed by some principles normally, rather than a set of secluded words or formed randomly.

Observance and Non-Observance of the principles is a feature of communication through which communication takes place successfully, if the maxim of the conversation is observed effectively by the speakers. If communicators do not observe the principles of conversation the process of communication would be stopped. According to Grundy (2019) the breaking of conversational principles takes place when speakers failed to observe the maxims of conversation. The breaking of the conversational maxims is known as overlooking of the maxims.

Grice argues that non-observance of the maxims take place when participants do not examine the maxims. The cause of the non-observance of the maxims by the speakers is the difference between what the speaker articulates and what does s/he mean? In other words an implicature occurs as a result of non-observance of the maxims, and the

implicature plays an important role to get the proposed meaning of the speaker's utterance. However, there is a variety of situations, when speakers do not examine the principles of conversation successfully because they are not able to speak successfully or because they purposely prefer to lie.

In order to explore the other reasons of ignoring the cooperative principles, Thomas explained the reason of non-observing of the conversational maxims is that speakers may not successful to observe a maxim as they are not able to state things clearly and it is deliberately decided to say things non-literally by them. Thomas is of the view that infringing, opting-out, and suspending of the maxims are the main reason of overlooking of the cooperative principles. According to Chapman (2000) flouting of the Maxims takes place when speaker takes part in communication even if he/she looks to be non-cooperative.

Opting Out a Maxim

The other feature of the overlooking of the cooperative principles is opting out a maxim. It is a feature of conversation that stops speakers to examine the conversational maxims. It happens when the speaker opts out of the maxim. Speaker seems not willing to cooperate at the level which a conversational maxim requires. The reason of the occurrence of the opting out of the maxims is due to the speaker's reluctant and unwilling attitude. Most of the time opting out of the maxim takes place when speakers are interested to conceal the piece of information.

Furthermore, Thomas (2014) described when speakers are opting out a maxim they do not hide anything and do not conceal what they want to say. Speakers opt out the maxim of conversation because they are not agree to cooperate and want to disclose more than they previously know. communicators prefer not to examine the maxim and show reluctant attitude towards the listeners. Thomas further described that opting out of the maxims takes place when speakers opt out to examine conversational maxims. Speakers refused to make contribution during the conversations by ignoring the requirement of the maxims.

Infringing the Maxims

The third factor of breaking the conversational principles is infringing of the maxims. It takes place when a speaker has an inadequate linguistic performance, cognitive impairment, or when a speaker cannot speak evidently. The reason of infringing a maxim also takes place when the speaker possesses lack of knowledge about the topic. As it is stated by Cutting (2005) in infringing speakers do not conceal anything. The distinguishing feature between opting out the maxim and infringing of the maxim is that infringing takes place when contributors misinterpret each other due to the difference in culture.

Implicature

Implicature is another feature of communication which may also become the reason of ignoring the maxims of conversation. As Grice (1975) explored that in every day communication speakers do not normally say things straightforwardly but they are keen to bring about or advise the listeners. Due to this reason the speaker habitually handles to pass on implicature which does not convey the information clearly but it is identified by the listener through implication.

Bhatia, A. (2006). In the research entitled "Critical discourse analysis of political press conferences" analyzed the press conferences of president of China Jiang Zemin and president of United States of America George W. Bush. These personalities hailed from different ideological backgrounds, moreover there were dissimilarities in their age, experience, economical position, sociopolitical influence and politically their aims were also different. The results of this research disclosed three most important themes as "positivity for the reinforcement of mutual trust, respect and progress; influence and power for subtle persuasion; and evasion to hedge or avoid responses to probing and inconvenient questions from the media".

Bilalet al. (2012). In the research entitled "Critical discourse analysis of political TV talk shows of Pakistani media" make an effort to explore the relations among language and ideology and in what way these kinds of relations are presented in the verbal text analysis through van Dijk's Socio Cognitive Model (2000). Two episodes of private Pakistani Television channel talk shows were analyzed to reveal the representing way of ideologies in these talk shows. The results revealed that these choices empower presenters to employ "the realizations of agency and power in representation of action" to create precise connotations.

Bardici (2012) postulated that "a discourse analysis of the media representation of social media for social change-The case of Egyptian revolution and political change" tried to form the worth of a discourse analysis, that in what way and with what aim in mind, the accessible media are ports on represents the link among social media and the rising political awareness and change in the context of Egypt. The results revealed that what is under-valued, over-valued, and excluded. Abbas, (2016) in the dissertation at University of Management and Technology Lahore, also analyzed hedging and turn talking by Pakistani politicians media discourse analysis.

Tabassum and Hafeez (2023). In the research entitled "Turn Taking Strategies and Gender: A Conversational Analysis of Pakistani Politicians in TV Shows" studied the relationship of gender, power changing aspects; and strategies of discussions in political talk shows by means of the conversational analytical style in the context of Pakistan. For this research study qualitative research design was used for the aim of comparing and interpreting data through the observation of talk shows. The results of the study exposed that the female politicians particular strategies in their conversation style. Moreover, the research findings also exposed that male politicians often take the lead in discussions, using tactics such as interruptions, overlapping, and frequent turn-taking to assert their control and influence. Conversely, female politicians tend to opt for cooperative strategies, fostering collaborative and cooperative exchanges.

Instead of these researches there is no single research which has analyzed this theme properly; the researchers find this gap and decided to conduct their research on this topic which was extremely overlooked from a long time. They tried to fill this research gap by using following research material and methods.

Material and Methods

"Research methodology is the part of the research study in which researchers give an account of the research methods, which they have used to conduct their research. Similarly, in the present study, the researchers have described the methods they have employed in the present research" (Ahmad et al., 2024, p.402). Qualitative design has been used by the researcher to collect and analyze data descriptively. Speakers were asked questions by hosts about the current political and educational situations of Pakistan. The

answers of the participants were taken by the researchers in order to examine the rationale of avoiding the maxims of conversation. Recorded talk shows of Pakistani speakers in different T.V channels were selected by the researcher to collect data. Those programs were further translated in English. People were invited in programs to share their knowledge with the audience as participants on burning issues.

Therefore, in order to explore the nature of the hedges and turn-taking for the observance and non-observance of the conversational maxims twelve programs comprising talk shows were selected from socio-political and educational contexts. The researchers used qualitative method to collect and analyze data primarily whereas quantitative method was used to present the data numerically in the form of graphs and tables only. Live programs were selected in which participants showed their own views on different topics. Sometime, they were seen agreeing with the other counterparts and sometime they showed disagreement. In each program two females and one male or two males and one female were invited by the host to get their responses regarding the issue at hand. The data was analyzed qualitatively.

Data Analysis

Data is analyzed by using following techniques:

Use of hedges

The data was chosen from the Pakistani Political talk shows and analyzed comprehensively by indicating causes and factors of ignoring of the conversational maxim of manner and relation. It describes the reasons of overlooking of the maxims by the politicians and educationists in order to use hedging technique.

Excerpt

Host: 90 days have passed male 1 what do you mean by ninety days have passed?

Guest: no you are talking absolutely wrong, absolutely wrong; I hope you will not irritate me. You show me one statement that Mr. A has written somewhere in our manifesto that we can improve education in ninety days. Improvement should be brought every year. If you remember that after our budget, one thing was admired; it was the budget of KPK. It was talking about the increase in resources of education. At this time *I think* it is near a major launch in a week or in ten days. 'Tameer-e-milat' is a major launch that is near to be launched, but i am saying that this is the time of input and you are working hard. At the end it should be visible. Net roles should improve dramatically, literacy rates should increase and gender disparity should decrease. If we will not do this, then it means the party A will be a failed government.

Host: I have a question to you. You are very good lawyer and know the law very well rather than me. Is it offending of the law if we do not practice it?

Guest: *I think* it does not offend the law if it is not being practiced. The circumstances of your country are very limited. Listen to me once, you can comment on it by saying something or can also comment in another way. I have to complete little bit. The prime minister did not come to see the president a single time today. Fine, it is wrong, but I do not consider that you can take it in the offending of the law. They are late and very slow on it.

Data interpretation

Speakers used personal evaluation as an expression to justify their point of view. It works as a reason of flouting the maxim of manner by the speakers, when they are giving less clear information. Flouting of the conversational maxim of manner takes place when a speaker is not completely clear about the idea which is formulated by him/her. In this program two speakers used the lexical hedge, 'I think'. The female speaker used the lexical hedge once and the male speaker used it five times. The other male and female guest did not do so. In the above example, the speaker talks about the inauguration of the tamer-emilat as major launch but he is not sure that it would be in one week or after one week. Due to his non-assured and unclear attitude he flouted the principle of manner.

Excerpt

Host: I have a question for you. You are very good lawyer and know the law effectively rather than me. Is it offending of the law if we do not practice it?

Guest: female B, if i would not complete my word, you cannot understand what I am saying. The public will also not understand. As far as you are worried about this, *maybe* we are also worried. Well, if we made nine universities in Sindh, and are also improving schools. I am talking about provisions, and then only 94 percent budget goes in salaries and in the infrastructure as well. I consider that the education development fund is low.

Guest male: You should see the total budget of KPK. I have this report. *Probably* it is a report by NGO'S. The 90 percent budget of education is going in salaries. I do not want to highlight in order to criticize.

Data Interpretation

Two speakers one male and one female used the hedging device as lexical hedge '*probably, may be*' communicating with the host. The rest of the male and female speakers do not used the lexical hedge. In the above examples speakers used expressions of hesitation as the technique of hedge. The reason behind using the expression of hesitation is that speakers tried to less direct in order to decrease the pressure of the utterance.

Excerpt

Host: I have a question to you. You are very good lawyer and know the law effectively rather than me. Is it offending of the law if we do not practice it?

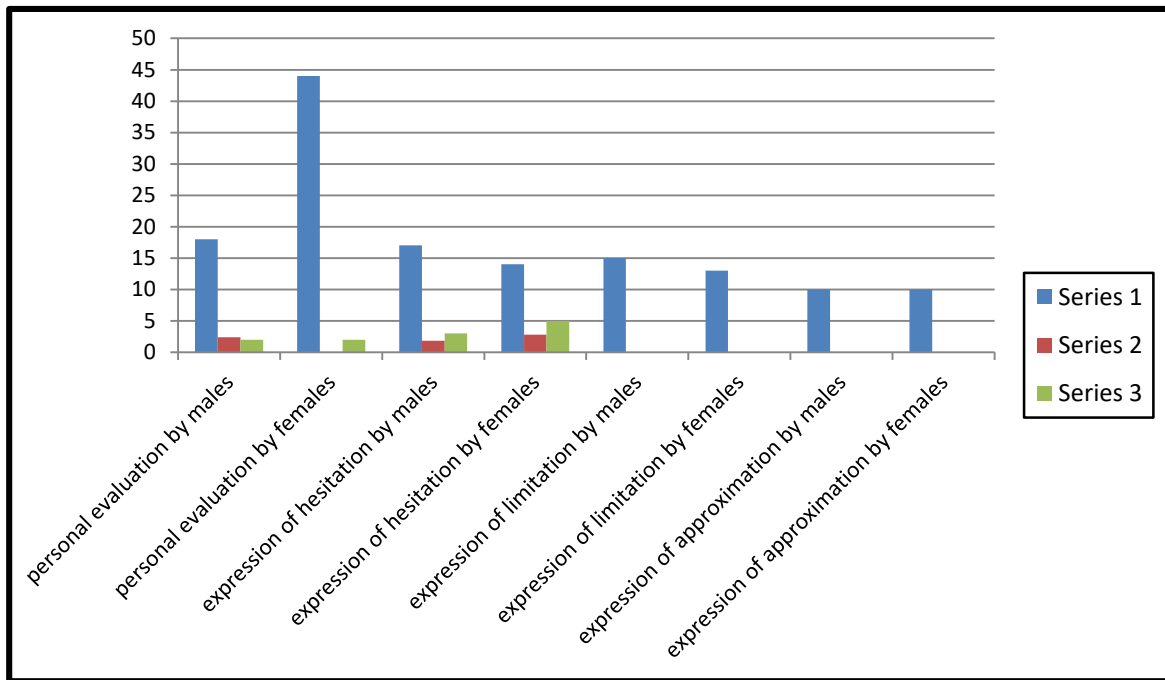
Guest: female well, as far as this matter is concerned whether education is being focused or not being focused by the party B. If you take up the previous decades, you will find that education is being focused by the party B. I am coming on this, definitely yours and the public's uneasiness is definitely right. If there will be no education, then there will be no awareness. I consider if there will be education awareness then the situation of law and order and the situation of our economy can be changed, although we cannot pay any attention on it effectively. As far as the matter of allocation is concerned, I consider the allocation of funds is not satisfactory. No doubt in Punjab it is 182 million and in Sindh it is 134 million. I have to complete it *little bit*, we need to change infrastructure.

Data Interpretation

Expression of limitation is also a significant feature which plays an important role in the process of communication. Speakers give limited response or information about things by using the expression of limitation. In this selected program a female guest produces the lexical hedge '*little bit*' two times as an expression of limitation. The

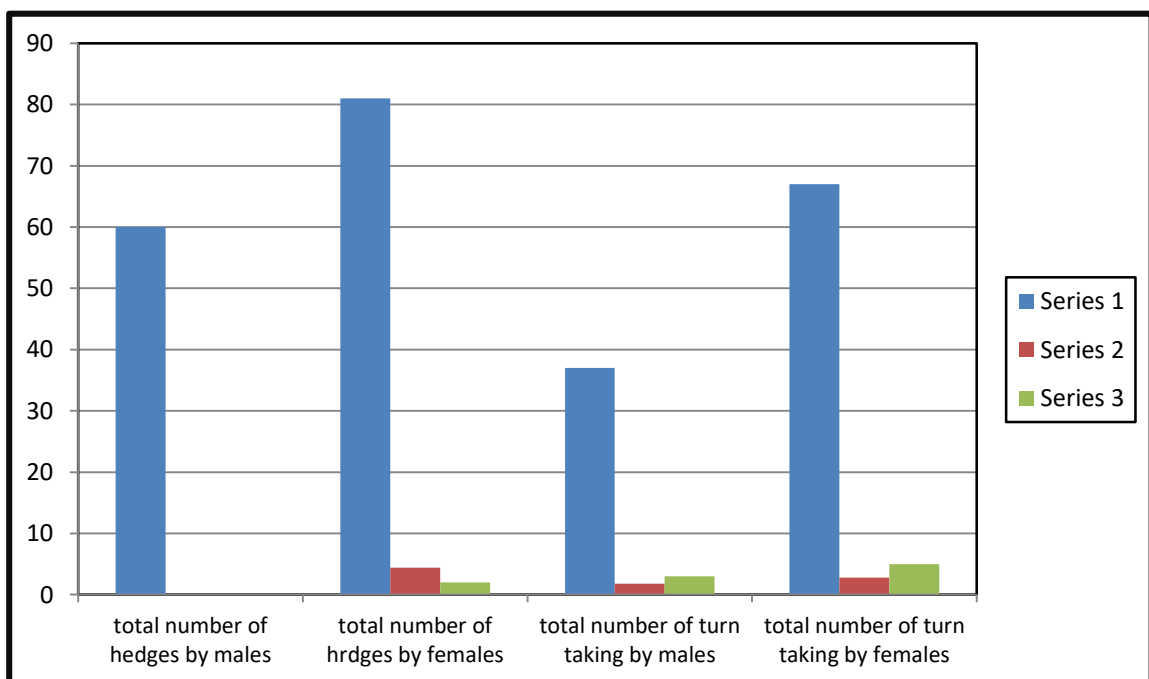
expression of limitation becomes the cause of flouting of the conversational maxim of manner due to the speaker’s vague and limited responses.

Figure 1: Total Number of Hedges and Turn Taking Used by Male and Female.



The above given figure is showing the frequent use of hedges by the speakers in a communicative situation. It also shows different categories of expressions which were used by the male and female speakers. Personal evaluated words are used by the females rather than males. Expression of hesitation is also experienced by females rather than males. Likewise, the expression of limitation and approximation is also used by female speakers as compared to males.

Figure 2: Total Number of Hedges and Turn Taking Used by Male and Female



The above given figure shows the overall difference of the male and female speakers communication by showing the total number of hedges (minute expressions) and total number of turn-taking. Female speakers used hedges and turn taking as a discourse markers frequently as compared to male speakers.

The maxim of manner and maxim of relation are ignored by the politicians and educationists in political and educational talk shows. This study also finds out that female politicians and educationists hedging technique more than male politicians and educationists. Male members used personal evaluation as a lexical hedge eighteen times and the female speakers used it forty four times. Expression of hesitation is used by male speakers seventeen times and the female participants used it fourteen times. Expression of approximation is used by male speakers ten times while female speakers used the expression of approximation ten times. Expression of limitation is used as a linguistic item by the male participants fifteen times and the female contributors exercised the expression of limitation thirteen times. This present study finds out that female speakers interrupt more than male speakers. Females are frequent in using hedging device in conversations, but according to this study conversational maxims may be flouted due to the nature of the issue at hand.

Discussion

The present study attempts to investigate pragmatically the nature and the significance of conversational principles during the conversation. This study tries to explore the frequencies and the possible reasons of overlooking of the cooperative principles by speakers examining the patterns of discourse markers. Researchers also tried to elaborate how speakers imply the original meanings of the words during the communicative situations, in order to grab attention of the audience. It also tries to identify the factors of non-observance of the principles of communication by the debaters due to the linguistics impairment or the lack of knowledge. The data was selected from the Pakistani Political talk shows in order to see how hedging and turn-taking are used in flouting of the conversational maxims by the male and female speakers. The responses of the speakers are examined to determine the factors why the speakers flouted the maxims of conversation by using hedging technique and turn taking patterns.

This study identifies that flouting occurs in cooperative principles normally by the speakers in order to get the attention of the hearers due to their same cultural background.

Conclusion

This study tries to examine pragmatically the nature and the importance of conversational maxims during the conversation. The current study explains why speakers used minute expressions, and how those expressions affect the principles of conversation. The researcher attempts to investigate the frequencies, and possible reasons of overlooking the principles of the conversation by the Pakistani politicians and educationists during their conversations.

The researchers also observed that the use of hedging device is very common by the female speakers as compared to male speakers. Female speakers used hedges to show their vague, irrelevant and non-assured linguistic behavior. The researchers explored that flouting occurs in conversational principles most of the time by the speakers when they want to get the attention of the audience due to their same cultural background. The maxim (principle) of manner is ignored by the participants using hedging device by giving vague responses. The maxim of manner is highly ignored conversational maxim by the speakers

as compared to the maxim of relation. Speakers, both male and female flouted the maxim of manner by providing vague statements.

Recommendations

Giving these findings, the researchers provide some suggestions and recommendations to observe the principles of communication, in order to run a smooth conversation with each other. Cooperation among speakers and hearers should be a part of communication, in owing to make an effective communication. It is suggested for the communicators that they should build up an effective communication by observing the maxims of the cooperation. The observance of maxims of conversation is important to show cooperation with each other in a communicative situation. The researchers also suggested that speakers should not follow the non-observance of the principles of conversation because it also becomes the reason of flouting of the principles of communication. The researchers also suggested about the turn-taking technique for the effective communication, that speakers as educationists should be used turn-taking device by giving their responses during the conversations. Speakers should take their turn systematically instead of taking their turn as self-selective speakers in order to run a smooth and fair conversation.

This research also suggests the background knowledge for the upcoming researchers regarding conversational principles. Future research can be done on the rest of the two maxims of conversation. Further research can be done in order to see how and why maxims of quality and quantity are ignored by the communicators in other domains apart from the political domain. This study can be helpful for the new researchers to understand the behavior of the speakers how they are reluctant to communicate by observing the infringing of the maxims. In which situations speakers are deliberately overlooked the maxims of conversation in order to create implicature.

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