A Pragmatic Analysis of Conversational Implicatures in English Drama and their Role in Teaching Critical Literacy

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of conversational implicatures in English drama in developing students' critical literacy. It identified conversational implicatures conveyed by characters of the selected drama texts, provided possible interpretations of the implicatures basing on Grice's Cooperative Principle maxims, and critically analyzed the role of conversational implicatures in English drama in developing students' critical literacy. The data were collected from the implicatures conveyed by the characters of two selected drama texts. These are 'Family Abuse' by Bernard Mersier and 'The Edge' by Paul Symonloe. Grice's pragmatic theory of Cooperative Principle and its maxims were used to identify and interpret conversational implicatures in the selected drama texts. Forty-two (42) conversational implicatures were identified from these texts. These implicatures were categorized into types basing on the four conversational maxims, and each conversational implicature was taken as data. Using Grice's interpretive model and the social context of the drama, what the characters implied by their utterances were explained together with the reasons for the implicatures. The Luke and Freebody's four resources model of critical literacy was then used to study the role of conversational implicatures in English drama in developing students' critical literacy. The study concluded that conversational implicatures in English drama develop students' critical literacy by enabling them to study a drama text from a social angle and evaluate the social aspects that may have influenced the meaning of the characters 'utterances. Therefore, it was suggested that drama texts should be used in language teaching and learning as they ease the teaching of conversational implicatures which can foster the development of students' critical literacy.

Keywords*: Conversational Implicatures, Drama, Critical Literacy, Pragmatic Analysis*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Awareness of conversational implicatures is very essential to English language learning. Language competence includes among many other things understanding conversational implicatures. Kroeger (2018) defines an implicature as a situation in which what is communicated is different from what is said. He adds that the speaker intends for the hearer to understand both the sentence meaning and the implicature. Wang (2011) puts that an implicature is what a speaker communicates without saying it directly and extends beyond the surface meaning. Conversational implicature is, according to Wang (2011), something which is suggested but not communicated directly in real life language use. Chen (2019) argues that conversational implicatures result from the violation of the Principle of Cooperation. The essence of this argument is that when a speaker fails to cooperate by explicitly conveying the intended meaning of his/her conversation, the hearer will try to infer what the speaker means. The Cooperative Principle (CP) was suggested by Grice (1991), and he describes conversation as a cooperative activity in which each participant accepts that there is a shared goal and agrees to observe particular accepted standards. Cruse (2006) asserts that the cooperative principle serves as the basis for the explanation of how conversational implicatures arise.

Drama is a genre where implicature can be illustrated. In drama, characters exhibit various scenes through conversations (Wiktionary, 2016). Iswahyuni (2019) reveals that characters in drama frequently convey their utterances implicitly so that their meaning appears different from what is said. So, conversational implicature is often found in drama because, in their conversations, characters don't always mean what they say; the audience has to infer meaning from what is said. This makes drama an effective tool that can enable students to widely explore the meaning of texts.

Developing critical literacy for our learners is of paramount importance. Drama, as a genre that is developed on real life situations, can best support critical literacy. Medina & Campano (2006) affirm that through drama students can best explore various critical spaces that allow them to make meaning out of diverse societal situations. One example is that of discovering power relationships between competing beliefs and values, analyzing them and expressing their personal judgment. We concur with Briles (2013) that critical literacy can be integrated in any post or during activities related to the selected drama text, and we propose a study of conversational implicatures as one of these activities that can best help in developing critical literacy.

Pragmatics being concerned with the use of language in social contexts (Nordquist 2019) and conversational implicatures being conveying information that goes beyond what is explicitly said (Blome-Tillmann 2013), we assumed that conversational implicatures can best help English language learners to develop their critical literacy. This is because reading for critical literacy purpose, as Govender (2019) stipulates, necessitates making meaning beyond the text by following Luke & Freebody's Four Resources Model as an effective approach for teaching reading from a critical literacy perspective. McKenzie (2017) contends that Luke & Freebody's Four Resources model involves code-breaking practices, comprehension practices, pragmatic practices, and critical practices towards a reading text. The last two practices were best suitable for our research project. The reason for this study was to spot conversational implicatures in selected drama texts and study the role they can play in developing students' critical literacy. Apart from being a genre that can easily support both conversational implicatures and critical literacy, drama texts were chosen because they seem not to be used in language learning/teaching in our language classrooms while language competence includes among many other things understanding conversational implicatures.

There are many studies on conversational implicatures in drama. It is important to note that there is a need to expand literature on the application of conversational implicatures in English language teaching and learning, especially in improving critical competence. Some authors wrote about conversational implicatures in drama and limited their studies on spotting the types of implicatures in those drama texts. For example, Iswahyuni (2019) limited his study to the conversational maxims that were flouted to generate conversational implicatures in the Sid River's drama script entitled "Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Aquilla." Cahyati (2017) classified the types of conversational implicature in Antigone drama and why they were used in utterances used by its characters. Sari (2007) analyzed the implicatures in the request expressions in the drama entitled *A Raisin in the Sun.* The list can be long, but the point at issue is that literature on the contribution of conversational implicatures to language teaching and learning needs increasing.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

From our teaching experience, we hardly ever use drama texts in our English language classrooms. Even where there might be used, learners are highly engaged with the text through comprehension and vocabulary practices. Even the exam questions that are set mainly focus on what the texts literarily mean. Seldom do we use activities that help learners critically analyze texts. It is in this perspective that using drama in Rwandan classrooms by studying conversational implicatures in them was appraised as one of the best strategies to enable learners to develop their critical language awareness of how particular meanings are created.

This study limited itself to developing learners' critical literacy as regards the application of conversational implicatures in language teaching and learning. This is due to its utmost importance of discouraging learners' passivity by developing their critical consciousness and self-seeking at the same time helping them to be critical consumers of texts and also having engagement with social issues (Abednia, 2015). So far no study has been conducted on this topic in the Rwandan context. Therefore, this study needed to address the issue of lack of drama texts in language teaching and learning while these texts would ease the teaching of conversational implicatures which can foster the development of learners' critical literacy. As stated earlier, the nature of most of the activities done by students in our classes do not foster critical literacy. The study was then meant to contribute to the development of critical literacy among Rwandan graduates through the understanding of conversational implicatures as a language competence.

1.1. Research Objectives
  i.   To identify conversational implicatures conveyed by characters of the selected drama texts;
  ii. To provide possible interpretations of the implicatures in the selected drama texts basing on Grice's Cooperative Principle maxims;
  iii. To critically analyze the role of conversational implicatures in English drama in developing students' critical literacy

1.2. Research Questions

  i.   What are the conversational implicatures conveyed by the characters of the selected drama texts?
 ii.   Based on Grice's Cooperative Principle maxims, what are the possible interpretations of the implicatures in the selected drama text?
iii.   What is the role of conversational implicatures in English drama in developing students' critical literacy?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conversational Implicature

Tatu and Moldovan (2012) assert that the term *implicature* was formulated by Herbert Paul Grice in 1975, and it is one of his notable ideas that represent what a speaker communicates by an utterance in a conversational context and expresses more than the surface meaning. In other words, what Grice means by implicature is that we mean a lot more than what we say. According to Haugh (2014), the term conversational implicatures originated from Grice, and its explanation was his major concern. Most of its definitions and explanations were developed from Grice's account. Cruse (2000, p. 349) describes conversational implicatures as utterances whose meaning is not explicitly conveyed in what is actually communicated. For example,

(1)   A: Am I in time for supper?
         B: I've cleared the table.

From Cruse's account of this example, B's intention is to communicate that a delayed to take his supper, but this implicit meaning has to be deciphered by the hearer. Another example by Chen (2019, p. 445),

(2)   A: So what do you think of my new haircut?
         B: Did you see the Blue Jays game last night?

B's answer is not related to A's question. B refuses to cooperate with A's topic, so A will try her best to find out what B implies by not providing an answer that connects with her new haircut. The meaning of B's conversation is "I'm not interested in your new haircut"

2.2 Cooperative Principle and Its Maxims

Paul Grice proposed a Cooperative Principle with associated Maxims of Conversation, which he used to explain how implicatures arise during conversations. He formulated it as a general principle which participants will be expected to observe, namely: Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged (Grice, 1989, P. 26). Grice subdivided the Cooperative principle (CP) into four categories or maxims under which fall nine submaxims. The four categories or maxims are Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner. The maxim of Quantity relates to the quantity of information to be provided (1. Make your contribution as informative as is required. 2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.) The Maxim of Quality (1. Try to make your contribution one that is true/Do not make unsupported statements 2. Do not say what you believe to be false. 3. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence). The maxim of Relation: "Be relevant". Grice claims that the effects of being over-informative in the maxim of quantity will be secured by relevance. The maxim of Manner: "Be perspicuous" (1. Avoid obscurity of expression .2. Avoid ambiguity 3. Be brief (Avoid unnecessary prolixity) 4. Be orderly (Grice, 1989; Cruse, 2000).

2.3 Pragmatic Analysis

Identifying conversational implicatures conveyed by the characters of a drama text is a pragmatic study. This is proven by the definitions of pragmatics that portray conversational implicatures as an aspect of pragmatics. Cruse (2006) correlates pragmatics to meaning and the way it is transmitted in language, and he contends that context-dependent aspects of meaning are the fundamental subjects that pragmatics is interested in. Conversational implicature, as maintained by Cruse (2006), is one of those aspects. In Pragmatics, as explained by Levinson (1983), language and the context in which it is applied are what matter most. This means that Pragmatics analyses what an utterance means and how the hearer, in a conversational context, interprets it. According to Widdowson (1996), what motivates a speaker to use particular words in the social context is of primary concern to pragmatics. It follows that pragmatic draws more attention, as Al-hindawi and Saffah (2017) assert, on what people intend to express by their utterances than the words themselves. Pragmatic analysis is finally, as viewed by Duffy (2008), a study that undertakes to single out all the implied meanings from the utterances of a speaker regarded in context.

2.4 Drama and Drama Text

Drama itself, as defined by Esslin (1977), stands for action in Greek. Esslin maintains that action in drama refers to its nature of copying human behavior. He largely stresses that the essence of drama is found in the signification of its words and which has to be taken as action. So, action is of fundamental importance to the meaning of drama. Drama is a method through which actors demonstrate various scenes through performance with dialogues, or a work of a play writer inspired by what he truly experiences in the society at a given time (Klaus et al., 1999). After reading many definitions of drama, Iwuchukwu (2008) concluded that drama is a way of inventing a situation or an expression of reality through imitation of people's characteristics. He adds that drama acts as a mirror of life as it truthfully represents it. Iwuchukwu's argument is based on the fact that it is only drama, among many other genres, that attempts to imitate life and give its clear and factual account to the audience.

For reading purpose in the classroom, some authors define drama in terms of text or script and stick to the relevance of the text. Esslin (2000) considers the text as an important written record of the words of drama as there were dramatic performances that did not keep any record of their words. Still on drama as a text, Wight (2020) asserts that drama is a script of a play. Surbhi (2020) and PEDIAA (2015) share the same view as Wright by maintaining that drama is the printed text of a play where they take a play as a dramatic performance on the stage. Drama is thus written in prose or verse that depict conversations of characters over a difficulty that the principal character is entrusted with its successful resolution. Finally, Holden (as cited in Uysal and Yavuz, 2018) holds that drama helps learners, as they read the text, to form an image, in their minds, related to the situation of the drama and think as if they were in the shoes of the characters. This means that they will learn to relate the message of the drama text to the context outside the classroom.

2.5 Critical Literacy in the English Language Classroom

Critical literacy, as explained by Coffey (2008), refers to the ability to read texts actively by thinking carefully and quietly so as to have a thorough understanding of some societal issues that concern people's daily lives and behavior. According to Coffey, developing critical literacy cannot leave behind the need to encourage students, in the classroom context, to explore texts with a critical eye in order to be able to question some standards in their societies. From this critical perspective, students can study the structure of a text from a social angle and evaluate the social aspects that may have prompted the author to construct the kind of text. The capacity to discover the meaning of implicit beliefs and agendas in conversations is another important definition of critical literacy (Warnick, 2002 in Hakim et al., 2021). Hakim et al. (2021) accentuate the practicality of critical literacy by contending that it enables students to think beyond the text and observe the role of social contexts in creating the meaning of texts. Kaur and Sidhu (2013) emphasize that incorporating critical literacy into the classroom generates more meaningful learning experiences among their learners as it encourages them to use their voices and life experiences as valid sources of knowledge.

2.6 Freebody and Luke's Four Resources Model of Critical Literacy

Freebody and Luke's four resources model is one of the frameworks of critical literacy practice that can best help practice critical literacy in the classroom. The Four Resources model focuses on four types of literacy practices that allow learners to effectively engage in reading practices. These are 1)*Text decoders* where learners practice code breaking by recognizing and using the fundamental features and construction of written texts such as alphabetic knowledge, sounds in words, spelling, conventions and patterns of sentence structure and text. They learn how these language features, images and vocabulary are used to influence readers and represent ideas, characters and events. 2) *Text Participants* where learners learn to participate in the meaning of texts by using their background knowledge, experiences, and understandings to interpret and make meaning of texts. Learners practice text participant by comparing and analyzing information in texts, explaining literal and inferential meaning. They use evidence from texts to support their responses. 3) *Pragmatic or text users* where learners practice using texts pragmatically by understanding that texts are written for various social and cultural purposes and that these purposes shape the way texts are constructed. Learner's knowledge of how texts are constructed allow them to respond to texts and justify their responses. 4) *Critic or Text analyst* where learners learn to become critical consumers of different text forms by understanding the non-neutrality of texts by which they represent different values, beliefs, and views of their creators. So, these viewpoints can specifically influence readers' interpretation of texts as they critically uncover and analyze them (Freebody and Luke, 1990; Luke, Woods & Dooley, 2011; Vasquez, Janks, & Comber, 2019; State Government of Victoria, Australia 2018).

III. METHODOLOGY

In this qualitative study, Grice's pragmatic model based on his Cooperative Principle which includes the four Maxims was followed in the analysis of conversational implicatures in the selected drama texts. These are *Family Abuse* by Mersier (2021) and *The Edge* by Symonloe (2021). The two drama texts were selected because they deal with cross-cutting social issues that pertain to what today's society undergoes most. The method involved the analysis of the texts by identifying the implicatures in the utterances of the characters and suggesting their possible interpretations. In addition to the Grice's pragmatic model based on his Cooperative Principle with its four Maxims, the Luke & Freebody's Four Resources model was used to examine the critical literacy perspective aspect in relation to conversational implicatures from the same selected drama texts. On this model, pragmatic practices and critical practices were our major concern.

3.1. Design of the Study

The study is a pragmatic analysis of the selected drama texts basing on Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP) with its Maxims. Conversational implicatures are first identified in each of the four drama texts, presented in the form of dialogue(s), and then analyzed and interpreted following Grice's pragmatic model of CP (Research question 1 and 2 were answered). Secondary data analysis (*Pearson Education 2014)* was used in the interpretation and review of existing information related to the four resources model of reading and critical literacy development. Thus, research question 3 was answered.

3.2. Source of the Data

Primary data were collected from the utterances of the characters of the selected drama texts. For secondary data, different materials were extensively explored for detailed information on conversational implicatures and drama texts and their application to language teaching and learning.

3.3. Data Processing and Analysis

Qualitative data for this study were summarized and analyzed quantitatively. After gathering data in quantitative tables, we went on to explain them to facilitate a clear understanding of the situations under study. Qualitative interpretation of quantified data enabled to understand how characters in drama cooperate by observing or not observing the conversational maxims. With regard to data for research question number 3, information from secondary data analysis was thoroughly delved into in relation to the Luke & Freebody's Four Resources Model of critical literacy in order to justify the role of conversational implicatures in English dramas in developing students' critical literacy.

The two selected drama texts were tackled by reading each of them thoroughly in order to identify the implicatures conveyed by the characters in their conversations. Grice's Cooperative Principle with its maxims and the social context of the utterances served to recognize conversational implicatures in these drama texts. The identified implicatures were categorized into types basing on the four conversational maxims, and each conversational implicature was taken as data. That is how utterances with quantity-based implicatures, quality-based implicatures, relevance-based implicatures, and manner-based implicatures were organized. The conversational implicatures established in these four groups evidenced the fact that the characters of the four selected drama texts conveyed implicatures in their conversations. Using Grice's interpretive model and what we know from the situation of the context of the drama, what the characters implied by their utterances were explained together with the reasons that made them create implicatures in their conversations. This was done by studying the maxim that was not observed and explaining the possible implicature that resulted from it.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Response Rate

There are several cases of implicatures in the two selected drama texts based on different maxims violations, but each maxim was illustrated with two examples.

4.1.1 Analysis of Conversational Implicatures in Drama text 1: *Family Abuse* by Mersier (2021)
4.1.1.1. Quantity-Based Implicatures
(1)   **YOUNG TAMARA:** Why was mommy mad at you?
        CARL: It's nothing to worry about. (p. 8)

This is a violation of the maxim of quantity. Carl's answer is not as informative as required because he wanted to mislead the young Tamara and prevent her from bringing his last night mood in conversation. He would find himself ashamed of his behavior towards his daughter. The implicature that may be derived from Carl's response is *He wanted to continue to hide his shameful action from Young Tamara.*

(2)   **DOMINIC:** Just take a look at it. Dominic opens the briefcase showing Carl the Heroin. Carl looks at it rubbing his chin with an orgasmic look in his eyes.
     CARL: As tempting as it looks...I can't get down with it. You can leave. Dominic takes one of the bags out, and then closes the briefcase.
     DOMINIC: Since we're good friends, you can have this one on me.
     CARL: Dominic---
     DOMINIC: If you decide to give it a try, cool. If you don't, that's cool, too. Temptation gets the best of Carl extending his hand, and Dominic places the bag in his hand. **(p. 27)**

Carl did not fully provide Dominic with the required information, so he flouts the maxim of quantity. Replying by stating *Dominic* only is a sign that he failed to firmly tell Dominic that he was not ready to take the bag of heroin. This made Dominic insistent that he should take a bag for just a trial. The implicature he created is *He had not made up his mind yet whether he was going to take a bag of heroin or not, but the probability of taking it was higher.*

4.1.1.2 Quality-Based Implicatures
(3)   **NIKKI:** What are you doing at my house?
     DOMINIC: Nikki, calm down. I didn't come to cause trouble.
     NIKKI: You are trouble. Whenever you come around, you bring grief.
     Carl and Teenage Tamara stand up.
     TEENAGE TAMARA: Who is that?
     CARL: Nobody. Go in the house. (p. 26)

Carl lied to Young Tamara that there was nobody when she had noticed that somebody was quarreling with her mother outside. So, Carl's response violates the maxim of quality. Carl did not mean that there was nobody outside because it was obvious Dominic, the drug dealer, had a bitter quarrel with Nikki over the effects of his drugs to their family. The implicature that Carl's response to Young Tamara's question may create is *Young Tamara did not have to know who Dominic was and what was going on between him and her father.*

(4)   **NIKKI:** What did that snake want?
     CARL: He wanted me to buy something.
     NIKKI: I'm glad you turned him down. He gives her a kiss.
     CARL: I changed my life for my family.
     NIKKI: Good. **(p. 29)**

This is a violation of the quality maxim as Carl knew that what he told Nikki was false. He misled her by making her believe that she stopped taking drugs from Dominic, yet he had left him a bag of heroin. When he said that Dominic wanted him to buy something, he did not specify what that thing was. He also lied that he changed his life for his family when he knew that he got tempted and accepted the bag of heroin. So, Carl did not mean what he told Nikki. There was a motive behind his false statements. The implicature that may be extracted from Carl's responses is *He failed to resist the temptation to receive a bag of heroin from Dominic but did not dare to confess it to Nikki as it sounded a sellout to his family.*

4.1.1.3 Relevance-Based Implicatures
(5)   **CARL:** Are you ready to go?
     YOUNG TAMARA: Are you okay from last night?
     CARL: (Clears throat) Yeah. **(p. 5)**

This is a flout of the maxim of relevance as Young Tamara's response is not connected to Carl's question. Instead of replying by stating whether she was ready to go or not, she talked asked her father about his mood of the last night. Young Tamara wanted Daddy to know that she witnessed his last night condition despite her young age. It

can be implied that *Young Tamara was not sure Daddy could be able to take her to school looking at the mood she left him in last night.*

(6)   DOMINIC: How was it?
        CARL: Son of a bitch, I'm about to kill you! (p. 35)

Carl's response was not relevant to Dominic's question, so it flouts the maxim of relevance. Dominic wanted to know whether he liked the heroin he had left him, but his answer was horrific. The implicature that Carl wanted to create is *Heroin caused trouble in his family as it was the reason his daughter was in a deep coma.*

4.1.1.4. Manner-based implicatures
(7)   YOUNG TAMARA: Mommy said you'll read to me tonight.
        CARL: And I will.
        YOUNG TAMARA: Any story I want?
        CARL: Any story you want, big girl.
        YOUNG TAMARA: Good. I have six books in mind.
        CARL: Six books?
        YOUNG TAMARA: Yes. I don't know what mood I'll be in
        CARL: (Laughs): What do you know about having a mood?
        YOUNG TAMARA: I'm a daddy's girl. I learned from you. (p. 8)

Younger Tamara's utterances are an example of a flout of the maxim of manner. Her language was not lucid to the point that Carl, her father, got confused. He failed to understand why she said she had six books in mind and she asked herself about the mood she would be in. Although she was young, she could notice her father's mood when drunk and on drugs. She could see Carl strong because of the drugs he was using, and she wanted to emulate her father's attitude. That is why, in Act II Scene IV, Nikki revealed to Carl that the Young Tamara had vowed to do anything to be like her father as she saw him so strong. Nikki was then blaming Carl that he was a bad role model. Nikki was saying this because the Young Tamara was in a deep coma after ingesting heroin that her father had kept secretly in the sugar canister. That is one of the disastrous effects of Carl's abusive behavior on his young daughter Tamara. So, *the Young Tamara wanted Carl to infer that she wanted to be as strong as him, but she did not have a good sense of the reason behind his mood and strength.*

(8)   CARL: This makes book number six.
        YOUNG TAMARA: Are you tired of reading?
        CARL: Princess, it's late. It's past your bedtime, and you need rest.
        YOUNG TAMARA: I'll be okay, daddy. I can multitask, like you.
        CARL: (Laughs) You can multitask, like me?
        YOUNG TAMARA: I told you I'm a daddy's girl. (p. 11)

Young Tamara's utterance about being multitask like Carl is so perspicuous that he failed to understand what she meant. This is another example of a flout of the maxim of manner. *She wanted her father to infer that she had to work as hard as him. As a drug user, he appeared so strong in case he had taken some doses.*
The types of conversational implicatures based on Grice's Maxims illustrated above are summarized in the table below.

Table 1
Types of Conversational Implicatures Based on Grice's Maxims in Family Abuse

Types of implicatures based on Grice's Maxims	Occurrence number	Percentage
Quantity-based	3	23.07
Quality-based	6	46.15
Relevance-based	2	15.39
Manner-based	2	15.39
Total	13	100

Table 1 displays the occurrence of conversational implicatures conveyed by the characters of *Family Abuse*. There are thirteen cases of conversational implicatures based on the non-observance of the four conversational

maxims. It is obvious that the implicatures resulting from a failure to observe the maxim of quality have the highest occurrence. The reason behind characters, especially Carl, not to be truthful in their conversation emanate from the nature of the drama itself. In *Family Abuse,* Carl and Nikki's house was full of quarrels because of Carl's addiction to drugs and alcohol. In his conversation, Carl had to hide any business about drugs and alcohol from his wife Nikki and their daughter Younger Tamara who also was highly affected by her father's abusive conduct. In some instances, Nikki had to lie to her daughter, Young Tamara, about her father's mood when he was drunk and had doses of drugs. Again, Carl appeared to be less informative in his conversation especially when he was talking to Young Tamara who tried to indirectly show him that she was aware, despite her young age, of what was going on in their house. This makes the implicatures based on the maxim of quantity have the second number of occurrences.

4.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Conversational Implicatures in Drama text 2: *The Edge* by Symonloe (2021)
4.2.1. Quantity-Based Implicatures
(1)   **MUNGO:** Such as searching out those who've made their mark in the world.
            MICHAEL: Bullies perhaps?
            MUNGO: Winners perhaps.
            STEPHEN: *(Grinning, at MUNGO).* Talking of winners, is your car the Range Rover?
            MUNGO: *(Dry).* Yes, why?
            STEPHEN: Oh nothing, just asking.
            MUNGO: There's a motive behind all questions. **(p. 13)**

Stephen's answer to Mungo's flouts the maxim of quantity. He is less informative as he did not want to reveal to Mungo the motive behind not saying anything when he had a reason to ask about him having a Range Rover car. He can't have asked that question just for the sake of asking. *The answer "nothing" means a lot. In this context, Stephen wanted Mungo, the arrogant man who boast over his wealth and does not value other people, to infer that he should stop believing that having an expensive car is an ingredient in his worth to the world. He wanted him to imply that he was confusing wealth with worth.*
(2)   **MICHAEL:** Where were you born?
            DAPHNE: That's a strange question.
            MICHAEL: Why?
            DAPHNE: Oh just that here we are in this trés dodgy situation and you want to know where I was born. **(p. 25)**

In this conversation, Daphne flouts the maxim of quantity by not being as informative as it is required. She did not like to talk much about her birthplace and her father. She thought Michael was prying into her life. *The implicature is Daphne was not ready to reveal her birthplace to him at that moment. They were all strangers there and did not know each other. So, she could not know why Michael was asking such a question. She later talked about it slightly and changed the topic immediately in order not to continue to talk about it.*

4.2.2 Relevance-Based Implicatures
(3)   **MUNGO:** And you think we conspired to destroy the planet and have all life perish? There were two wars remember? Nobody was even aware of the science. Plus we have to believe the science. Just what would your generation have done differently?
            DAPHNE: *(Avoiding).* **To conclude, I have a boyfriend, also a lawyer, and no children I'm pleased to say. I wouldn't bring them in to a toppling world like this. Oh yes, and I never knew my father, which is sad. C'est finis. (p. 18)**

Daphine's answer flouts the maxim of relevance as it is not connected to Mungo's question. She intentionally averted it as she did not want to continue to talk about generations' disputes over issues of climate change. *The implicature she wanted to generate is that Mungo had to understand that she is not interested in the topic as she does not even have any plan to bear children in this tumbling world.* So, she would not have any child to lay charges against her on destroying the planet and their future. *She also wanted him to infer that she should have learned a lot from his father about climate change if she had known him.*
(4)   **MICHAEL:** *(Pause to smile and respond).* What will you do?
            DAPHNE: Save our boat from the storm.
            MICHAEL: On your own?

DAPHNE: I hope with you, and people like you.

MICHAEL: It's a very large boat to save.

DAPHNE: It's the only one we've got. We have no choice. We're not going to stand by while it sinks forever, are we?

MICHAEL: I have my child to consider. I have to see to him. (p. 58)

In this conversation, Michael's answer flouts the maxim of relevance. Instead of answering by yes or no to Daphne's question, he talked about his child. Apparently, *the implicature is Michael accept that they would not allow the boat to sink without doing anything to stop it as it would be beneficial to him in a sense that he would be able to go and take care of his* son

4.2.3 Manner-Based Implicatures

(5)   **DAPHNE:** You okay? Michael right?

MICHAEL: Yes, Michael.

DAPHNE: I'm guessing there's something wrong?

MICHAEL*:* No, no… *(Relenting)* **well yes, I suppose. I was just saying to that guy Raj I'm worried about my son's health. The medics can't pin down the problem. Tonight he's expecting me home and...** *(Tails off)* **(p. 8)**

Michael's answer to Daphne's question is not perspicuous. He violated the maxim of manner by confusing Daphine as he did not want to talk to her about his son's health condition. Denying that something was wrong, then accepting it with doubt indicates that Michael did not want to disclose it to Daphne. *The implicature that can be obtained from their conversation is that Michael wanted the privacy of his son's health status although Daphine had noticed it through his gestures after the phone call.* Michael's utterances portray an example of defeasibility or cancellability, which is one of the properties of conversational implicatures. In the beginning, he did not want to talk about the problem he had, but later he cancelled the implicature by adding two utterances without taking it as self-contradiction.

(6)   **MICHAEL:** *(Looks frankly at the other man)* Right. You seem pretty un-fazed yourself. Have you got any more news on this mess?

STEPHEN: *(Ignores the question)* **I'm always on a natural high. Besides, I've looked in to many chasms. We're helpless as babies out here you know? Shall we cross the Acheron covering our ears to the screams of the Uncommitted?**

MICHAEL: (Puzzled) Sorry, I don't know what you're talking about.

STEPHEN: Sorry, I'm being obscure. It's Dante's Inferno. This bridge and the angry waters reminds of his journey across the river Acheron, hearing the tormented screams of those who chose neither side in life - not good or evil - thinking only of themselves. **(p. 10)**

Stephen's statement violates the maxim of manner. He intentionally overlooked Michael's question and decided to confuse him by blathering about how he always tries to put himself in a good mood without using drugs. He also talked about the worry that they would have a long journey without finding anyone to save them from the catastrophe they believed it resulted from humankind selfishness and heartlessness that lead to climate change. *The implicature from Stephen's statement is that he did not have an answer to Michael's question on whether he had any more news on this mess. So, he decided to opaquely tell him a story insinuating how it would be very difficult for them to get out of the dangerous situation they found themselves in.*

The types of conversational implicatures based on Grice's Maxims typified above are summarized in the table below.

Table 2
Types of Conversational Implicatures Based on Grice's Maxims in The Edge

Types of implicatures based on Grice's Maxims	Occurrence number	Percentage
Quantity-based	11	37.94
Quality-based	0	0
Relevance-based	12	41.38
Manner-based	6	20.68
Total	29	100

Table 2 summarizes the conversational implicatures conveyed by characters in *The Edge*. Based on Grice's Maxims, there are twenty-eight occurrences. Relevance-based implicatures are the most dominant types of implicatures. As *The Edge* is a drama about climate change, some characters were providing answers that are not connected to the questions that were deviating from the topic of what they could do to get out of the disastrous situation they had found themselves in as a result of climate change. This happened most to the character Mungo who was denying the existence of climate change where other characters like Michael and Daphne were trying to provide answers that would bring him on the topic. Other reasons for the dominance of relevance-based implicatures are found in Michael's answers who did not want Mungo to talk about his wife as Mungo wanted him to bring his son in conversation. Mungo had a son with Michel's wife. Other cases are related to characters who did not want others to know about their lives, so they were providing irrelevant answers to the questions. Quantity-based implicatures have the second highest number of occurrences. The fact that this drama is about five strangers who got stuck, in the midst of a torrential storm, on the edge of a downed bridge above a raging river, makes characters' conversations mainly less informative because they did not know one another.

4.3 Discussions

The results of the present study indicate that characters of the drama texts *Family Abuse* and *The Edge* conveyed quantity-based implicatures, quality-based implicatures, relevance-based implicatures, and manner-based implicatures in their conversations. These results are consistent with Iswahyuni (2019)'s claim that characters in drama frequently create implicatures in their conversations so that the audience can infer meaning from what is said. This credits drama with an undeniable ability to allow students to widely explore the meaning of texts. The results also proved that there are social issues that made the characters of these drama texts frequently convey their utterances implicitly. This align with Medina & Campano (2006)'s assertion that drama is a genre that is developed on diverse societal situations through which students can best explore various critical spaces as they discuss its meaning. This pattern of the results contributed a lot to this study as the occurrence and interpretation of conversational implicatures based on Grice's Cooperative Principle with its Maxims , which Cruse (2006) maintains that it serves as the basis for the explanation of how conversational implicatures arise, were justified in relation to the social contexts of the drama texts. Drama is thus proven to be a genre that can easily support both conversational implicatures and critical literacy .With these results, the first and second research questions were answered, and the first and second objectives were achieved.

Analyzing the role of conversational implicatures in English drama in developing students' critical literacy was the third objective of this study. Conversational implicatures from *Family Abuse* and *The Edge* together with the social issues upon which meaning is constructed in these drama texts were used to attain this objective. The analysis of this role is coherent with the ideas that critical literacy provides students with the capacity to discover the meaning of implicit beliefs and agendas in conversations (Warnick as cited in Hakim et al., 2021), the capacity to read texts actively by thinking carefully and quietly so as to have a thorough understanding of some societal issues that concern people's daily lives and behavior (Coffey , 2008), and the capacity to think beyond the text and observe the role of social contexts in creating the meaning of texts (Hakim et al. ,2021). This analysis also mainly fits in Govender (2019)'s argument that critical literacy necessitates making meaning beyond the text by following Luke & Freebody's Four Resources Model as an effective approach for teaching reading from a critical literacy perspective and in McKenzie (2017) and Freebody and Luke (1990)'s description and discussion of the four practices of the Luke & Freebody's Four Resources model of critical literacy: code-breaking practices, comprehension practices, pragmatic practices, and critical practices towards a reading text. Text User (Pragmatic competence) and Text Critic (Critical competence) were best suitable for our research project.

In their pragmatic practices as text users, students can first practice identifying the social issues that prompted the authors to write *Family Abuse* and *The Edge*. They can also practice determining the author's purpose and the tone or characters' attitudes vis-à-vis the social situation for each drama. The understanding of the social situation together with the purpose and the tone of the drama definitely helps students to spot the implied meaning from characters' utterances. Students can then be able to practice sorting out conversational implicatures in these two drama texts and providing their possible interpretations. In their critical practices as text critics/analysts, students can practice studying other viewpoints and values represented in these drama texts besides the overall social issues upon which they are structured. For example, Michael's view on climate change in *The Edge* is that the future of the society may become worse because of parents who do not avail themselves for their children in order to share with them their past experience on climate change. . Students can be asked to examine how these views and many others are depicted in the text in relation to the social issues on which the texts are constructed.

To illustrate the points in the above paragraph, for example, as students actively read the drama *Family Abuse*, they have to think carefully so as to understand how addiction for drugs and alcohol is the social issue that is addressed in this drama text. Studying this text from a social angle can help them discover the relation between characters' utterances and this social issue upon which Mersier (2021) structured this drama text. For instance, they can notice that the reason behind characters, especially Carl, not to be truthful in their conversations stems from his addiction for drugs and alcohol. Carl had to hide any business about drugs and alcohol from his wife Nikki and their daughter Younger Tamara who also was highly affected by her father's abusive conduct. As students study the implicit meanings in these characters' conversations in relation to the overall social issue, they can notice how it is linked to the high occurrence of the implicatures that are based on the maxim of quality and the maxim of quantity. It is this connection between language and the social context in which it is applied that made us realize that critical literacy can undeniably be developed through the study of conversational implicatures. What a character intends to express by his or her utterances has a connection with a given context and in this particular case the social context that is characterized by some societal issues that concern people's daily lives and behavior.

In *The Edge*, Symonloe (2021) depicts climate change as a social issue that needs thoughtful consideration. For example, climate change's disastrous effects hugely affect vulnerable people like the poor, the elderly, children, and people with mental health problems. Other social issues added to this major social issue are arrogant people who do not see the best in others and do not value any effort to help one another in critical situations, unfaithfulness in marriage, and children who grow up without experiencing fatherly care and advice. As students at tertiary level critically read the drama text to find out and discuss these ideas from a social perspective, they exercise their capacity to question and examine ideas from a drama text. The understanding of the social condition upon which *The Edge* is constructed provides students with abilities to analytically study the text in order to discover their intended meanings as what a character intends to convey by his/her utterance has a connection with the social issue.

Analyzing the reasons for the dominant occurrence of the types of implicatures based of Grice's maxims towards the social context and characters' discourse and behavior can be another critical literacy practice. For example, why do quality-based implicatures appear with the highest occurrences over others? How does the social situation contribute to this occurrence? Why does the character Carl, in *Family Abuse*, speak untruthfully? From a social perspective, why do implicatures resulting from failing to observe the maxims of quantity and relevance occur most in *The Edge*? Why were some characters less informative in *The Edge*? From a social angle, why do quality-based implicatures have the highest occurrence in *Family Abuse*? Why would the character Mungo create implicatures by replying with more information? What was Michael's intention in giving answers that are not relevant to others' utterances? Students can practice critical literacy through answering such questions that can enable them to link characters' discourse to the social situations in drama texts. Students can then practice reconstruction through writing descriptions of characters' most important lines and various viewpoints and practice speaking through a deep discussion. Finally, from their wide exploration of social issues in *Family Abuse* and *The Edge*, they practice social action by raising their voices to combat addiction for drugs, alcohol, and racism and take action against climate change in their communities.

V. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

The present study mainly aimed to study the role of conversational implicatures in English drama in developing students' critical literacy. With the aim to achieve this overall objective, the study identified conversational implicatures conveyed by the characters of the two selected drama texts and provided their possible interpretations basing on Grice's Cooperative Principle maxims. The study also analyzed the role of conversational implicatures in English drama in developing students' critical literacy. The findings revealed that the characters of the two selected drama texts conveyed quantity-based, quality-based, relevance-based, and manner based implicatures in their conversations. Grice's interpretive model and the situation of the context of the drama were also used to provide possible interpretations of these conversational implicatures. By applying the Luke and Freebody's four resources model of critical literacy to drama texts, it was concluded that conversational implicatures in English drama develop students' critical literacy by enabling them to study a drama text from a social angle and evaluate the social aspects that may have influenced the meaning of the characters 'utterances. Thus, the important task that English language teachers have before them is to do their best to help students upgrade their pragmatic and critical competences and use the knowledge from their practices to take action in their communities and play a key role in positively transforming them.

5.2 Recommendations

It was recommended that English language program designers foster critical literacy practices basing on conversational implicatures through drama texts. It was also recommended that students' critical literacy needs developing through the understanding of conversational implicatures in drama texts. Embracing the Luke and Freebody's four resources model of critical literacy , with much focus on the Text User (Pragmatic competence) and the Text Critic (Critical competence) resources or roles, is also another important contribution to the development of critical literacy in English language classrooms. Further studies should be carried out to explore the role of conversational implicatures in the teaching of other language skills. Studies should also be conducted to investigate the effectiveness of using drama texts in increasing students' awareness of issues that matter most in the society (e.g. women empowerment, drug abuse effects, climate change, unintended pregnancy effects, domestic violence and others).

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