

Discourse Analysis and Pragmatic Meanings of "Zift" in the Daily Mosuli Arabic Conversation

Lecturer :Ameer Suleiman Saleh
University of Mosul /College of Basic Education
Department of English

تاريخ الاستلام : ٢٠٢٢/١٢/١

تاريخ القبول: ٢٠٢٢/١٢/٢٨

ABSTRACT

The current study investigates the discourse analysis and pragmatic meanings of the word asphalt **zift** زفت in the daily Mosuli conversation, based on a collection of natural-occurring conversational data. The data analyzed consisted of eight conversations which were translated and then transliterated into English. Discourse analysis was adopted as a model for the current study. It is concluded that the word asphalt **zift** has many different pragmatic meanings based on the context and the situation in which it is used, such as : high, bad , unsuitable, bad dealing, hopeless , uncomfortable, low and without respect and status .Such meanings implicitly express: disapproval, complaint, a certain point of view, depression, hard , dissatisfaction, anger, despair, evaluating the performance of others and misfortune.

Keywords: discourse, pragmatics, conversation, context, meaning .

تحليل الخطاب والمعاني التداولية لكلمة "زفت" في الحديث اليومي باللهجة الموصلية

م. امير سليمان صالح
جامعة الموصل/ كلية التربية الاساسية
قسم اللغة الانكليزية

الملخص

تتناول الدراسة تحليل الخطاب في السياقات التي وردت فيها لفظة زفت في الحديث اليومي باللهجة الموصلية ، ومن ثم تحديد المعاني البراغماتية لهذا التعبير على وفق السياق الخطابي الذي وردت فيه، وكشفت الدراسة وجود معانٍ براغماتية عديدة للفظـة زفت منها :باهض الثمن، وصعب، وغير ملائم، وسيء التعامل، وميؤوس منه، وعدم الراحة، ومتدنٍ، وقليل الشأن، إذ استعملت أيضاً للتعبير بشكل ضمني عن الرفض، والشكوى، والتعبير عن وجهة نظر معينة ، وعدم الرضا، والغضب، والياس، وتقييم أداء الآخرين، وسوء الطالع. وتكرر استعمال هذه الصفة (زفت) من المتحدث الموصلـي لعمل مقارنـه بين الأشياء ولفظة (زفت) التي تعبّر عن الشيء السيء عادة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخطاب ، البراغماتية، الحوار، السياق ، المعنى.

1-Introduction

Language is a way to transmit information, express feelings, emotions, and ideas, and building social identities. It also plays a main role in the process of transmitting knowledge (Banga, 2015:182) .

Language is a dynamic phenomenon, and speakers of language always find methods of expressing their ideas and feelings. Actually, language is always creating new words in order to explain new concepts (ibid.) . One of the important things in our life is to have ability to communicate in effectively way, because we(human beings) need to communicate to fulfill our social needs. Moreover, real communications do not based only on the meanings of words in the spoken language , but also on understanding speakers' meanings (Yule, 2014) . In other words, the speaker attempts to convey a specific meaning to the listener ,and the listener tries to recognise the speakers' meanings depending on the context. Therefore, communication needs deep perception of how language is employed by the speakers and the listeners (Sarii, 2014:1). As an essential role of everyday communication and interaction in human society, speakers do not only use language to send factual information but also to express and convey their emotions, opinions and attitudes) Al-Khawaldeh,2018:114) .

Mosuli conversation, in our daily life , is an encouraging area of investigation. It consists of an unlimited collection of social and linguistic items that awaits studies and investigation seriously. One of such samples is asphalt (zift زفت),which has many meanings. This word(asphalt) catches our attention because of its high frequency and repetition in the everyday Mosuli conversations.

Moreover, "" zift " زفت is one of the petroleum products as it is in the form of a viscous substance used in caulking ships to seal holes to prevent water from leaking into them, as well as used in paving streets. (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asphalt>).

The word "zift" is often used in colloquial slang with meanings that different depending on the context in which it comes. In general, it comes with bad meanings in conversations. Because of its dark black colour, for example, when a person compares his living situation with asphalt. This means, from a pragmatic point of view, that his condition and luck are bad and black as the colour and viscosity of asphalt.

2-Aims of the Study

The study aims at:

1. Investigating the discourse analysis and pragmatic meanings of the word zift زفت asphalt in Mosuli spoken conversation .

2. Identifying the use of zift زفت and to know the extent of knowledge of Arabic speakers of those uses.
3. formulating the pragmatic meanings of (zift) asphalt in Mousli conversation.

3-Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

1. The daily Mosuli conversation is different from the ordinary language in vocabulary, structure ,and ambiguous use of words and phrases.
2. In the daily Mousli discourse, the speaker means more in their utterances than what is expressed literally by employing pragmatic aspects.

4-Data Collection

In this study, some Mosuli discourses from different conversations in our daily life are collected, based on the set of data for conversations occurred naturally, which were recorded in different situations and places such as schools, markets, colleges, conversations between friends, interactions between family members, phoning between two persons and so on. Eight discourses are selected as a data of the analysis by identifying these discourses that convey the pragmatic meanings of the word asphalt "zift" زفت according to the discursal context in which it came.

5-The Procedures

The procedure of the present study includes the following:

1. Presenting a theoretical account related to the discourse analysis and pragmatics.
2. Doing discourse analysis to analyze the conversations in which the word zift زفت is used in the daily Mosuli conversation, and then determining the pragmatic meanings of this expression according to the discursal context in which it came.

6-Limits of the Study

This study is limited to the Mousli conversation and to show the different pragmatistical meanings of the expression "asphalt zift" زفت which is used in everyday conversation within a whole discursal unit.

7-Value of the Study

1. It is expected to be useful for discourse analysts and pragmatists.
2. It is hoped to be of theoretical significance to researchers .
3. It is useful in understanding the different meanings of a word within contextual discourse as a coherent discourse unit.

8-Discourse analysis

In a narrow sense , discourse viewed as the study of language behind the sentence or the clause. Discourse analysis is the aspect of linguistics that is how people construct meanings in larger communicative, instead of grammatical units. It studies meanings in a text, paragraph and conversation, rather than at the sentence level (Stubbs,1983:1).

Brown and Yule (1983 : 27) see that discourse and pragmatics are interested in the analysis of language in use; they focus on the description of linguistic items , their functions and purposes in a piece of spoken language.

Discourse analysis is the domain devoted to the study of the relationship between form and function in verbal communications (Renkema,1993:1)

Ostman and Virtanen (1995:244) define "discourse analysis as an umbrella-term for all matters that have been dealt with in the linguistic studies especially in discourse and text".

Riggenbach (1999 cited in Paltridge,2012 :12) states that discourse analysis takes us into the 'bigger picture' of language description. It takes us into the social and cultural settings of language use in order to know the choices of a particular language. Discourse analysis takes us beyond description to interpretation and helps us to understand the game s' rules that the speakers of language draw on in their everyday communications. Swamy (2010 cited in Al-Khalidy , 2017:22) assumed that not only we seek to understand the forms of written and spoken words but also, the intended meanings of the writers and speakers.

Discourse analysis investigates language patterns across texts and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used. It examines how the use of language is influenced by relationships between participants as well as the effects the use of language has upon social identities and relations (Paltridge ,2012:2).

According to Yule (2014:125-126) , both discourse and pragmatics are studying meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by a listener . Therefore, the concentrate will be on what speakers mean by their utterances rather than what the words and phrases mean by themselves. This study will shed light on the discourse analysis and pragmatic meanings of the word "asphalt zift " in Mousli conversations .

9-Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a study which thinks what is communicated is more interested than what is said. The speakers' utterances in verbal communication include a deeper sense than the actual meaning of the words themselves. Leech (1983: 6) mentions that pragmatics is the study of meaning which is connected to the speech situations. According to Leech statement, Yule (1996:3) claims that pragmatics should consider elements of the context like who people are talking to, when, where, and under what conditions that will decide the way they say and what they want to say. According to him there is a strong relation between pragmatics and context especially when something is being said. So, it is very useful for speakers and researchers to concentrate on the context and situation and to put them into consideration. As well , Yule (ibid.) relates pragmatics to the study of meanings as communicated by a hearer or reader. Thus, we conclude that pragmatics investigates in the intended meanings of the speakers .

Levinson's (1997) view on pragmatics and define it as an important branch of linguistics that concerns with meaning's aspects that cannot be studied and understood by the semantic theory only .Pragmatics deals with discourse in relation to the situations of the speech (ibid.) .

Crystal (1998:301) shows that pragmatics focuses on those elements, which govern our choice of language , like our social awareness , our cultural and our sense of etiquette.

Furthermore, Rose and Kassper (2000:2) see pragmatics as the study of communicative action in its social and cultural context ."Communicative action" involves not only using acts

of speech, but also engaging in different kinds of discourse , then participating in speech events of varying length and complexity.

Finally, pragmatics can be define as the study of language from the point of view of speakers, particularly of the choices they make, the constraints they facing in employing language in social interactions and the impacts their use of language has on the other contributors in the act of communication (Crystal,2003:301) .

10-Context and Meaning

Levinson (1983: 276) confirms that "a context "should be understood to be a collection of propositions, describing the beliefs, knowledge and commitments in the discourse analysis. Cruse (2006:3) argues that the main topics of linguistic pragmatics are those aspects of meaning which are dependent on context. Therefore, context is an important concept in pragmatic analysis because pragmatics focuses on the meaning of words in context and how the persons involved in the interaction communicate more information than the words show. When a word, used in a piece of text, often denotes one meaning out of multiple meanings it carries inherently (Dash,2008:21) .

A word in linguistics is a bundle of information related to phonology, morphology, semantics, structure, text, metaphor, discourse, pragmatics and the world knowledge. It is difficult to control all the information of a word just

by looking at its surface form; the context is needed for understanding the intended meaning of a word within the discourse unit (Pinker 1995: 344).

Context plays a key role in interpreting the meaning of the spoken and written discourse. This involves the physical context, the social context and the role of people engaged in the interaction. All these factors determine what we utter and write, and how people interpret them(Paltridge,2012: 39) .

In fact, there are different types of context that are essential to the production, development ,and interpretation of any discourse. First, situational context refers to "what

people can see around them". Second, background knowledge context indicates " what people know about each other and about the World ".

It consists of cultural and interpersonal knowledge . Third , co - textual context refers to "what people know about what they have been saying"(ibid.)

On the other hand, Fraser (1990: 385-386) differentiates between "content meaning" and "pragmatic meaning". Content meaning, also referred to as "referential meaning", is a more or less explicit representation of some state of the world that the speaker intends to bring to the listener's attention by means of the literal interpretation of the sentence .Pragmatic meaning, which refers to the speaker's communicative intention, is the direct message the speaker intends to convey in uttering the sentence .Meaning can be investigated by semantics linguistically. Context and meaning both are interdependent, i.e., we cannot communicate without context, and we cannot establish context without meaning (Williams, 2004 cited in Nouraldeen , 2015:13).

11- Data Analysis:

This section shows some Mosuli discourses ,that contain the word "zift"asphalt from our daily conversation and analyse them pragmatically .It is found that these discourses express different meanings of this word depending on the contexts in which it is used. Also,there are many discursal situations and contexts that use the word zift زفت to express dissatisfaction, discontent,sadness, lack of knowledge about matters and the lack of quality of things. For example , " my luck is zift حظي زفت " , " the party is zift الحفلة زفت " , " the session is zift الجلسة زفت " , "the situation is zift الوضعية زفت " , " his food is zift (الطبخ) زفت " , " his driving is zift سياقته زفت " , "the health is zift الصحة زفت " , "the situation of the country is zift وضعية البلد زفت " , " the roads are zift الطرق زفت " , my car is zift السيارة زفت " , "the film is zift الفلم زفت " , "electricity is zift الكهرباء زفت " , "the petrol is zift البنزين زفت " , " his morals are zift تربيته زفت " , " his work is zift شغله زفت " , " the device is zift الجهاز زفت " , " my life is zift حياتي زفت " and so on .

However, some discursal excerpts were selected for the analysis as a representative sample of the study, and it is not necessary to mention all of them, because the selected samples adequately cover the main idea of the study. The analysis of data came out with many various meanings of the word asphalt zift زفت in the daily Mosuli conversation. The data shows that the word zift asphalt gives the following pragmatic meanings:

11.1. High

Speaker A: اشوني الاسعار بالسوق اليوم ؟
Speaker B: والله اليوم الاسعار زفت

Arabic Text	Transliteration	English Text	Meaning
الاسعار زفت	alas'ar zift	prices are high	High

Usually ,people in the Mosuli community, in particular and the Iraqi in general , open their daily discourse and talk with each other by asking about the prices of goods , vegetables and the foreign currency in the local markets.

In this situation, someone asks about the prices of goods in the market for the day from another one , he answers, saying "wallahi " (the word "wallahi" used in this situation to clarify the discourse function of answering and giving information to prior discourse.) that the prices are "zift زفت. The word zift as an adjective has a pragmatic meaning in this context, that the prices are high. So, the word zift means "high ".

11.2.Bad

Teacher: سال المعلم طلابه بعد الانتهاء من اداء الامتحان في مادته اشوني اجاباتكم ؟

Student: استاذ اجابتنا زفت

Arabic Text	Transliteration	English Text	Meaning
اجابتنا زفت	ijabetna zift	Our answer is bad	Bad

The teacher asked his students, after completing the exam in his subject, "How are your answers?" One of the students answered "Sir, our answer is zift". Here, in this discourse, the teacher asks his students as usual ,after they finish the exam ,about their opinion about the ease, difficulty and clarity of the questions. One of the students answered on behalf of his colleagues that our answers were "zift زفت". The student expressed his opinion about his

answer and the answer of his colleagues about the nature of the questions that the teacher asked them about as "zift".

The pragmatic meaning of the word "zift" in this discorsal context means bad, and it expresses the students' dissatisfaction with the questions because of their difficulty. Here, it is inferred that the word "zift" means "bad" from a pragmatic point of view.

11.3.Unsuitable

Speaker A : تجون نغوح سفرة؟

Speaker B: يامعود ايما سفرة ما عتغشع الجو زفت

Arabic Text	Transliteration	English Text	Meaning
ج الجو زفت	aljaw zift	جج The weather is not suitable	Unsuitable

There was a session between a group of friends, one of whom suggested going to a picnic. The answer was rejection of the proposal by another friend, using at the beginning of his speech Yamawwad يامعود as a discourse marker(it can be adversative in function expressing disagreement and opposition to a given proposition)that can be used to express disagreement and opposition to his proposal. The role of "yamawwadيامعود" in this context is to resume the conversation and bring the whole communicative act into focus. It gives the speaker a license to begin telling his topic and opinion to the partner in the discourse. It is difficult to define or translate into English due to its multiple pragmatic and interactional functions. It occurs exclusively at clause- or sentence-initial boundaries analogous to the attention getter hey in English. Therefore, speaker B does not agree with speaker A and opposes the idea and suggestion of the latter predicting that the weather is "zift زفت". The word "zift" is used in a discorsal context to denote a pragmatic meaning that the weather is not suitable for going out for a picnic.

The word "zift" in this context means that the weather is either hot, cold or dusty. Hence, the word "zift زفت" expresses the unsuitability of the weather for going out for a picnic , which is

why the proposal was rejected by the speaker B. Here the word "zift زفت" pragmatically means "unsuitable".

11.4.Bad dealing

Speaker A: اشون تغشع موظفي الدائرة؟

Speaker B: اش احكي؟ معاملتهم زفت

Arabic Text	Transliteration	English Text	Meaning
معاملتهم زفت	mueamalatahum zift	They treat others badly	bad dealing or bad style

Within an integrated discursual context between two persons in an interactive situation, speaker A asked speaker B about his opinion about the way the employees of a particular department treat others. They asked "How do you see the employees of the department?". Speaker B replied that their treatment is "zift زفت", that is, their way of speaking and the way they perform with others is bad. Speaker B used the word "zift زفت" in this context to evaluate and give his opinion about the employees. As we mentioned earlier, the word "zift" expresses the bad thing. So, the word "zift زفت" pragmatically "means that their style of performance and speech is not good.

11.5.Hopeless

Speaker A: اليوم يلعب اسود الرافدين؟

Speaker B: اي اليوم يلعب بس انا معنوياتي زفت

Arabic Text	Transliteration	English Text	Meaning
معنوياتي زفت	maenawiaati zift	I'm in low spirits	Hopeless

In one of the discursual situations, friends are talking to each other. Speaker A mentioned that today there is a football match, the Lions of Al-Rafidain will play today, (the Lions of Al-Rafidain) as a metaphor for a reference to the national team. Speaker B answered yes نعم as an endorsement of his words that today there is a match for our national team, and then the speaker B used the word bas بس as a contrastive marker (or discourse marker) used to express his contradictory opinion with speaker A who praised the national team and called them the Lions of Al-Rafidain. "Bas بس" is also used in Mosuli conversation as a contrastive marker. Markers of contrastive signal a relationship between two utterances where the utterance following either denies or contrasts another proposition contained in the previous discourse. "Bas" in this context is employed by the speaker B to initiate his turn that contrasts the preceding turn uttered by the other speaker(A) "Bas" can sometimes be used as a discourse marker to indicate politeness, where the listener tries to disagree with the speakers' utterances in a polite way.

Speaker B also used the word asphalt "zift زفت" to express the team's poor technical performance based on previous matches .It is inferred that the use of the word "zift زفت" "expresses how difficult the task of our national team is and the strength of the opposite opponent. The word zift زفت expresses the despair that speaker B feels through his low morale. In this context, the meaning and pragmatic function of the word "zift زفت" is hopeless.

11.6.Uncomfortable

Speaker A: اخباركم احوالكم ان شاء الله بخير اشوني اجواء البيت ؟

B: Speaker والله اخبارنا ما مليحة والاجواء بالبيت زفت

Arabic Text	Transliteration	English Text	Meaning
الاجواء بالبيت زفت	alajwa belbayt zift	Conditions at home are not good	Uncomfortable

In phone calls, the conversation is usually opened between two persons with greetings and peace between the two parties, and the two parties ask about each other's conditions. Among the questions asked by the speaker A to the speaker B is the question about his conditions, saying: "Tell me about your conditions, how is the atmosphere in the house" . Based on previous information between the two parties , the speaker B answered that the atmosphere in the house is zift زفت ". So , the word zift was used in this context to describe the bad conditions in the house, such as the presence of social and economic problems, as well as to express dissatisfaction, discontent, sadness and the gloomy atmosphere as a result of the bad situations in the house. It is concluded that the pragmatic meaning of the word "zift زفت" is "uncomfortable".

11.7. Low

اليومي (الاجور) زفت

Arabic Text	Transliteration	English Text	Meaning
اليومي زفت	alyuwmiyi zift	Low daily wages	Low

One of the speakers says, in one of the discorsal sessions within the family interaction, that he will leave his work because the wages are "zift زفت". The word "zift زفت" in this context ,expresses dissatisfaction with the low wages and the lack of acceptance of it ,because it is low. So, it is concluded that the word " zift زفت" pragmatically means low.

11.8. Without Respect and Status

Speaker A: دق علينا بالموبايل

Speaker B : يعني كم مرة قتولك هذا الزفت ما يجاوب

Arabic Text	Transliteration	English Text	Meaning
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هذا زفت ما يجالوب	hatha alzift	This man without respect and status	Without respect and status
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In one of the conversations between two friends, speaker A asked speaker B to call someone via the mobile phone for a certain topic. Speaker B initiated his turn by the linguistic element " ya?ni يعني " frequently used in the variety of Arabic spoken in Mosul. Ya?ni " belongs to a host of expressions known as discourse markers or discourse operator. "Ya?ni" here expresses indignation and exasperation. It means you 're supposed to know that I called him many times, and speaker B does not agree with speaker A to call the person concerned and calling him "alzift الزفت". Speaker B used the word zift instead of the name of the person concerned as a sign to belittle the person he was asked to call because, he is a condescending person and does not respond to their calls. So, it is noted that the use of the adjective "zift زفت " is to degrade the status and value of the transcendent man.

12- Conclusions

The study comes up with the following conclusions:

1. The pragmatic meanings of the word "zift زفت" have been identified. It serves many different meanings in different social and discorsal contexts. It means high , bad , unsuitable, bad dealing, hopeless , uncomfortable, low and without respect and status . These meanings implicitly express: disapproval, complaint, a certain point of view, depression, dissatisfaction, anger and despair, and evaluate the performance of others and misfortune.
2. Context plays a key role in determining and interpreting the pragmatic meaning of the word "zift زفت". So, one cannot understand the meanings of the word "zift " without being aware of the situational context.
3. Based on the interactive and communicative exchanges between speakers in different situations, it is found that the word 'zift' occurs only in colloquial spoken discourse.
4. It is also concluded ,through the discorsal contexts, that the word zift is usually used by the listener, represented by the speaker B, in a response to a question or a statement of his opinion on a particular topic directed to him by the speaker A.

5. Throughout the analysis , it is shown that despite of the multiple pragmatic meanings expressed by the word "zift" , according to different contexts and situations in which it occurred, it generally expresses the meaning of bad things by the Mosuli speaker in the daily life conversations.
6. Finally, the daily Mousli discourse is rich, and it is of an unlimited collection of linguistic and social terms including the word "zift زفت".

13-Bibliography

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