

Interpreting the Non-Literal Meaning in Selected Scenes of "The Family Plan" Movie

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Abstract:

Pragmatics is that field of language that studies the intended meaning behind words and sentences. It studies the non-literal meaning of words and sentences which does not exist in the dictionary, otherwise it depends on the context and cultural knowledge of the listener. Many English learners confront difficulties in interpreting the non-literal meaning behind idioms, metaphor, irony, or indirect speech. The researcher attempts to investigate how such meanings are employed in real-life like contexts and how learners can get benefit from it in developing proficiency in language use. The aim of this study is to analyze the non-literal language in selected scenes of the "The Family Plan" movie. Since this analysis can help to improve the pragmatic competence among EFL learners. It is hypothesized that non-literal expressions are more frequently used in scenes involving conflict or humor. The researcher conducts a qualitative-content analysis to (15) selected scenes from "The Family Plan" movie. Scenes are selected depending on the existence of idioms, metaphor, irony, or indirect speech. The researcher has adopted Grice's maxims of conversational implicature and Searle's taxonomy of speech acts. The findings of the analysis reveal that non-literal language expressions are more frequent in scenes involving humor.

Keywords: pragmatics, literal, non-literal, indirect speech act, implicature



تفسير المعنى المجازي في مشاهد مختارة من فيلم "الخطة العائلية"

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الملخص:

التداوile هي ذلك الفرع من اللغة الذي يدرس المعنى المقصود وراء الكلمات و الجمل. فهي تدرس المعاني المجازية للكلمات و الجمل التي لا يمكن العثور عليها في القاموس، اذ تعتمد على السياق و المعرفة الثقافية للمسمع. يواجه العديد من متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية صعوبات في تفسير المعنى غير الحرفي (المجازي او الضمني) الكامن وراء التعبير الاصطلاحية (irony) او السخرية (idioms) او الاستعارة (metaphor) او الكلام الغير المباشر (indirect speech). يحاول الباحث في هذه الدراسة التتحقق من كيفية استخدام مثل هذه المعاني في مواقف شبيهة بالحياة الواقعية و كيف يمكن للمتعلمين الاستفادة منها في تطوير كفاءتهم اللغوية. الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو تحليل اللغة المجازية في مشاهد مختارة من فيلم الخطة العائلية. ان هذا التحليل يمكن ان يساعد في تحسين الكفاءة التدوالية (pragmatic competence) لدى متعلمي اللغة الانكليزية كلغة اجنبية. تم افتراض ان التعبيرات المجازية تستخدم بشكل اكثر تكرارا في المشاهد التي تتضمن صراعا او فكاهة. قام الباحث بإجراء تحليل نوعي للمحتوى ل (١٥) مشهد مختار من الفيلم و تم اختيار هذه المشاهد اعتمادا على وجود التعبيرات الاصطلاحية او السخرية او الاستعارة او الكلام الغير المباشر. وقد اعتمد الباحث في تحليله على مبادئ غرلبيس (Grice's maxims) الخاصة بالتضمين الحواري (conversational Implicature) و تصنيف سيرل لافعال الكلام. تكشف نتائج التحليل ان التعبيرات غير الحرافية (المجازية) في اللغة تستخدم بشكل اكثر تكرارا في المشاهد التي تتضمن عنصر الفكاهة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : التدوالية، المعنى الحرفي، المعنى غير الحرفي (المجازي)، الفعل الكلامي الغير المباشر، التضمين الحواري



1. Introduction

Language has a crucial role in human life. Thus, the importance of studying language via pragmatics is that it provides insights to the intended meaning of the speaker's utterance. The field of pragmatics is interesting because it explores how speakers understand each other. Yet, it can also be a challenging field since it involves interpreting what individuals mean depending on what's in their mind. It is the study of invisible meaning, it looks at how listeners 'fill in blanks'. The listener has to make inferences to understand the full message. Pragmatics is also the study of contextual meaning. It analyses how speakers organize their words based on who they are talking to, where they are, and when the conversation happens. The context changes the meaning (Widdowson, 1996: 3-4). In a study entitled "The Analysis of Literal and Non-literal Meaning in William Shakespeare's Poetry", Gustiana and Maisarah (2023) examine the dominant non-literal meaning in the poetry of Shakespeare and the literal meaning behind each non-literal use. In another empirical study done by Falkum (2021), who studied the development of non-literal uses of language. Falkum (2021) tried to find out how children develop comprehension of metonymy and irony during preschool years. In the current study the researcher studies the literal meaning behind non-literal expressions in "The Family Plan" movie. Since studies on pragmatic features of this movie are lacking and this study aims to fill this gap.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Introduction

This section includes the theoretical background about the study. First, the researcher tackles the definition of pragmatics and how it is important in language learning. Then, essential ideas about Grice's theory of conversational implicature as well as the speech act theory are introduced since they are necessary for the analysis.

2.2 Pragmatics in Language Learning

Pragmatics is the field of linguistics that deals with how language is employed in different contexts. It studies the connection between language use and language form. In other words, it studies the different facets of non-literal meaning (Flowerdew, 2013: 79). Briner (2013: 2) defines pragmatics as the study of language use in context that differs from semantics which focuses on the



literal meaning without taking into account the context. For example, if someone is having a bad day says:

1. My day was a night mare.

Semantically, this sentence would be interpreted as if the person had a bad dream about the day. Pragmatically, it means that the person had a difficult day. That is, the meaning intended in the context of the utterance. This type of meaning is not found in dictionaries and it differs from context to context. Thus, pragmatics deals with meaning from four facets as it is stated by Briner (2013: 3-4).

- non-literal meaning
- context-dependent
- inferential
- not truth conditional

Basically, pragmatics concentrates on the communicative action of the context. In pragmatics, the primary concern is the language use and language users rather than focusing on a set of rules or principles. Pragmatics goes behind a set of rules and focuses on participants with their personalities, feelings, social status, goals which interact with other participants (Bublitz & Norrick, 2011: 4-5). Thus, pragmatics is the study of relative distance, it explains how speakers decide how much to say. The rule is based on distance or closeness whether it is physical, social, or conceptual. If the speaker is close to someone, s/he does not need to say much to be understood. If there is high distance between the speaker and the listener, the speaker has to explain more (Widdowson, 1996: 3).

2.3 Conversational Implicature

The notion of conversational implicature is founded by the philosopher H. Paul Grice. He presented the idea in his lectures and some important articles written in (1975, 1978, and 1989). He suggested a way to understand how speakers and listeners communicate with each other. A conversational implicature must be something that the listener can logically work out. Even if the implicature is obvious, it does not count as a conversational implicature unless it can be justified through reasoning; otherwise, it is considered as conventional implicature. In order to decide

whether a conversational implicature exists, the listener relies on several kinds of information (Grice, 1975: 50):

1. the literal or conventional meaning of the words, including any inferences they contain.
2. the cooperative principle and its maxims;
3. the linguistic and situational context of the utterance
4. the relevant background knowledge
5. the assumption that both the speaker and the listener share all the necessary information falling under these categories.

Grice noticed that people often understand more than what is directly or explicitly said. They make inferences depending on hints or suggestions and for successful communication they follow certain shared rules (Saeed, 2016: 210). Grice called these as cooperative principle which states how the listener figures out the speaker's intended meaning from context depending on inferences even when it is not stated clearly and this is called implicature (Flowerdew, 2013: 96). For example:

2. Carol: Are you coming to the party tonight?

Lara: I have got an exam tomorrow

The implied meaning in this sentence is that I can't come since 'exam tomorrow' conventionally means study tonight. Carol understands that Lara cannot come to the party depending on her background knowledge about exams and studying (Yule, 1996: 145-146).

The cooperative principle is as follows:

Grice's Co-operative Principle

Make your 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: 26).

2.3.1 Grice's Maxims of Conversational Implicature

In everyday communication, hearers make assumptions about what speakers really mean depending on various types of inference or implicatures. Grice called the basic ideas behind these



interpretations as maxims (Grice, 1975: 45-46). Grice's four maxims and sub maxims are as follows:

- The maxim of Quality

Try to make your contribution one that is true

1. Do not say what you believe is false
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

An example of the quality maxim would be (Widdowson, 1996: 41):

3. I'm studying linguistics and I've completed some of the required courses. (Implicature: I have not completed them all)
- The Maxim of Quantity

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required.
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

A typical example of the quantity maxim would be (Saeed, 2016: 212):

4. A: Did you drink all the bottles of beer in the fridge?
B: I drank some. (Implicature: B didn't drink them all)

- The Maxim of Relevance

Make your contribution relevant.

An example of relevance maxim would be (Saeed, 2016: 211):

5. A: Can I borrow ten euros?
B: My purse is in the hall. (Implicature: Yes)

- The Maxim of Manner

Be perspicuous and specifically



1. Avoid ambiguity
2. Avoid obscurity
3. Be brief
4. Be orderly

An example of the maxim of manner would be (Griffiths, 2006: 139):

6. I sold my car and bought a bicycle. (That is, the event of selling the car come before the event of buying a bicycle).

2.3.2 Flouting the Maxims of Conversational Implicature

Grice mentioned another type of implicature which is called flouts. That is, the speaker blatantly fail to fulfill a maxim (Grice, 1989: 30). A flout happens when the speaker deliberately and clearly breaks a maxim (Flowerdew, 2016: 97). Examples of flouting the four maxims are as follows:

1. Flouting the quantity maxim

An example of flouting the maxim of quantity:

7. A: Have you done the washing-up and put everything away?

B: I have done the washing-up.

B's answer implicates that she washed the dishes, but did not put everything away (Lyons, 1995: 278).

2. Flouting the maxim of quality

There are many examples on the quality maxim such as irony, metaphor, meiosis (understatement), and hyperbole. In these cases, the speakers express themselves non-literally and hearers infer the intended meaning from context (Grice, 1975: 53; Flowerdew, 2013: 98), for example:

8. Great shot! (The hearer infers that this is an irony since the team completely miss the ball).



Another example of understatement is:

9. I was a little bit lucky. (After winning a big prize)

An example of metaphor could be:

10. You are a pain in the neck.
11. You are the cream in my coffee (you are my pride and joy)

Or Hyperbole:

12. I paid a fortune. (For something that was not so expensive).
13. Every nice girl loves a sailor.

Or meiosis:

14. A man who have broken all the furniture another one says 'He was a little intoxicated'.

3. Flouting the maxim of relevance

An example of flouting the maxim of relevance in a tea party where one person says:

15. Mrs A is an old bag. (After a brief pause the other person (B) completely changes the topic by saying something like (The weather has been quite delightful this summer. In this situation, B is implicating that A's comment is inappropriate and intentionally avoids a relevant reply (Flowerdew, 2013; 98).

4. Flouting the maxim of manner

Concerning the maxim of manner, the speaker is deliberately ambiguous. An example of flouting the maxim of manner is:

16. Customer: Where is Windsor?

Official: to Windsor

Customer: yes.

Official: 3:15.

The customer's question is ambiguous in the sense that s/he does not ask whether the train is coming from or to Windsor (Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981: 121).



2.4 Speech Act Theory

The speech act theory is a different approach in which linguists tried to classify how humans use language to interact with each other. When a speaker says something, s/he is trying to achieve an action. A statement uttered by a judge:

17. I sentence you to five years' imprisonment.

This sentence is not just a series of words, but rather that the person has to go to a prison, which is an action, too (Aitchison, 2003: 106). The speech act theory was first introduced by the British philosopher John Austin. Austin (1962: 2) argues that communication is a sequence of speech acts aimed at achieving a specific communicative purposes. He was mainly concerned with how people use language to perform various actions such as apologizing, suggesting, and persuading.

In 1969, John Searle expanded on Austin's theory of speech act. The distinction between them is how they view the illocutionary force of any utterance. Austin believes that it is based on speaker's intention whereas Searle sees that it depends on listener's interpretation (Coulthard, 1977: 22). Regarding the Speech act theory, the researcher focuses on Searle's classification of speech acts who came up with a taxonomy of illocutionary acts which is divided into five groups. These groups are: representatives (assertives), directives, commissives, expressives, and declaratives (Searle, 1979: 12-17):

- 1. Assertives:** are those acts that commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition. These acts include actions performed by the speaker such as describing, claiming, hypothesizing, insisting, predicting, reporting, concluding and asserting (Searle, 1979: 12; Cutting, 2002: 17).
- 2. Directives:** In this kind, the speaker tries to get the hearer to do something such as commands, orders, requests, suggesting, forbidding, begging, pleading, and instructing (Searle, 1979: 13).
- 3. Commissives:** are speech acts in which the speaker commits him/her self to carry out a future action. These acts include promises, threats, refusals, vows, offers, and pledges (Widdowson, 1996: 54)

4. **Expressives:** are speech acts where the speakers convey their internal, emotional or psychological state such as joy, sorrow, pleasure, pain, and so on. These include actions like thanking, apologizing, congratulating, praising, or expressing regret (Searle, 1979: 15).
5. **Declaratives:** These are utterances that bring about a change in the world when it is uttered by someone with proper authority and in the correct context. For example: resigning, firing, appointing somebody, marrying, and baptizing (Searle, 1979: 16-17).

In sum, the speech act theory tends to describe the action behind an utterance while Grice's theory shows how the listener infers that action or any other implied meaning. Together, these two theories help to understand the speaker's intentions and the hearer's interpretations in real-life communications such as irony, metaphor, and indirect speech (Johnstone, 2008: 235).

2.5 Literal and Non-literal Language

The difference between literal and non-literal meaning has been mentioned in many semantics texts. The main idea is that sometimes people speak in a clear and direct way. While other times they exaggerate in describing things to make a strong effect. For example, if someone has not eaten lunch, might speak literally and say:

18. I'm hungry.

Or non-literally:

19. I could eat a horse.

The non- literal use of language is referred to as figurative including metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, and litotes (Saeed, 2016: 13-14). Moreover, pragmaticists study the situations where what the speaker intends to express is different from the meaning of the words. In other words, they are interested in the distinction between implicit and explicit meaning. The implicit meaning indicates a lot more than is literally expressed (Chapman, 2011: 30).

Searle (1979: 117-118) further expands this distinction. Searle argues that the direct use of language is called literal and the indirect use is called non-literal use. The literal meaning of a sentence must be clearly separated from what a speaker intends to convey when using that sentence in a speech act. A speaker's intended meaning can differ from the literal meaning in many ways. For instance when someone says a sentence, s/he might intend a meaning that is different from the



sentence's literal meaning, as happens with metaphors. S/he might even intend the opposite meaning, as in irony. Sometimes the speaker means the literal meaning, but also implies additional information, as in conversational implicature or indirect speech acts. In the simplest situation, the literal meaning and the speaker's intended meaning are exactly the same, for example:

20. The cat is on the mat.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this section, the researcher qualitatively analyzes (15) selected scenes from "The Family Plan" movie. The researcher depends on the presence of idioms, irony, hyperbole, indirect speech act, and other types of non-literal meaning in choosing the scenes. The researcher conducts a pragmatic analysis on the selected scenes depending on flouting Grice's conversational maxims and Searle's taxonomy of speech acts.

3.2 Data Analysis

The researcher analyzes (15) selected scenes from "The Family Plan" movie qualitatively only, focusing on the non-literal meaning. The researcher has chosen only (15) scenes otherwise this research paper would be bulky. The researcher writes the text of the selected scene first. Then, she analyses it using a table. Each scene is analyzed in a table which consists of two columns. The first column contains the elements of the analysis and the second column contains the analysis of the elements. The analysis focuses on three main components. First, identifying the type of expression (literal or non-literal). Second, determining the speech act used by the characters. Third, examining whether any of Grice's cooperative maxims are flouted and what implicatures are generated. Then, every table is explained in detail.

Text (1) Boss: One's lemon is another man's lemonade. He just needed a squeeze.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ specifically metaphor
Speech Act	Expressive act (Dan's boss praising Dan's ability and achievement)
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quality. The boss flouts the maxim of quality through



	metaphor.
Implicature	The implied meaning is "Dan consistently performs well"
context	Dan's boss utters this sentence when Dan again wins 'the salesman of the month'.

Table (1) Analysis of scene 1

In table (1), the researcher analyses the first scene. It is clear from the text that Dan has won the 'salesman of the month' again, and his boss is congratulating him. The boss uses a metaphor. He compares Dan to lemon whom with a little pressure produces something great (lemonade). The function of this speech is to praise Dan. The maxim of quality requires to tell what is literally true. Since Dan is not a fruit (a lemon) and did not literally get squeezed, the boss flouts this maxim to create a colorful metaphor. The implied meaning is 'Dan is a valuable worker who performs well under pressure'.

Text (2) Dan: What happened to journalism at Stanford? Wasn't that the dream?

Nina: Journalism is dead, Dad.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal meaning /especially hyperbole.
Speech Act	Expressive act. The teenager daughter expresses her feelings regarding her past dream as far as journalism is concerned.
Gricean Maxim flouted	The maxim of quality. She does not mean that journalism is dead, it is not literally true. She also flouts the maxim of quantity by not giving enough information for why she stopped dreaming about journalism career.
Implicature	The implied meaning is "My tendency and dream are changed"
context	Nina utters this sentence when her father asks her why she no longer pursues her dream regarding journalism.

Table (2) Analysis of scene 2

In table (2), the researcher analyses the second selected scene. Dan asks his daughter, Nina, why she stopped pursuing her dream of being a journalist. Journalism is not dead, this is an exaggeration used by the daughter. Journalism has not literally ceased to exist. This is an expressive act since the



daughter expresses his psychological state or attitude towards her past dream. She flouts the maxim of quality by uttering a false statement. She also flouts the quantity maxim by giving too little information for why she quit her dream. She uses three words to close the conversation. The implied meaning is that 'my interests are changed and I do not want to discuss it further'.

Text (3) Wife (inhales deeply): But Dan's... He's just a total homebody, you know?

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language /specifically indirect complaint
Speech Act	Assertive act. Dan's wife describes Dan. She highlights the idea that Dan focuses on family.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of manner. She flouts the maxim of manner to convey her emotion indirectly.
Implicature	Dan is a reliable family man, but he lacks sense of adventure.
context	The wife describing her husband at the therapist.

Table (3) Analysis of scene 3

In table (3), the researcher analyses the third scene. Dan's wife (Jessica) is talking to a therapist about her marriage. She uses a positive word 'homebody' to complain about Dan's lacking sense of adventure. She uses an assertive act, she is stating a fact about Dan's personality. The maxim of manner requires clarity and directness. When she says 'but Dan', she is actually avoiding to say harsh things about Dan like 'He is boring' or 'he is predictable and routine loving man'. The implied meaning is that 'Dan lacks a sense of adventure and that she loves travelling unlike him'.

Text (4) Dan: Do I really need to explain the birds and the bees right now, Augie, or can we talk business?

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ an idiom and an indirect request
Speech Act	Directive act. Dan asks Augie to stop asking him questions. Dan also uses expressive act since he expresses his impatience.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of relation. Dan flouts the maxim of relation since birds and bees are not relevant to business matter.

Implicature	The implied meaning is ' Stay on topic; let's handle the situation'
context	Dan asks Augie for new identities, but Augie starts asking him questions behind his demand which bothers him.

Table (4) Analysis of scene 4

In table (4), the researcher analyses scene (4). In this scene, Dan is talking to his friend whose name is Augie and asking him for new identities. Augie starts asking personal questions about why Dan needs new identities. Dan gets very annoyed and utters the idiom 'the birds and the bees' (that is, do I need to explain everything for you). Dan is commanding Augie to stop since he bothered him with too many questions. Dan flouts the maxim of relevance since the 'birds and bees' has nothing to do with new identities. The implied meaning is 'stop asking questions and focus on the job'.

Text (5) Dan: You two are gonna show her nothing, but excitement for this trip. Guys, tell your mother how pumped you are for this trip? Teenagers: Whoo! yes.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ indirect request.
Speech Act	Directive act. Dan is ordering or instructing his kids to act as if they are excited.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quality. Dan tells his teenagers to behave as if they are happy and this is not true.
Implicature	Let's persuade your mom about the trip.
context	Dan picks up the teenagers (Nina and Kyle) for the trip and instructs them to be happy in front of their mother.

Table (5) Analysis of scene 5

In table (5), the researcher thoroughly analyses the scene. In this scene, Dan picks up his teenagers (Nina and Kyle) to start the road trip. He tells them to act as if they are happy so his wife does not get worried or suspicious. Dan uses directive act since he is ordering his children to perform an emotion they do not actually feel. The maxim of quality requires truthfulness. Dan is explicitly ordering his children to flout this maxim. He orders them to present a false reality (happiness)

instead of the true reality that they confused. The implied meaning is that 'this trip is important for me, so do not ruin it.

Text (6) Dan: You deserve a break. And I think this could be really good for us as a family.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ Indirect persuasion
Speech Act	Directive act- Dan is trying to convince his family to go on a trip.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quantity. Dan does not give enough information why they should go on a trip.
Implicature	We need to go right now.
context	Dan is trying to convince the family that they need a trip without telling them that someone is actually chasing him.

Table (6) Analysis of scene 6

In table (6), the researcher analyses the scene (6). In this scene, Dan is trying to convince his family about the sudden road trip without explaining the real reason for them (that the assassin are chasing them). Dan frames the trip as a reward 'you deserve a break', rather than as an urgent necessity. He is manipulating the context to make his trip look nice. Dan uses directive act to make them agree to get in the car. He flouts the maxim of quantity by giving too little information about the fact that there is someone chasing them and trying to kill him. The implied meaning is that 'We need to leave this location immediately to survive'.

Text (7) Wife: okay: this is totally crazy. Dan this is crazy.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non- literal language / hyperbole
Speech Act	Expressive act. The wife expresses her surprise about Dan's urgent demand.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quantity. The repetition gives more emotional intensity than new information.
Implicature	The wife is confused about Dan's urgent decision.
context	When Dan picks up Jessica and tells her that they are going on a

trip.

Table (7) Analysis of scene 7

In table (7), the researcher analyses the wife's confusion. In this scene, the wife calls the situation crazy. She is using exaggeration to describe her confusion and shock about the lack of planning. She uses an expressive act, she is expressing her psychological state (shock/ confusion). She flouts the maxim of quality by repeating the same word without presenting new information. The implied meaning is that 'Dan, I do not understand the logic behind this decision and your actions are out of control, you need to stop or justify them'.

Text (8) Teen daughter: No, Dad. Please. I can't deal with a dad lecture now. You literally don't even know how to text, so your opinion does not count.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language / idiom.
Speech Act	Directive and assertive acts. The daughter in a polite way issues a command 'stop talking'. She also asserts a fact 'you don't know how to text'.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quality. The daughter tells her father that he does not know how to text and this not true.
Implicature	The daughter is actually saying 'let me use social media'
context	When the teen daughter want to use social media, but Dan refuses claiming that it is a family trip.

Table (8) Analysis of scene 8

In table (8), the researcher analyses the teenager's rejection for her father's demand to stop using the mobile phone. The teen daughter is arguing with her father about using the phone. She uses and idiom 'dad lecture' to describe her father's demand (which refers to cultural concept of boring speech from a father). She uses a directive act even though she says 'please', but the function of her speech is 'stop talking'. She also uses assertive act to support her idea. She flouts the maxim of quality when she tells her father that he does not know texting and this is not true. The implied meaning is 'let me use social media'.



Text (9) Dan: I have just freed our family from the shackles of technology with a flick of my wrist. Just like that.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ metaphor
Speech Act	Declarative act. By destroying the phones he changed the status of the family from connected to disconnected.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quality. By using metaphor, Dan says something that is false (Phones are not shackles).
Implicature	Dan does not want the teenagers to use mobile phones.
context	Dan throws the teenagers mobile phones away.

Table (9) Analysis of scene 9

In table (9), the researcher analyses the scene where Dan throws the family's devices out of the car window. The phrase 'shackles of technology' is a metaphor, Dan compares the smartphones to the chains used on prisoners. The speech act used is declarative, by throwing the devices and uttering his metaphor, he changes the family's status from connected to disconnected to the internet (He is declaring a new reality for them). Phones are not literally 'shackles' and technology does not have physical iron shackles, Dan flouts the maxim of truthfulness to create a dramatic image of freedom. The implied meaning is 'I do not want you to use mobile phone'.

Text (10) Wife: I have a question for you, Mr. Spontaneous without our phones, how are we gonna know where we are going? If this is a joke, it is not funny.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ irony
Speech Act	Directive act. She requests for justification for why Dan is acting without thinking.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quality. The wife says Mr. Spontaneous, she does not say that in a positive way. Maxim of manner is also flouted, she does not tell Dan directly that he is irresponsible.
Implicature	The wife wants to know what the plan is.
context	Dan throws the mobile phones so his wife asks him what they are



going to do without mobiles.

Table (10) Analysis of scene 10

In table (10), the researcher analyses the wife's sarcastic nickname 'Mr. spontaneous'. The wife is demanding Dan how they will navigate and he has thrown all the mobiles. Although she uses a statement, but she is demanding a justification from Dan. She is not complimenting his spontaneity, but rather mocking his lack of planning. She flouts the maxim of truthfulness (quality), she uses a positive nickname for a negative behavior. She also flouts the maxim of manner since she does not directly tell Dan 'you are irresponsible'. The wife is actually implying that 'you have been irresponsible, it is not funny, and I am stressed and uncomfortable'.

Text (11) Wife to Dan: You have been acting so weird this whole trip.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ indirect question.
Speech Act	Directive act. Dan's wife requests information from Dan for why he was behaving in a weird way during the trip.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quantity. She does not give examples of Dan's weird behavior.
Implicature	She believes that Dan is hiding something important.
context	Dan acts strangely during the trip so at the end his wife doubtfully asks him for reasons.

Table (11) Analysis of scene 11

In table (11), the researcher analyses the scene in which Jessica confronts Dan and asks him the reasons about his recent behavior. Her sentence looks like a statement of fact, but it functions as a request for information. She flouts the maxim of quantity, she does not give examples or enough information about his weirdness. The implied meaning is that 'I know you are hiding something, why you don not just tell us the reasons of your weird behavior'.

Text (12) Teen son (Kyle): I finally have a life, and you are ruining it. Thanks, Dad.

Dan: Kyle, come back.



Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ irony.
Speech Act	Expressive act. Kyle expresses his anger and frustration. He also blames his father.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quality and quantity. Kyle is not being truthful when he said 'thanks'. He does not give enough information about ruining his life.
Implicature	The implied meaning is 'you do not understand the consequences of your actions'.
context	The teen son utters this sentence after discovering that his father was an old assassin

Table (12) Analysis of scene 12

In table (12), the researcher analyses the scene where Kyle (the teen son) discovers that his father is a trained killer. Kyle finally has a social life, but his father makes things worse. Kyle says 'thanks, dad', he ironically thanks his father. He is actually criticizing his father. He is not grateful, but rather resentful. Kyle flouts the maxim of quality, he says 'thanks' which is positive word to describe the negative situation. He also flouts the maxim of quantity, he says 'you are ruining' without fully explaining the situation. The implied meaning is that 'your secrets dad are going to destroy my social life'.

Text (13) Wife to Dan: We were just some disguise for you. Just some part of your cover as a suburban schlub?

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language/ indirect question/ metaphor.
Speech Act	Expressive act. She expresses her emotional pain.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quality. She does not tell Dan truly that he betrayed them. She flouts the maxim of manner, she expresses her feelings in a metaphorical not a straightforward way.
Implicature	The implied meaning is 'did you actually love us?'
context	The wife discovers that Dan was hiding his real identity as an

	assassin from them for years.
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Table (13) Analysis of scene 13

In table (13), the researcher analyses the scene where Jessica (the wife) realizes that her entire marriage is based on a lie. She does not tell Dan literally that she feels betrayed, she uses a metaphor. She calls herself and the children as 'disguise' or 'cover' comparing human beings to props used in a spy mission. She tells Dan that this is the reason for his acting as a 'suburban schlub' (this is a slang term for an ordinary and boring dad). She uses expressive act, she expresses her emotional pain and deep insecurity. She flouts the maxim of manner, she does not directly say 'Did you love me?', and instead she uses metaphors about disguises. She also flouts the maxim of quality, she implies a statement and hopes that it is not true (that they were a disguise). The implied meaning is that 'Was our love real, or was it just a job, Dan'.

Text (14) Wife: What? Was it so real that you couldn't trust me with knowing how much danger we were in?

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non-literal language / understatement / irony
Speech Act	Assertive act. She is concluding that if their love was real Dan would have told her everything.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of quality. She is mocking of Dan's using the word 'real'.
Implicature	The implied meaning is 'You did not trust me to be strong enough to accept your past'.
context	After discovering Dan's real identity.

Table (14) Analysis of scene 14

In table (14), the researcher analyses scene (14). In this scene, Dan claims that his love for his family is real despite his fake identity. She uses non-literal language, she feels underestimated (Dan, you did not trust me to be strong enough to accept your past). The wife is downplaying the intensity of her anger to make a logical point. She uses assertive act, she is making a logical conclusion. She flouts the maxim of quality, she mocks of Dan's using the word 'real' to describe their love. She implies that the version of 'real' is actually 'fake' since it lacks honesty. The implied meaning is 'you did not trust me, Dan'.

Text (15): Wife: I know you think we probably hate you for everything that's happened these past few days, and ... may be we should.

Elements of analysis	The analysis of the scene
Type of expression	Non- literal language/ implicature
Speech Act	Expressive act. The wife is revealing her internal state.
Gricean Maxim flouted	Maxim of manner. She is indirect rather than being straightforward. She does not explicitly say we hate you.
Implicature	The implied meaning is that 'Dan you hurt us by hiding your identity'.
context	Dan wife utters these words after discovering Dan's real identity.

Table (15) Analysis of Scene 15

In table (15), the researcher focuses on the implicature in scene (15). The sentence is not a direct hate, but a reflection of a possibility of hate. She uses expressive act, she is expressing her internal emotional state and acknowledging Dan's internal fears 'I know you think'. She flouts the maxim of manner, instead of being direct and saying 'we hate you' or 'we forgive you'. She says 'maybe we should hate you'. The implied meaning is 'Dan you hurt us by hiding who actually are you'.

3.3 The Findings and Discussion

The analysis of the fifteen selected scenes from "The Family Plan" movie reveals different types of non-literal language used by the characters. These include irony, hyperbole, understatement, metaphor, idiom, and indirect speech acts. Many emotional feelings, tense situations, and indirect intentions in the movie are expressed through these non-literal meanings. Across the scenes, the characters performed various types of speech acts such as expressives, assertives, declaratives and directives. Expressive acts are the most common, especially in scenes that contain frustration, annoyance, and irony in which the characters revealed their internal states. The characters have showed their psychological states indirectly. Assertive acts are used by the characters in describing situations. Directive acts occurred in scenes when characters warned or insisted on an action. Declarative acts are used by the characters to bring about a change in a situation.

Concerning flouting Grice's maxims. The maxim of quality is the most common especially when the characters used irony. The maxim of quantity is also flouted when the characters give less



information and avoid details. The maxim of manner is flouted when characters used indirect language to soften emotional tension. Moreover, the maxim of relation is flouted by the characters intentionally when they change the topic to avoid difficult situations. Flouting these maxims direct audience's attention to the emotional state of the characters and create implicatures. This supports Grice's notion that the conversational implicatures appear when speakers intentionally break the maxims to convey meanings that are understood but not explicitly (or literally) stated. Together, the speech act theory and implicatures create layered meanings. For example, an expressive act together with flouting the maxim of quality lead to a strong implicature. As a result an utterance serves multiple functions like expressing emotions, frustration, dissatisfaction, and hinting at the speaker's intentions.

3.4 Conclusions

Non-literal language exists in many scenes of "The Family Plan" movie. It was obvious in humorous, emotional, and serious scenes of the movie. This verifies the researcher's hypothesis that non-literal language is more common in scenes involving conflict or humor. Moreover, among the selected scenes of the movie, there were many types of non-literal language such as idiom, metaphor, understatement, and indirect speech act. The use of non-literal expressions shed light on the importance of pragmatic competence and how it is essential for understanding the speaker's intended meaning. The findings recommend that films like "The Family Plan" are rich sources for teaching EFL pragmatics because it helps them recognize indirect meanings, understanding emotional and cultural contexts (such as the meanings behind idioms or metaphors that need cultural knowledge in English), and differentiating between literal and non-literal speech.

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