

Mulk Raj Anand's Story 'The Lost Child' from the Perspective of Speech Act Theory

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Abstract

Language has been the field under discussion from the pre-historic period when man began to communicate with his speech community using the tone of his voice to express feelings of cheerfulness or unhappiness, emotions of love or hate, thoughts of the present, past or future, and astonishment caused by sudden changes in nature etc. It is the acknowledged fact that language is an evolutionary process. An undeniable truth is that language is constantly under flux. Over a period of time in the history of human civilization many languages were born and developed on the planet earth. There are nearly seven thousand languages being spoken all over the world and unfortunately some are on the verge of dying. The meaning is at the center of any language. We are in search of meaning from the time immemorial. The study of meaning falls within the discipline of linguistics. The branch of linguistics studies various components of language such as phonology, morphology, syntax, neologism and grammar. There are many branches of linguistics such as sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, semantics, and pragmatics. In the recent years, the study of pragmatics has become very popular among the research scholars as well as students of language all over the world. Many well-known universities in the world offer courses in pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Pragmatics as a sub-field of linguistics is looked upon as a powerful tool to interpret human communication whether written or oral. The fact of the matter is that linguistic utterances are governed by socio-cultural aspects of a speech community. Therefore, contextual knowledge is required to study the utterances of the conversational partners. Understanding interpersonal and social relations is at the center of pragmatics. In literary discourse too, we do come across many conversations of the characters which need to be studied using the contextual background. The novels, short stories and dramas are replete with speech acts of the characters which take place in particular speech situations. Therefore, it is very interesting and revealing to study fictional discourse with the help of pragmatics. The present article is devoted to the analysis of Mulk Raj Anand's maiden short story The Lost Child in the light of J. R. Searle's typology of speech acts.

KEYWORDS: language, linguistics, semantics, pragmatics, speech act, sociolinguistics, speech community, literary discourse, utterance, analysis, phonology, morphology, syntax, neologism, interpersonal and social relation.

Introduction

Speech Act Theory is based on the principle that people do not use language just to provide information but they also use language to state something, to give a command, express their emotions etc. The function of language is beyond merely disseminating information. We do too many things with language; we express our emotional world to the other people engaged in a conversation, we also get the things

done via the utterances. We tend to make requests, ask questions, give invitations, beg apology etc. When the words are used with some intention, they have an illocutionary force which is recognizable by the listener of that utterance. Similarly, in a short story, we do come across some face to face conversations of the characters which can be only understood in the context in which they are spoken by the interlocutors. The characters in a short story utter some expressions which are well understood if some theories in Pragmatics are applied. Speech Act Theory is one such a theory which is a handy tool to interpret the story in the socio-cultural context leading to establish the authenticity of the characters and the speech situation in which conversations take place.

Speech Act Theory in Pragmatics

J. R. Searle, an American philosopher of language, developed Speech Act Theory taking a cue from his predecessor J. L. Austin. He earned his reputation in the field of language study with the publication of his book *Speech Acts* (1969). Searle was very much influenced by the three dimensions of the speech act theory of J. L. Austin, such as locutionary act, illocutionary force and the perlocutionary effect of an utterance on the hearer in an ongoing conversation. He was especially interested in the study of illocutionary dimensions of the speech act. According to Searle, illocutionary force of the utterance is central to the speech act theory. Therefore, one must understand the meaning of the illocutionary act. This act is defined by him as the intentionality of the speaker as understood by his/her hearer. He made the basic categories of illocutionary acts as stated below:

- 1. Representative or Assertive Speech Act**
- 2. Directive Speech Act**
- 3. Commissive Speech Act**
- 4. Expressive Speech Act and**
- 5. Declarative Speech Act**

Let us discuss in detail the above-mentioned speech acts with explicit examples.

1. Representative or Assertive Speech Act

This speech act is used by the conversational partner to state the fact, describe the situation, and reveal the truth or falsehood. In fact, the very purpose of this speech act is to commit the speaker to say something truthful or tell a lie. In our everyday conversations we tend to describe the current happenings in order to make the hearer aware of what has been happening around him/her. Common people make use of the representative or assertive speech act abundantly during their conversations with the people they often meet. We also tend to speak the truth occasionally and tell lies if need arises. It has been observed that almost seventy percent people make use of this speech act while talking with their relatives and friends. All the speech acts in this category are identified on the scale of truthfulness or falsehood. Interlocutors engaged in an ongoing conversation skillfully make use of this speech act in the form of statements. The following are some of the notable examples:

- a) Mr. Shelke went to Jagannathpuri in Orissa with his wife as a part of religious tourism.
- b) My brother-in-law is a lover of music.
- c) The earth is round.
- d) Donald Trump visited Sabarmati Ashram in February 2020.

- e) The corona virus has been rapidly spreading across the world.
- f) LataMangeshkar is the oldest living legendary singer in India.

On the careful examination one comes to know that all the above speech acts are related to the description or reveal the fact of the matter. If an interlocutor uses one of these speech acts he/she is considered to have used the assertive or representative speech act.

2. Directive Speech Act

In using the directive speech act, the speaker is committed to giving the direction to his/her conversational partner. The addressee is asked to perform an action as indicated by the utterance of the addresser in the context. Therefore, one would jump to the conclusion that there is some kind of bond between the speaker and the hearer of the utterance in a specific speech situation. Several commands can be given by using this speech act. One can also make a request to the addressee to perform an action by using directive speech act. Invitation, command, advice and pardon can be included in this category of speech act. The following are some of the glaring examples of directive speech act:

- a) Could you please switch the fan on?
- b) Shut down the computer.
- c) I invite you cordially for my birthday party.
- d) I beg your pardon; I could not hear what you have just said.
- e) I strongly advise you not to go to China for the fear of epidemic of corona virus.
- f) Will you go and bring milk from the dairy?

It has been observed that the above cited directive speech acts are inevitably used in face-to-face conversations. The speaker wants his/her hearer to perform an action as the perlocutionary effect. It is also noticed that the illocutionary forces of the above speech acts are a) request, b) command, c) invitation, d) pardon, e) advice and f) a friendly or informal request. This speech act has been widely used by the interlocutors in their day-to-day conversations. A directive speech is used by the speaker to make the hearer to carry out an intended action. Therefore, this speech act shows the solidarity between the addresser and the addressee.

3. Commissive Speech Act

Commissive speech act is used by the speaker when he/she wants to commit to the future course of action. It is a common knowledge that not only politicians but ordinary people also make promises to convince their hearers that they will fulfill their wishes in future. All promises are related to the future course of action. The use of performative verbs is made in this typology of speech act. Commissive speech acts are used very often to establish solidarity or power between the interlocutors through the utterances in the context. Different types of commissive speech acts are deployed by the speakers to express their intentions such as promise, guarantee, pledge, refusal and threat. Let us illustrate this point with the help of examples given below:

- a) The wife to the husband: I will buy a new car for you on your approaching birthday.
- b) The son to his father: Daddy, I guarantee you that I will crack NET or SET this year.

- c) The young boy to the young girl: I refuse to accept your marriage proposal on the grounds that you have no faith in God.
- d) The Manager to his Secretary: I threaten you with dire consequences if you do not change your old habit of coming to the office late every day.
- e) The social worker to the students: I volunteer to take the responsibility of arranging a blood donation camp this summer.
- f) The priest to the church goers: I offer my services for the uplift and wellbeing of the destitute and the underprivileged class of people living in the vicinity.

On close examination of the above speech acts one notices that there are different illocutionary forces deployed by the speakers in specific speech situations. In the first example, the illocutionary force is a promise. In the second example the preformative verb 'guarantee' is used to show the illocutionary force of assurance by the speaker. In the remaining examples the performative verbs such as 'threaten', 'volunteer' and 'offer' are used respectively with particular illocutionary forces. Therefore, commissive speech acts are those speech acts through which the speaker commits the hearer to do something in the future. George Yule (1996) rightly says in this regard:

"In using a commissive speech act, the speaker undertakes to make the world to fit the words." (p.54)

The above comment made by George Yule, a very famous language philosopher, speaks abundantly about the role and function of the commissive speech act.

4. Expressive Speech Act

Expressive speech act can be best described as utterances that state the feelings of the speaker while in a conversation. What goes in the speaker's mind in terms of feelings is central to this speech act. To put in precise terms, expressive speech act is a psychological expression in an ongoing conversation involving the feelings of the interlocutors such as pleasure, pain, disappointment, apology, joys, sorrows, likes and dislikes. While using an expressive speech act, the speaker makes the words fit the world. Therefore, it is to be understood that human feelings play an important role in day-today conversations. Feelings are an integral part of human existence. Without feelings it is not possible to have friendly and amicable communication in any language. Human societies evolved and developed over the years due to the emotional bond expressed via words of the people that helped nourish and sustain human relations. Expressive speech acts are used by the speakers as a linguistic strategy to convey the intensity of their emotions in a polite manner. Austin and Searle believe that we not only express emotions and feelings but we also tend to express our attitudes to our conversational partners occasionally to achieve our conversational goals. The following are some of the prominent examples of expressive speech act:

- a) The student to the teacher in the class: Sir, I am extremely sorry that I could not complete the assignment on Shakespearean sonnets.
- b) A college boy to the girl: Wow! You look gorgeous in this new dress.
- c) A friend to a friend: I heartily congratulate you on your winning the gold medal of SavitribaiPhule Pune University.
- d) The old man to a woman: Thank you very much for allowing me to collect the passport.
- e) The servant to his master: I apologise sir for my absence from the office without your prior permission yesterday.

- f) A professor to the speaker in a seminar: Sir, I really appreciate you for galvanizing our attitude towards the spread of corona virus.

In all the above examples we find that the emotional state of the speakers is expressed. In face-to-face conversations people do express their feelings, attitudes and sudden intense emotions to show respect or disrespect, happiness or sadness, dejection or delightfulness and so on and so forth and achieve their communication goals. Therefore, this speech occurs when the interlocutors try to express thankfulness, apology, gratefulness, sympathy, greeting, condolences, appreciation etc. in face-to-face interaction which is the basis of speech act theory devised by J. L. Austin and J. R. Searle.

5. Declarative Speech Act

Declarative speech acts are those speech acts via which the change is brought in the world. This speech act is similar to the verdictive speech act of J. L. Austin. In using a declarative speech act, the speaker brings the change in the world via words. While executing this speech act certain felicity conditions need to be fulfilled. First and foremost felicity condition is that the speaker must have some kind of authoritative power at the time of producing an utterance. Another felicity condition is the sincerity condition. It means that the speaker of declarative speech act ought to be sincere or genuine while articulating his words. The third condition is that all participants must be ready to accept the pronouncement of the speaker. For instance, when the referee on the playing ground declares the player out by simply saying the words "You are out". The concerned player has to leave the ground as soon as the declaration by the umpire is completed. The player cannot say anything as far as his case is concerned. Therefore, preparatory condition, sincerity condition and essential condition are a must in addition to the propositional content if this speech act is to be treated as felicitous. If any of these conditions is not fulfilled, this speech act is treated as infelicitous. The following are some of the glaring examples of declarative speech act:

- a) The priest in the church to the wedding couple: Now, I pronounce you as husband and wife.
- b) The manager to the employee: Now, I dismiss you from your current job on the charges of misconduct.
- c) The Judge while giving a verdict: I sentence you for life imprisonment for your heinous crime of murder a minor girl.
- d) The Chairperson of the Seminar: I declare this Seminar open.
- e) The Principal: I inaugurate this symposium for all the young scientists across the world.
- f) The police commissioner to his subordinate: Call all the police force to disperse the hooligans.

On the close examination of the above cited examples one notices that the speakers of the utterances are the individuals who have some kind of authority to declare the relevant things in the context. Unless the person is in power, he or she cannot have the right to make use of this speech act. Moreover, all the felicity conditions need to be fulfilled at the time of the execution of the declarative speech act.

Making of Mulk Raj Anand

Mulk Raj Anand, a renowned Indian writer in English, journalist, editor, political activist and short story writer was born in a family of coppersmith in Peshawar now in

Pakistan on December 12, 1905. He breathed his last at Lonawala near Pune on the 28th September 2004. He was one of those writers writing in Indian English and is known for his down-to-earth and compassionate portrayal of the downtrodden in India. In his childhood, he used to play with the children of the sweepers in the neighborhood for which he was reprimanded by his parents as they were orthodox. He was traumatized as a small child when he saw one of his close relatives committing suicide. She committed suicide because she was ostracized by the family members on account of sharing food with a Muslim. In those days sharing food with a member from the downtrodden community was considered an act of pollution.

Mulk Raj Anand attained name and fame not only in India but he also became very popular at the international level for his prolific writing of short stories and novels in the early stage of his life. In his novels *Untouchable* (1935) and *Coolie* (1936) he depicted the exploited class of the Indian society. Since he had befriended E. M. Foster, George Orwell, W. B. Yeats, Herbert Read and others, he would often go to London and come back to India. He was very much involved in Indian freedom struggle movement as he was greatly influenced by Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence.

Mulk Raj Anand fictional works include short stories, novels and essays on various themes such as innocence of childhood, untouchability, miserable condition of the plantation workers, exploitation of the poor etc. Therefore, for his depiction of the plight of the underprivileged people he is rightly called as a Charles Dickens of India. The following are the publications of short stories by Mulk Raj Anand.

Short Stories:-

1. *The Lost Child and Other Stories* (1934)
2. *The Barbers' Trade Union and Other Stories* (1942)
3. *The Tractor and the Corn Goddess and Other Stories* (1947)
4. *Reflection on the Golden Bed and Other Stories* (1954)
5. *The Power and Darkness and Other Stories* (1954)
6. *Selected Stories* (1955)
7. *Lajwanti The Power and Darkness and Other Stories* (1954)

The Lost Child: At a Glance

Mulk Raj Anand in his short story 'The Lost Child' depicts the bewilderment in the mind of a small child who was lost in the overcrowded village fair when he was not able to see his father and mother with whom he came. The psychological state of the mind of a small child when the parents are lost is the central theme of the story. The protagonist of the story is a nameless small boy around whom the story rotates.

It was a spring festival and the main attraction was the village fair. The people belonging to different castes from the neighboring villages and towns wearing diverse colorful dresses thronged their way to the place of the village fair to take part in the festivities. A small boy accompanied by his parents was also heading towards the village fair. On the way to the fair there were green mustard fields with bright flowers of yellow colors on both sides of the road. The boy was captivated by the immaculate beauty of the bright yellow flowers that decorated the landscape. His joy knew no bound as he gazed the splendid spectacle of dazzling flowers. His innocent eyes kept on watching the mesmerizing beauty of the flowers as he came closer to the fields. He, forgetting his parents, entered the field and started to rummage it with his bright

innocent eyes. As soon he entered the field, he saw colorful butterflies and dragonflies that amused his innocent mind. He was running after them with the hope of catching them but his joy did not last for a long time as his mother gave him a loud call asking him not to wander too far. The child soon joined his parents on the path leading to the village fair. Presently, his attention was drawn towards the little insects and worms. He started chasing these little creatures in the nature. Again his mother called him and warned him not to wander off. After crossing some distance his parents sat down under the banyan tree near the well and rested. There, the child's mind was completely fascinated by the beautiful trees of Gulmohar. They resumed their journey and now they were at the entrance of the fair. No sooner did he notice burfi decorated with golden and silver leaves at the sweetmeat seller's shop, his mouth watered at its sight. He had a strong desire to eat his favourite burfi. He said, "I want burfi" but without waiting for the positive answer from his parents he moved on. After sometime, he witnessed beautiful garlands of multicolored flowers and wanted to smell the fragrance but he did not express his desire. Then, he saw a balloon seller selling multicolored balloons. He wanted to possess them all but he knew that his parents would think that he was too old to play with them. As soon as he walked away, he saw a snake charmer playing his flute. He wanted to listen to the sweet music of the flute but he was disappointed as his parents would not allow him to do so. He was very much interested to have a ride as his eyes met the merry-go-round. He asked the permission of his parents to enjoy the swing but there was no reply from his parents.

There was a huge crowd at the entrance of the temple. Here, the little boy could not see his parents. He looked here and there in all direction knowing not where to go. He ran helter-skelter frantically to look for his father and mother but in vain. By this time, he realized that he was lost in the overcrowded place. He was flabbergasted as he could not see his dear father and lovable mother. He started crying to the top of his voice. His cries were suppressed into sobs. He ran quickly in the direction of the shrine where people seemed to be crowding. He kept sobbing uttering the words 'father', 'mother'. But nobody could notice the lost child's cry for help. The crowd became very thick at the entrance of the shrine as they jostled to move ahead. The poor child was struggling to thrust his way between their legs. Had he not screamed at the highest pitch of his voice the words, 'father', 'mother', he would have been trampled by the brutal feet of the crowd. A man in the crowd heard the pitiable cry of the child. He stooped with great difficulty and lifted the child in his arms. He asked the child how he got there and whose child he was. But the child wept more bitterly in the name of his father and mother. The man did not know what to do in such a situation. The man tried to comfort the child by taking him to the merry-go-round. He gently asked the child whether he wanted to sit on the horse and enjoy the ride but the child simply said, "I want my mother", "I want my father". The man took him to the snake charmer and asked the child to listen to the nice music of the flute but the boy was not interested in listening to the charmer's flute. The child simply wanted his mother and father. Then the man took the child near the multicolored balloons thinking that it would distract his attention and calm him down. The man tried to persuade the boy to look at the rainbow-colored flying balloons tied to the bicycle of the balloon seller. But, the child was disinclined to look at the balloons. He only cried in the name of his mother and father. The man tried every trick to make the child happy but in vain. Next, the man took the lost child to the gate of the shrine where flower-seller was still sitting. The man asked the boy if he wanted to smell those nice

flowers and to put a garland around his neck but the boy turned his nose reiterating his sob, “I want my mother”, “I want my father”. Finally, the man took him to the sweetmeat seller and asked the child what sweets he would like to eat but the child was disinterested in eating anything. He just wanted his mother and father. Thus, the story ends with the implicit message that nothing is more precious in the world than one’s mother and father.

Speech Act Analysis

As the story opens we come across the description of how the gaily clad people of different religions were coming from their houses into the narrow lanes and heading towards the yearly spring festival in a village. Some of them walked on foot, some rode on horses, some came in bullock carts. One of them was a small child accompanied by his father and mother. He was very animated as he walked along the path looking at the bright yellow colored mustard fields that lay on both sides of the path leading to the place of the spring festival. On his way he saw the shop of toys. He was fascinated by the colorful toys. As he lagged behind his parents called him:

“Come, child, come.”

The above linguistic expression is an instance of a directive speech act. The locutionary force of the utterance includes the verb ‘come’ which is used twice with the falling tone probably because the parents seemed to summon the boy not to lag behind. It is common in Indian English to use the linguistic device of repetition to lay emphasis. The illocutionary force of the utterance is to draw the attention of the child and warn him that he should walk along with his parents hand in hand. The intentionality of the speech act produced by the parents is that their child should not get lost in the crowd. It also shows the uneasiness on the faces of the parents as their small child was walking far behind them. The parents did not use the name of their son but called him ‘child’. The solidarity of the relation between the child and his parents is established by putting the emphasis on the word ‘come’. The perlocutionary effect is felt on the boy as he hurriedly and unquestioningly obeyed the call of his parents. Therefore, one can say that the interpersonal relations of the child and his parents are based on the solid foundation of love and affection.

As the child came to the place where his parents had stopped to wait for him, he could not suppress the desire of his heart to possess one of the toys in the street stall. Let us study the following conversation:

The Child: I want that toy.

Mother: Look, child, what is before you.

The speech situation is that a small child along with his parents is on the way to the annual spring festival held in a village. On the way he comes across many eye-catching things such as butterflies, dragonflies, bright colored yellow mustard flowers in the adjoining fields. As the boy gets attracted towards the beauty of nature, he lags behind his father and mother. Therefore, they give him a loud call reminding him that they have to move on as they have no time to let the boy play with the trifle things. The boy is obedient enough to follow his parents’ instructions. However, on looking at the multicolored beautiful toys which the street vendor was selling, he cannot

suppress his strong desire to possess one of those toys. He musters up his courage and says that he wants one of those attractive toys. The locutionary force of the utterance of the small boy indicates that it is a plain positive statement. Grammatically speaking it is declarative sentence in the simple present tense. However, it has the illocutionary force of an implicit request. Children often demand playthings from their parents using the same expression. The perlocutionary effect is that the parents are annoyed to buy a toy which their son has asked for. They seem to be reluctant to buy the toy for the little boy because either they do not have sufficient money or they do not have enough time to buy a toy for their little son. It is to be remembered that in India, every village has a deity and the people in the village celebrate a yearly festival in the name of that deity. Therefore, many vendors come to the place of the village fair to sell their goods. Men, women, young boys and girls and small children go to the fair for merrymaking. Therefore, it is natural for small children to demand something they like from their parents. It is the psychological fact that children do get attracted to many colorful things. They are so curious to have a closer look at the colorful objects including toys. Therefore, it is natural in the case of the protagonist of the present story to persuade his parents to buy a plaything of his choice. One of the illocutionary forces of the child's utterance is persuading the parents to do the action of buying a toy. The perlocutionary effect on the parents is negative as they do not pay heed to their son's implicit request. The mother's utterance in this context speaks abundantly of her reluctance to buy a toy for her son as she says, "*Look, child, what is before you*". Let us carefully examine the speech act of the mother. It is a directive speech act with the illocutionary force of admonishment. It is obvious that the mother did not want to buy a toy for her little son during their walk to the spring festival. Further, it has the additional illocutionary force of advice. It means that the mother wants the child to walk carefully without looking here and there anxiously. It has also the implicit force of a warning because the speaker does not like the behavior of the hearer of her speech act. She perhaps has the intention to warn her son not to demand anything at a public place. It is the typical tendency of the Indian people to dissuade their children from the temptation of buying futile things including toys during the festive occasion such as the village spring festival.

The parents of the boy were very much watchful about their son's movements as he sometimes lagged behind due to the attractions of butterflies and dragonflies in the flowering mustard field. He was seen running after the butterflies with the intention of catching them when one of them rested on the top of the flower. He was very much engrossed in the colorful world of nature. As soon as the child's mother noticed that her son was drifting away, she gave him a cautionary call:

"Come, child, come, come onto the footpath."

Firstly, let us examine the speech act produced by the mother. The locutionary force of the utterance is the use of the verb 'come' three times. The entire sentence is produced by the speaker with the high pitch of her voice. The intonation pattern of the utterance is the falling tone. Secondly, the illocutionary force of the utterance is a command. Therefore, the utterance falls in the category of a directive speech act. The exigency of asking the child to come onto the footpath is suggested by the repetition of the word 'come'. The intentionality of the speaker is understood by the hearer. No sooner did the child hear the loud call given by his dear mother than he hurriedly ran towards his parents through the green mustard fields. He started waking gaily abreast

of them as soon as he came on the footpath. Presently, he was attracted by the little insects and worms that came out of their hiding places to enjoy the sunshine. Meanwhile, his parents sat under the shade of a grove for a while. The attention of the child was drawn towards the raining petals that started falling on him as he was running through the grove. He began to collect them in his hands forgetting his parents. At this moment, he heard the cooing of the doves. The child uttered the following speech act:

“The dove!The dove!”

The above linguistic expression falls in the category of expressive speech act for the boy was overwhelmed to hear the cooing of the doves in the grove under which his parents were sitting. As he uttered this speech act, the flowers which he had gathered recently fell from his delicate hands. The repetition of the words in the form of exclamatory remark with ellipsis of some words indicates his emotional state of mind. The illocutionary force of the utterance is that he was astonished after hearing the sound produced by the doves sitting on the branch of a banyan tree. The perlocutionary effect on the parents is that they became aware of the boy’s presence as they gave him again a cautionary call. This again leads to the fact that there was a strong interpersonal relationship between the interlocutors.

As the child approached the village where the fair was held, he could see many other footpaths full of crowd that not only fascinated him but also created in him the confusion of the world he was entering in. First, his eager eyes met the sweetmeats as the seller hawked the words ‘gulab-jaman’, ‘rasagulla’, ‘burfi’, ‘jalebi’ at the corner of the entrance. As he stared open-eyed at his favourite ‘burfi’, his mouth watered. He could not resist his temptation as he murmured:

“I want that burfi”

If we look at the above expression of the child, we come to know that at the surface level it is a plain statement. However, at the deeper level of communication this expression implicitly falls in the typology of directive speech act since it has the illocutionary force of a mild request made by the boy to the parents to buy ‘burfi’ for him. The child was craving to eat ‘buri’ his favourite sweet. His whispering has to do something with his expectation. He partly knew that his parents would not pay heed to his plea. The perlocutionary effect on the parents was seen in the utterance itself. They did not respond to the speech act produced by their son. Perhaps, they did not hear what the boy said as it was a crowded place with multiple loud shouting of the hawkers selling their supplies. It is interesting to note that the perlocutionary effect was not felt on the hearer of the utterance but on the speaker himself. The boy knew that his parents would think that he was greedy. Therefore, without waiting for an answer from the parents, he moved on.

The boy saw ahead of him a flower seller who was hawking “a garland of gulmohar, a garland of gulmohar”. Again the little boy was tempted to possess the beautiful flowers but he knew that his parents would refuse to buy those flowers for him. Then, he saw a flute player who was playing sonorous tunes on his bamboo made flute. He wanted to listen to the sweet music but he was aware that his parents would not allow

him to do so. As soon as he came near the roundabout, he could not resist his temptation of enjoying the ride. The following speech act is worth studying:

"I want to go on the roundabout, please Father, please Mother."

We need to understand the three dimensions of the speech act. The locutionary act suggests that it is plain sentence with the rising intonation pattern. The illocutionary force of the utterance is the polite request. Therefore, this speech act is treated as the expressive speech act because the intense emotions of the child are explicit in the utterance itself. The word 'please' is used twice to indicate the emotional intensity of the child. He seems to be craving to go on the roundabout. He is making the direct request. Therefore, the above speech act of the boy is also an instance of a direct speech act in terms of Searle's typology of speech acts. The third dimension of the above speech act is the perlocutionary speech act. There was no reply from his parents. There is no perlocutionary effect on the parents because at this point of time they were not there. Here, the boy was lost as he could not see his father and mother in the crowd gathered around the roundabout.

Now the boy was lost in the crowd gathered near the merry-go-round. He was panic with fear gripping his mind. He tried to look for his mother and father in all the direction but there was no trace of them. The child was trying to come out of the crowded place. The child's cries were heard by a man whose heart melted with pity. With a great difficulty, he lifted the child and asked him whose child he was and how he got there. The following speech act of the child is worth studying"

"I want my mother, I want my father!"

This speech act of the child in terms of locutionary act is the repetition of the same sentence. The main verb 'want' is important as far as the completion of the sentence is concerned. What is more important in the speech act is its illocutionary dimension. The intentionality of the speaker is to find out his mother and father as early as possible. The emotional status of the child's mind is reflected in this speech act. His emotions are so intense that he does not want anything in the world but his mother and father. Therefore, this speech act is considered as the expressive speech act. The child is very much longing to see his parents. His speech act is directed towards the man who lifted him on his shoulder. He wants his hearer to find out his mother and father. He does not expect anything from the man but his dear parents. The perlocutionary effect was felt on the man. He tried to calm down the boy by showing him the most attractive things in the fair such as roundabout, snake charmer's flute, multicolored balloons, and decorated sweets. However, the child was disinterested in all the things in the world. The message that one gets from the utterance of the child is that nothing in the world is more important than one's father and mother. Thus, the story has an implicit didactic message in it.

Conclusion:

The analysis of the short story 'The Lost Child' from the perspective of speech act theory brings out the psychological world of the small child who was suddenly lost in the village fair. It also brings to light the importance of mother and father in a child's life. Without mother and father the child felt that the world was nothing for him. Therefore, the message of Mulk Raj Anand is loud and clear that the parents are dearer to small children than any other material object on the planet earth.

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