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Metapragmatic Awareness and Relationship Dynamics: A Pragmatic-Discourse Analysis of Gricean Maxims in a Literary Work

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ABSTRACT

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This study investigates how the relationship dynamics in a literary work can be constructed by the metapragmatic strategies deployed by the characters. To illustrate the significance and rhetorical functions of metapragmatic awareness, this study conducted a pragmatic-discourse analysis of conversations among the protagonists in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Employing Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP) as an analytical framework, the study focuses primarily on how the protagonists utilize their metapragmatic strategies during their interactions and how the strategies impact their relationship dynamics. Verbal exchanges between the main characters were systematically analyzed based on the four maxims of the CP: Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner. Instances of both compliance and violation of these maxims were identified and selected as representative examples to illustrate the arguments.

KEYWORDS

Gricean maxims, cooperative principle, metapragmatics, dynamics of relationship, *Pride and Prejudice*

1. Introduction

This study investigates how the dynamics in a literary work can be constructed by the metapragmatic strategies deployed by the characters. Metapragmatic awareness refers to the self-reflexive consciousness of language users regarding the use of language in communicative contexts (Silverstein 1976). This consciousness extends beyond the mere content of the message to encompass how language is used, why it is used in a particular way, and the effects it may have on the listener. Silverstein (1976) asserts, "without a metapragmatic function simultaneously in play with whatever pragmatic function(s) there may be in discursive interaction, there is no possibility of interactional coherence, since there is no framework of structure (p. 36)". Metapragmatic understanding is integral to human interactions in contexts where cooperation between interlocutors is assumed (Grice 1975, 1989). In this regard, metapragmatic awareness is premised on Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP).

Grice (1975) posits that effective communication relies on the shared commitment of speakers and listeners to be cooperative, informative, truthful, and relevant. The underlying assumption of the Gricean theory is rationality, which is that rational people usually communicate in such fashions for effectiveness. However, as Davies (2007) argues, speakers may not always adhere to these principles, even though violating them can result in misunderstandings or special implicatures. People sometimes flout conventional expectations, being aware of the potential effects of their violation. This intentional violation is often made possible through meta-discourse, which enables speakers to achieve metapragmatic rhetorical effects like intensifying irony, intensification, and challenging conventions (Attardo 1993, Dynel 2010). For instance, Attardo (1993) discusses the humor effects caused by violations of conversational maxims. He explains that jokes convey meaning by implying certain assumptions rather than their direct message. This is achieved through "metamessages and suppressions of the violation" (p. 537). These metapragmatic practices highlight how speakers strategically and intentionally use language to accomplish rhetorical aims.

This study aims to demonstrate the significance and rhetorical functions of metapragmatic awareness by conducting a pragmatic-discourse analysis of conversations among the protagonists in Jane Austen's work, *Pride and Prejudice*. Through examining the pragmatic choices made by authors, such as politeness strategies, cultural norms, and conversational implicatures, and their effects of those choices on the interpretation of the works, we can better comprehend the social dynamics depicted in literature and the ways in which these dynamics reflect broader societal values and ideologies. This practical application of pragmatic analysis to literature not only enriches our understanding of the text but also provides a lens through which we can view and interpret our own social interactions. In addition, this study employs Grice's CP as an analytical framework because, despite its limitations in cross-cultural application (LoCastro 2012, Spencer-Oatey 2004), Gricean framework is practical for understanding the complexity of human interactions in context. Its explanatory power can be utilized to account for the conversational dynamics in a literary work, as interactions in literature can be viewed as a microcosm of human interactions in general. It focuses on Elizabeth and Darcy, investigating their metapragmatic strategies and their impact on relationship dynamics. Critical dialogues and pivotal moments between the characters were examined to uncover the layers of pride, prejudice, vulnerability, and sincerity underlying their verbal exchanges. Verbal exchanges are analyzed based on the CP's four maxims, with instances of compliance and violation identified as examples. Nonverbal communication was also explored to understand how it influences their perceptions of one another. In so doing, the study delves deep into their evolving relationship and how their communication transforms over time, highlighting their metapragmatic awareness.

2. Gricean Maxims and Metapragmatic Awareness

The basic understanding of the Gricean Maxims is that communication is successful when participants follow a certain set of principles. Participants in communication generally assume a shared commitment to be cooperative, informative, truthful, and relevant (Grice 1975). This Cooperative Principle (CP) of communication is further divided into four maxims: Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner. The Maxim of Quantity, 'Say enough, but don't say too much', requires the speaker to provide necessary information for the conversation's purpose without exceeding the required amount. The Maxim of Quality, "Say only what you have reason to believe is true," requires the speaker to provide true information, avoid lying, and refrain from stating anything without a basis. The Maxim of Relevance emphasizes that the speech should be to the point and not include anything irrelevant to the topic at hand. Finally, the Maxim of Manner: "Be brief, clear, and unambiguous," sets forth requirements in terms of means of expression. The speech should be concise and to the point without using ambiguous and redundant words (Birner 2012).

However, human verbal communication is not always straightforward and can be much more complicated by various contextual factors. One such factor is politeness, which can influence how people choose to convey meaning, whether directly or indirectly (Brown and Levinson 1987, Leech 2014). As speech acts inherently threaten face, in in interpersonal communication, individuals may strive to avoid face-threatening acts and both speakers' and listeners' face. Politeness, as a redressive strategy for face-saving (Brown and Levinson 1987), may override the effectiveness of communication even to the extent that the assumed cooperative principles could be violated or deliberately flouted. One criticism of Gricean theory is that it often places too much emphasis on the cooperation and rationality (Davies 2007). In many cases, however, interlocutors deliberately or inadvertently deviate from the expected patterns or conventions of communication. Such flouting is still the individual's rational choice and rather indicative of their metapragmatic awareness. Flouting the maxim or any assumed expectation is indicative of the interlocutor's metapragmatic awareness of the pragmatic practices and underlying logic. This idea has evolved into a more comprehensive study focused on metapragmatic awareness and its indicators through metapragmatic expressions.

Grice's CP is intimately intertwined with metapragmatics. Several scholars have developed increasing interest in the pragmatic nature of interaction and in ways of discussing about it. Verschueren (1999) suggests if we consider the way communication functions are expressed linguistically during interactions as crucial for comprehending pragmatics, we can seek out "indicators of metapragmatic awareness" (p. 189). He distinguishes between explicit and implicit metapragmatic markers. Verschueren divides indicators of metapragmatic awareness into explicit and implicit metalanguage. Explicit includes metapragmatic descriptions via lexical items, self-referential expressions, markers/particles, adverbs, hedges, intertextual links, quoted/reported speech, and some shifters and cues. Implicit consists of shifters like deictic expressions, aspect, mood/modality, evidentials, contextualization cues, and implicit "voices" (Verschueren 2000).

Haugh (2018) defines metapragmatics as "the study of reflexive awareness on the part of participants in interaction, and observers of interactions, about the language that is being used in those interactions" (p. 619). Caffi (1994) views metapragmatic awareness as the ability to monitor and discuss ongoing interactions. In this sense, metapragmatics is inherently concerned with language ideologies because it focuses on the ways in which people use language to comment on language, to reflect on language use, and to negotiate meaning in social interactions (Silverstein 1993).

Overstreet (2012) points out that indicators of metapragmatic awareness involves a constant reevaluation of referential indices, either as proximal or distal, through the use of linguistic devices like proforms, time and place

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expressions, and tenses. Additionally, modal auxiliaries and adverbs also contribute to indicating speakers' varying degrees of commitment to the interpretation of their utterances. Other indicators include hedges, contextualization cues, pragmatic markers, and speech reporting (Caffi 2016).

In this study, we will pay close attention to these indicators in our analysis. We will examine how explicit and implicit metapragmatic markers can be identified in texts. We will also explore the rhetorical effects of these indicators, considering how they contribute to the overall meaning and impact of the text. By doing so, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of metapragmatic awareness and its role in communication.

Gricean CP has been extensively discussed, analyzed, and applied across various fields, including psychology (Jia 2008), classroom teaching (Hutahaean 2020, Liu 2017), and literature (Fashina 2009, Zhou 2022). Leech and Short (1981) analyze fictional dialogue, incorporating speech act theory and Grice's principles to explore the difference between explicit meaning and implied intention. Pratt (1977) applies Grice's CP to literary works, arguing that conversational implicature becomes noticeable when the maxims of the CP are intentionally violated. More recently, Dong and Huang (2019) examine the violation of CP in *The Little Prince*, while Rashid (2019) examines implicature triggers and deviation from the Quantity maxim in *Pride and Prejudice*. Gong (2023) also analyzes conversational implicature in *Pride and Prejudice*. While these existing studies contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of human interactions and the refinement of conversational implicature theories, they have limitations in that they usually focus on only some aspects of pragmatic dimensions, such as conversational implicature.

When analyzing literary works, it is imperative to consider the social contexts in which they originated. These works, as linguistic epitomes of the intricate nature of human relationships, represents specific social and cultural contexts. They were created at a given time and communicated and interpreted within or in relation to diverse audiences, each context adding a layer of depth to our understanding (Johansen 2002). A meta-perspective considering the multifaceted dimensions of the text in context, including linguistic expressions, social interaction, and social context, is essential for a pragmatic inquiry of literary text, such as how Gricean framework can be substantiated in literary work (Lindblom 2001). In exploring *Pride and Prejudice*, it becomes evident that the text goes line with the underlying logic of the Cooperative Principle, either adherence to or deviation from its maxims. The relationship between the protagonists unfolds through three distinct stages: initial prejudice and misunderstanding, the resolution of prejudice, and the establishment of a romantic connection. Throughout these stages, the dialogues portrayed in the novel serve as invaluable data for analysis through the lens of the Cooperative Principle. They offer insights into the characters' personalities, psychological dynamics, and the evolving nature of their relationship, highlighting how they adapt their communication styles over time.

3. Methodology

This study uses a set of texts from Austen's (1995) *Pride and Prejudice* to explore how Gricean CP can be substantiated in a literary discourse. The research involves text analysis to address the following research questions: What metapragmatic strategies are employed in the interactions between the protagonists to establish the perceptions of each other at the different phases of the plot?; How do the CP violations made by the protagonists in the work at the beginning affect their initial interactions and perceptions of each other?; What are their rhetorical effects on the evolving relationship between the characters?

The text was subjected to a series of iterative readings to identify instances of interactions that shape the relationship dynamics surrounding the protagonists. These interactions were classified under the four maxims:

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Quality, Quantity, Relevance, and Manner. The conversations were initially coded based on these categories, and then further subcategorized according to whether they demonstrated compliance, violation, or flouting of the maxim. To ensure the validity of the analysis, the two authors conducted several rounds of cross-reading and review on the data.

From the novel, twelve conversations were meticulously chosen for a comprehensive examination of the evolving relationship between the protagonists. These conversations were not randomly selected, but carefully chosen to represent key stages in their relationship. Six excerpts were from the initial stage, when both protagonists harbored prejudices and misunderstandings. Three excerpts were from the phase when their prejudices were resolved, and three from the stage when the protagonists began to develop romantic feelings. Out of the twelve conversations, nine are exclusively between Elizabeth and Darcy. In these dialogues, the differences in communication styles are particularly noticeable. The remaining three conversations involve either Elizabeth or Darcy engaging with someone else. However, they still revolve around Elizabeth and Darcy, offering insight into their characters and relationship dynamics from a different perspective.

Understanding the Cooperative Principle (CP) requires a meta-perspective that encompasses utterance, social interaction, and social context (Lindblom 2001). It is important to consider multiple dimensions, including lexical and meta-pragmatic aspects, communication modes, social norms, and nonverbal cues. In this vein, the study transcends the examination of the protagonists' verbal utterances. Nonverbal interactions and adherence to social norms are explored. By adopting this holistic approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics that emerge from the various metapragmatic strategies deployed by the protagonists.

4. Findings

4.1 Initial Prejudice and Misunderstanding

Pride and Prejudice is a novel that revolves around the Bennet family, with a focus on Elizabeth and her developing romantic relationship with the aloof and wealthy Mr. Darcy. At the outset, misunderstandings and societal expectations cause tension between them. However, as Darcy's feelings for Elizabeth deepen, she discovers his true character, and they overcome their initial pride and prejudice. Darcy proves himself to be an honorable man when he intervenes after a scandal involving Elizabeth's sister Lydia arises, cementing his love for Elizabeth. Through their journey, they both overcome societal norms and personal biases, finally confessing their love for each other and demonstrating that true love transcends social class. Elizabeth's initial impression of Mr. Darcy isn't positive. She perceives him as being proud, aloof, and dismissive of those who are socially beneath him. Similarly, Darcy is reserved and somewhat prejudiced against individuals he deemed beneath him due to his social standing. In the beginning part of their encounters, flouting the maxim is salient as illustrated in Excerpt 1 below. We provide some analysis of the rhetorical effects and relationship dynamics in this pivotal conversation.

> Excerpt 1.
> "Oh! She is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld! But there is one of her sisters sitting down just behind you, who is very pretty, and I dare say very agreeable. Do let me ask my partner to introduce you." "Which do you mean?" and turning round he looked for a moment at Elizabeth, till catching her eye, he withdrew his own and coldly said: "She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me; I am in no humour at present to give consequence to young ladies who are slighted by other men. You had better return to your partner and

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enjoy her smiles, for you are wasting your time with me." (Chapter 1, p. 13)

This conversation is a significant moment in the development of the relationship between Darcy and Elizabeth. Conducted in private, Mr. Bingley, a mutual friend, enthusiastically recommends Elizabeth to Darcy, employing affirmative and emphatic language like "very pretty" and "agreeable," along with evidential markers like "dare say" and speech act verbs like "do let," which metapragmatically modulate his communicative intention. Then, the author, Jane Austen, subtly signals to readers, through the descriptor "coldly said," that Darcy's response will be dismissive and arrogant, revealing his superiority. In violating the Manner Maxim by responding with a lack of courtesy and politeness, Darcy initially acknowledges Elizabeth as "tolerable" before implicitly rejecting her with the comment "but not handsome enough for me." Moreover, with a metapragmatic disclaimer (Hewitt and Stokes 1975), Darcy strives to showcase his dignity while simultaneously denigrating Elizabeth. He first acknowledges Mr. Bingley's compliment of Elizabeth as "She is tolerable," but then implicitly refutes it with his own comment, "but not handsome enough for me." By indirectly declining Mr. Bingley's suggestion, Darcy presents himself as a man of politeness and pride while saving Mr. Bingley's face (Brown and Levinson 1987). Further, Darcy's relatively lengthy reply becomes redundant as he offers an unsolicited remark on "young ladies who are slighted by other men." With a sweeping disdain towards young ladies, Darcy reveals his prejudice and sarcastically dismisses Elizabeth as a young lady of that kind. At the same time, he distances himself from "other men", thereby elevating his own nobility. Darcy's aloof remarks and haughty demeanor underscore the underlying social hierarchy, class distinctions, and the theme of initial misjudgments that the characters are entangled in.

Darcy's rejoinder violates the Manner and Quantity Maxims, principles of conversation that dictate how information should be shared and how much information should be shared. The violation of these maxims produces rhetorical effects such as emphasis and attention-grabbing. Elizabeth overhears all of this, which leads to an initial misunderstanding between them. Darcy's utterance might be motivated by his awareness that Elizabeth was overhearing in earshot of the conversation. If so, Darcy's utterance would not be intended or directed to Mr. Bingley but to Elizabeth. And then Darcy would deliberately flout the Maxims. Thus, by offering excessive information and using unconventional language, he emphasizes his refusal to establish a relationship with Elizabeth and asserts his dismissiveness towards her. In effect, this exchange creates pivotal tension between the protagonists, which drives them toward dynamics in their interactions and perceptions of each other as the story unfolds.

> Excerpt 2.
> "You excel so much in the dance, Miss Eliza, that it is cruel to deny me the happiness of seeing you; and though this gentleman dislikes the amusement in general, he can have no objection, I am sure, to oblige us for one half-hour." "Mr. Darcy is all politeness," said Elizabeth, smiling. "He is, indeed; but, considering the inducement, my dear Miss Eliza, we cannot wonder at his complaisance—for who would object to such a partner?" Elizabeth looked archly, and turned away. (Chapter 6, p. 24)

In the dialogue above, Elizabeth and Sir William are at a ball party. Sir William suggests that Elizabeth should dance with Mr. Darcy, who is known for his arrogance and unwillingness to engage with those of lower social standing. William deliberately persuades Elizabeth through emotional appeal, demonstrating his keen awareness of the persuasive power of language. The conversation is characterized by the strategic use of pronouns, which contribute to a sense of intimacy and directness. By addressing Elizabeth as "you" and "my dear Miss Eliza," Mr. Bingley establishes a friendly and slightly familiar tone, suggesting a level of comfort and camaraderie between

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them. This approach serves to soften his request and make it more appealing to Elizabeth. In contrast, Elizabeth's use of more formal pronouns like "he" and "Mr. Darcy" when referring to Darcy underscores the more formal and distant nature of their relationship. Despite Sir William's attempts to flatter Mr. Darcy, Elizabeth refuses to dance with him. Her refusal is a breach of the maxim of Quality, as it implies her sarcasm towards Mr. Darcy's unpleasant behavior. Interestingly, Elizabeth's polite rejection adheres to societal norms while conveying her dissatisfaction through indirect communication. The employment of indirectness emerges as a key component of negative politeness, aimed at maintaining social harmony and avoiding potential face-threatening acts (Brown and Levinson 1987). This use of indirect communication is significant in social situations as it helps to avoid direct conflict. Elizabeth's nonverbal cues, such as smiling and looking archly, contradicted the utterance that Darcy was polite, suggesting that she may has a degree of skepticism or perhaps even sarcasm by the idea of Darcy's supposed invitation to dance. It suggests that politeness may not always be genuine but can be influenced by social expectations or motives, and individuals may view such displays of politeness with varying degrees of skepticism. The speed and ease of identifying irony hinge on the extent of activation of various contextual sources. The more inconsistencies or incompatibilities a listener detects between the available contextual cues, the faster and simpler it becomes to discern irony (Yus 2000). Therefore, through the nonverbal cues, Darcy and the reader could infer that Elizabeth was being dismissive and viewing him as prideful and disagreeable. While the nonverbal cues were sufficient to recognize Elizabeth's ironic intention, additional contextual information further clarified her dissociative attitude. The use of the word "all" which emphasized Elizabeth's ironic statement. As Zhao (2011) mentions, these multiple contextual activations demonstrate the importance of context in understanding irony and the speaker's dissociative attitude.

> Excerpt 3.
> "Your examination of Mr. Darcy is over, I presume," said Miss Bingley; "and pray what is the result?" "I am perfectly convinced by it that Mr. Darcy has no defect. He owns it himself without disguise." (Chapter 11, p. 52).

During a conversation between Elizabeth and Darcy about human flaws, Elizabeth sarcastically comments that Mr. Darcy has no defects. Earlier, they discussed weaknesses that people would laugh at, and Elizabeth mentioned "vanity and pride". Darcy agreed that vanity is a weakness, but remarked that pride can be under good regulation when there is a real superiority of mind. Elizabeth's subsequent sarcastic remark violates the quality maxim, and reveals her strong disapproval of Darcy. Her insincerity prevents her from offering genuine praise, and she is unwilling to express her true thoughts about him directly, instead resorting to sarcasm to highlight his arrogance and lack of self-awareness. Moreover, there's a subtle humor effect created by the clever wordplay and the contrasting perspectives of the characters. The humor arises from the irony of the situation. Elizabeth's response is all positive words to Mr. Darcy, despite Miss Bingley's attempts to elicit negative opinions about him due to her own interest in marrying him. The use of hyperbole in Elizabeth's statement, claiming that Mr. Darcy has "no defect," adds to the comedic effect by exaggerating her false admiration for him. By employing contextualization cue "perfectly" and "no defect", she signals to the listeners that her words are not meant to be taken at face value. By using sarcasm, she is subverting these expectations and potentially challenging their perceptions of him. This demonstrates her awareness of the social dynamics at play and her desire to challenge them. Elizabeth's use of sarcasm allows her to convey a complex message without explicitly stating it. She may be expressing criticism or disdain for Mr. Darcy, but by using sarcasm, she avoids direct confrontation and allows listeners to interpret her words as they see fit. Sarcasm can be a powerful rhetorical tool, allowing speakers to express strong emotions or

opinions while maintaining a degree of detachment. Furthermore, Elizabeth's assertion that Mr. Darcy "owns it himself without disguise" suggests that he is self-aware and proud in his own character. "Deliberate violation of CP is the linguistic basis of humor" (Pan 2012). By violating the quality maxim intentionally, humor is created. The humor effects in this conversation stem from the clever wordplay, the unexpectedness of Elizabeth's response, and the contrast between her negative perception of Mr. Darcy and Miss Bingley's eager of marrying him.

> Excerpt 4.
> "A thorough, determined dislike of me—a dislike which I cannot but attribute in some measure to jealousy...He had not a temper to bear the sort of competition in which we stood— the sort of preference which was often given me."
> "I had not thought Mr. Darcy so bad as this---though I have never liked him, I had not thought so very ill of him--I had supposed him to be despising his fellow creatures in general, but did not suspect him of descending to such malicious revenge, such injustice, such inhumanity as this!" (Chapter 16, pp. 70-71)

Elizabeth, while communicating with Mr. Wickham, speaks ill of Mr. Darcy and believes the slander against him without much skepticism. This conversation leads to an increase in her prejudice against him. The past perfect tense in the phrases "I had not thought" and "I had supposed" emphasizes the speaker's recognition of the temporal evolution of their beliefs, showcasing their acute awareness of how their perceptions have shifted and developed over time. Her surprise is expressed by repeating the phrase "I had not thought", thus violating the maxim of manner. This phrase is in the past perfect tense, suggesting that there was a point in the past when Elizabeth had not thought of Darcy in a negative light. It implies a change in her mental state and a sense of retrospection. She has certain expectations regarding Mr. Darcy's character, as seen from her statement "I could easily forgive his pride, if he had not mortified mine". This shows that she recognizes the existence of pride in others and indicates that her own pride has been hurt. The recent revelation, however, surpasses her expectations and reveals Darcy's behavior to be characterized by malicious revenge, injustice, and inhumanity. This contrast between expectations and reality intensifies Elizabeth's shock and disappointment. On another level, Elizabeth's quick acceptance of information without much skepticism or critical examination shows that she is also "blind, partial, prejudiced and absurd" (Chapter 36 p. 177) despite being a witty and smart person.

> Excerpt 5.
> "Do you talk by rule, then, while you are dancing?" "Sometimes. One must speak a little...and yet, for the advantage of some, conversation ought to be so arranged as that they may have the trouble of saying as little as possible." "Are you consulting your own feelings in the present case, or do you imagine that you are gratifying mine?" "Both," replied Elizabeth archly; "for I have always seen a great similarity in the turn of our minds. We are each of an unsocial, taciturn disposition, unwilling to speak, unless we expect to say something that will a maze the whole room, and be handed down to posterity with all the éclat of a proverb." (Chapter 18, pp.79-80)

In chapter 18 of the novel, Darcy invites Elizabeth to dance. However, Elizabeth's perception of Darcy has been deeply distorted by Wickham's slander against him before the ball. Additionally, she also remembers Darcy's arrogant behavior at the first ball. Therefore, during the dance, she deliberately engages him in conversation to embarrass him. When Darcy asks her if she enjoys chatting, she replies that she does, but then changes the subject and says that "for the advantage of some," it would be better to talk less. The "some" in this case is a reference to

Darcy himself. Elizabeth's strategic use of indirect language to mock Darcy's arrogance and suggest that he is too proud to talk with those of lower social status showcases her metapragmatic awareness. Her words violate the quality maxim and quantity maxim, demonstrating her ability to manipulate the language to her advantage. Elizabeth then mentions that she and Darcy share similar personalities and have difficulty communicating with others unless they can make a strong impression with a few well-chosen words. However, from previous chapters, it is clear that Elizabeth is an optimistic and cheerful girl, rather than being taciturn and unsociable as she claims. Therefore, it is easy to see that her words are ironic and meant to tease Darcy. She intentionally says things that she knows are false and unfounded to demonstrate her cleverness and cunning, which deeply intrigues Darcy.

> Excerpt 6.
> "How very suddenly you all quitted Netherfield last November, Mr. Darcy! It must have been a most agreeable surprise to Mr. Bingley to see you all after him so soon; for, if I recollect right, he went but the day before. He and his sister were well, I hope, when you left London." "Perfectly so--I thank you." (Chapter 32, p. 152)

Mr. Bingley and Jane, who is Elizabeth's sister, fall in love with each other the moment they meet. However, as winter arrives, the Bingleys leave Netherfield for London without informing Jane. This deeply upsets Jane. When Elizabeth asks Darcy about it, he responds with just two words, "perfectly so," which is not enough for Elizabeth. Darcy seems reluctant to discuss Mr. Bingley's departure in detail, possibly because he was the one who convinced his friends to distance themselves from Jane. This becomes more apparent in subsequent chapters.

4.2 The Resolution of Prejudice

As the plot unfolds, Elizabeth and Darcy are presented with several opportunities to transcend their initial biases. Elizabeth, in particular, undergoes a significant transformation as she uncovers admirable aspects of Darcy's character, such as his unwavering loyalty to his friends and his strong sense of duty. Similarly, Darcy's perception of Elizabeth evolves as he discerns her intellect, quick wit, and benevolence. The narrative is punctuated by significant external events and the actions of other characters, notably Mr. Wickham's duplicity and Mr. Bingley's sudden departure. These serve as catalysts, compelling both Elizabeth and Darcy to reassess their preconceptions and ultimately, to acknowledge the profound depths of each other's personalities.

> Excerpt 7.
> "I certainly have not the talent which some people possess," said Darcy, "of conversing easily with those I have never seen before. I cannot catch their tone of conversation, or appear interested in their concerns, as I often see done." "My fingers," said Elizabeth, "do not move over this instrument in the masterly manner which I see so many women's do. They have not the same force or rapidity, and do not produce the same expression. But then I have always supposed it to be my own fault--because I will not take the trouble of practising. It is not that I do not believe my fingers as capable as any other woman's of superior execution." Darcy smiled and said, "You are perfectly right...We neither of us perform to strangers." (Chapter 31, pp. 150-151)

In this scene, Elizabeth and Darcy meet again in the drawing room of Darcy's aunt, Lady Catherine. Elizabeth is about to play the piano and wonders why Darcy behaved so arrogantly at the earlier ball. This is the first time

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that Darcy tries to explain himself by answering Elizabeth's question cooperatively. He expresses his difficulty in engaging in easy conversation with unfamiliar people. However, Elizabeth does not pursue this topic and instead comments on her fingers and performance, which is irrelevant to what Darcy says. By doing so, Elizabeth violates the maxim of relevance. Moreover, she violates the maxim of manner by responding humorously instead of replying briefly and directly. However, in this particular instance, deviating from the Cooperative Principle represents a notable, courteous, and even charming mode of communication. This departure from the norm serves as an effective and nuanced means of expression. It is consistent with the idea that deviating from the Cooperative Principle does not necessarily indicate a lack of cooperation between interlocutors. Rather, as Davies (2007) asserts, both adherence to and flouting of the Cooperative Principle can be rational strategies within the context of communication. This highlights the flexibility and complexity of language use, exemplified by speakers' strategic adaptation of their adherence to cooperative norms. This reveals their metapragmatic awareness, enabling them to achieve specific communicative goals or convey nuanced meanings with precision. In spite of shifting the focus of the conversation, Elizabeth's response demonstrates her sympathy and encouragement towards Darcy. By acknowledging her own perceived shortcomings in comparison to others and attributing them to her own lack of effort, Elizabeth shows empathy towards Darcy's earlier admission of struggling to converse easily with strangers. This understanding and encouragement may serve to alleviate any potential discomfort or self-consciousness Darcy may feel about his own perceived inadequacies in social situations.

Darcy remains cooperative by smiling and saying "perfectly right. By consistently employing the pronouns "we" and "us," he emphasizes the perceived similarities and shared personality traits between the individuals involved, utilizing an implicit metalanguage as outlined by Verschueren (2000) to create a sense of unity and camaraderie. The exchange reflects a mutual understanding between Darcy and Elizabeth regarding their social shortcomings or inadequacies. They share a moment of self-awareness and acceptance of their limitations in certain social situations. This shared sentiment creates a moment of connection between the characters.

> Excerpt 8.
> Mr. Darcy drew his chair a little towards her, and said, "You cannot have a right to such very strong local attachment. You cannot have been always at Longbourn." Elizabeth looked surprised. The gentleman experienced some change of feeling; he drew back his chair, took a newspaper from the table, and glancing over it, said, in a colder voice: "Are you pleased with Kent?" (Chapter 32, p. 153)

In the unfolding story, Mr. Darcy is in love with Elizabeth, but she is unaware of his feelings. Despite this, he continues to assert his authority as a wealthy landowner from the upper class, marked by wealth, status, and inheritance. He uses phrases such as "you cannot have a right" and "you cannot" as orders, implying that a woman should not be confined to her hometown. These sentences not only show Darcy's superiority in the social hierarchy but also display discrimination towards women. Elizabeth is taken aback and responds in silence. Verbal silence is a linguistic component that is represented by a null signifier attached to a specific non-null signified, thus belonging in the linguistic dimension of communication (Ephratt 2011). Elizabeth's silence is a way of communicating her disagreement and astonishment, which goes against the Cooperative Principle. Realizing this, Darcy modifies his communication style and asks, "Are you pleased with Kent?" Kent is his hometown, and this question indicates his desire to know more about Elizabeth and implies that he expects her to love him and his hometown. This is consistent with the Cooperative Principle's goal of obtaining relevant and informative contributions from all participants.

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Excerpt 9.

"In such cases as this, it is, I believe, the established mode to express a sense of obligation for the sentiments avowed, however unequally they may be returned. It is natural that obligation should be felt, and if I could feel gratitude, I would now thank you. But I cannot—I have never desired your good opinion, and you have certainly bestowed it most unwillingly. I am sorry to have occasioned pain to anyone..." [...]

"And this is all the reply which I am to have the honour of expecting! I might, perhaps, wish to be informed why, with so little endeavour at civility, I am thus rejected. But it is of small importance." [...]

"You have said quite enough, madam. I perfectly comprehend your feelings, and have now only to be ashamed of what my own have been. Forgive me for having taken up so much of your time, and accept my best wishes for your health and happiness." (Chapter 34, pp. 163-166)

This passage is about the conversation between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy in the climax of the novel. In this conversation, Mr. Darcy proposes to Elizabeth, but she, in a manner that reflects the societal norms of the time, responds by commenting on his declaration of love while also acknowledging her family's social inferiority. In situations where one receives a marriage proposal, it is customary to express gratitude. However, Elizabeth's use of a disclaimer in "In such cases as this," "it is," "I believe," and "the established mode is...however..." to politely reject Mr. Darcy's proposal is a clear reflection of the societal norms of the time. The disclaimer is "a verbal device employed to ward off and defeat in advance doubts and negative typifications." (Hewitt and Stokes 1975). When individuals anticipate that their speech or actions might be unfavorably received by the listener, they may seek to mitigate their speech or actions, employing disclaimers as a strategy for self-presentation (Caffi 1999, 2007). By using the disclaimer, Elizabeth is attempting to avoid any negative reactions that might result from her rejection. However, the use of these disclaimers violates the maxim of quantity and manner by adding more words than necessary and not being brief. Elizabeth repeats this structure when she says, "It is natural that...and if I could...but I cannot..." This repetition of disclaimers not only shows that Elizabeth wants to minimize any offense to Mr. Darcy, but also indicates that she will refuse him decisively and completely. Elizabeth's pride prevents her from even expressing gratitude, and she implies that Darcy's condescending attitude is intolerable by using the words "bestow" and "unwillingly." She also points out the inconsistency in Darcy's behavior by mentioning his contradictory statements about liking her against his will and reason. Although she says "I am sorry", she isn't sorry at all.

Moreover, there are several times Elizabeth adopts different modal verbs. Modality in linguistics refers to the expression of possibility, necessity, obligation, and permission. It can reveal the speaker's attitude towards the proposition and their degree of certainty. "It is natural that obligation should be felt" reflects a normative statement about social expectations, using the modal verb "should" to indicate a generally accepted obligation. "If I could feel gratitude, I would now thank you" uses "could" and "would" to express a conditional possibility and a hypothetical obligation. It suggests that under different emotional circumstances, Elizabeth would feel compelled to express gratitude. The use of modal verbs in this context underscores Elizabeth's comprehensive understanding of the societal norms and expectations imposed upon women, yet she chooses not to conform to them. Instead, she asserts her independence and defies these conventions.

Mr. Darcy is taken aback by Elizabeth's rejection of his proposal. He is surprised and offended, as he had not realized that his way of expressing himself was the problem. In Darcy's reply to Elizabeth, the modal verbs in "I might, perhaps, wish to be informed..." serve to convey a sense of indignation and surprise at her seemingly abrupt

rejection. The use of "might" suggests that he is considering the possibility of asking for an explanation. In addition to "might", "perhaps" is another lexical modality serves to reduce the forcefulness of Darcy's desire to understand Elizabeth's rejection, showing a polite hesitation. It indicates that Darcy is aware of the social norms surrounding politeness and civility, and is choosing his words carefully to avoid appearing too abrupt or demanding. And it also portrays Darcy as a proud and somewhat haughty character who finds Elizabeth's rejection unexpected and unworthy of further discussion. Besides, he uses phrases like "all the reply", "little endeavour at civility" and "of small importance" to express his astonishment and maintain his self-esteem. "Quite enough" intensifies the finality and emotional impact of Elizabeth's words, indicating that she has made her point emphatically clear." Perfectly comprehend" intensifies Darcy's understanding of Elizabeth's feelings, suggesting a deep and complete grasp of the situation. Darcy's phrase, "It is of small importance," uses downplaying as a metapragmatic strategy to mask his hurt and disappointment, suggesting that he is attempting to maintain his dignity despite being rejected.

Despite the tension in their relationship, Elizabeth and Darcy are honest with each other, sharing their true thoughts and feelings and uncovering their doubts and disagreements. Through this conversation, they begin to understand each other better and appreciate each other's character. Darcy eventually realizes the impact of his words, apologizes for taking up Elizabeth's time, acknowledges her feelings, and wishes her well. This marks a turning point in his attitude, as he recognizes his own faults and works to overcome his prejudices.

The dialogue between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy exemplifies complex metapragmatic maneuvering through modality, hedges, intensifiers, and other linguistic strategies. Darcy's use of hedges and modality reveals his tentative approach to social conventions and his internal struggle with expressing genuine emotion. Elizabeth's direct yet ironic statements reflect her emotional independence and critical stance towards Darcy's sentiments. Intensifiers and formal expressions of politeness underscore the emotional tension and the characters' attempts to navigate the interaction within the constraints of social propriety. This passage highlights the intricate interplay of language, emotion, and social norms in shaping their communication.

4.3 Establishment of Romantic Connection

Darcy's first proposal to Elizabeth is initially met with rejection due to his poorly worded delivery. After further introspection and a series of events, Elizabeth's feelings for Darcy evolve. She recognizes the depth of his affection and integrity. Eventually, both characters come to accept their mutual love for each other. In this process, their communication style turns more open and expressive. They start engaging in meaningful conversations, and their utterances become increasingly polite and cooperative.

> Excerpt 10.
> "I have been walking in the grove some time in the hope of meeting you. Will you do me the honour of reading that letter?" (Chapter 35, p. 168)

After proposing to Elizabeth, Darcy wishes to give her a letter in which he expresses his love for her and offers explanations for his past actions. The use of present perfect continuous tense, "have been walking" emphasizes his eagerness to meeting Elizabeth. Moreover, the use of "will" in the polite request "will you" indicates a polite inquiry or favor. By saying "Do me the honor of reading that letter," Darcy is not just elevating the act of reading the letter to a level of honor and respect, but also showing the depth of his feelings for Elizabeth. The strategic use of "do" as a performative verb intensifies the language's power, highlighting Darcy's meticulous endeavor to craft a request that is both formal and steeped in politeness. This makes the request more formal and courteous and

contributes to the tranquility of Elizabeth's reading of the letter. It is at this point that Elizabeth begins to grasp the true depth of Darcy's feelings and motives.

> Excerpt 11.
> "There is also one other person in the party," he continued after a pause, "who more particularly wishes to be known to you, ---Will you allow me, or do I ask too much, to introduce my sister to your acquaintance during your stay at Lambton?" (Chapter 43, p. 214)

Darcy utters this when Elizabeth pays a visit to Pemberley, Mr. Darcy's estate, several months after he proposed to her. By this chance he wants to introduce his sister to her. Darcy's speech features multiple hedges, a pause, and careful rephrases ("Will you allow me, or do I ask too much"), indicating how much he is endeavoring to formulate the request with the ultimate degree of courtesy and politeness. Darcy begins with an indirect reference: "There is also one other person in the party who more particularly wishes to be known to you." By not immediately revealing who this person is, he softens the imposition on Elizabeth and creates a sense of anticipation. It is evident that his manner of communication is much polite, and he uses language that is respectful and considerate. "more particularly" emphasizes a strong or specific desire on the part of his sister, which makes Elizabeth more willing to accept the introduction. A very proper expression "will you allow me" maximizes Elizabeth's benefit by offering an option for her. He doesn't act superior to others anymore. Instead, he is very careful about his words and demonstrate humility and etiquette even using "do I ask too much". Darcy frames his request with a conditional and respectful tone: "Will you allow me," which serves as a prelude to the actual request. This framing device prepares Elizabeth for the nature of the request and signals Darcy's respect for her decision-making power. "Do I ask too much" is another hedge that reduces the imposition of the request. It shows Darcy's awareness of the social norms and his sensitivity to not overstepping boundaries, thus making his request less forceful and more considerate.

His careful phrasing, indirectness and pause all serve to mitigate the imposition of his request and show respect for Elizabeth's autonomy. The text demonstrates the complexity of language use, incorporating elements of hedging to express politeness and metapragmatic considerations. To some extent, it also reflects his psychological barriers. He fears that Elizabeth might refuse him due to their unpleasant past and her lingering disdain for him. Darcy is not only conveying the literal message of introduction and navigating social protocols but also overcoming his fear and expressing his eager to reconciling with Elizabeth.

> Excerpt 12.
> "Mr. Darcy, I am a very selfish creature; and, for the sake of giving relief to my own feelings, care not how much I may be wondering yours. I can no longer help thanking you for your unexampled kindness to my poor sister. Ever since I have known it, I have been most anxious to acknowledge to you how gratefully I feel it. Were it known to that rest of my family, I should not have merely my own gratitude to express." "I am sorry, exceedingly sorry," replied Darcy, in a tone of surprise and emotion, "that you have ever been informed of what may, in a mistaken light, have given you uneasiness." (Chapter 58, p. 306)

Both Elizabeth and Darcy engage in a profound process of introspection and self-reflection. Elizabeth, in particular, exhibits a remarkable level of emotional sincerity and self-awareness. Elizabeth begins by framing her statement with self-disclosure: "I am a very selfish creature; and, for the sake of giving relief to my own feelings, care not how much I may be wondering yours." This metapragmatic act sets the stage for her subsequent gratitude,

indicating that she is aware of the emotional implications and potential impropriety of her expression. It also reveals her internal conflict and self-awareness about her motives, thereby managing how her message is received. She openly expresses herself, laying bare her own selfish nature, a testament to her self-awareness. She confesses to Darcy about her previous disregard for his feelings. Her heartfelt admission of her feelings towards him and her gratitude for his kindness towards her sister is a poignant display of sincerity and emotional honesty. This act of expressing her emotions openly aligns with Grice's cooperative principle of sincerity, as she strives to convey truthful and relevant information to Darcy. However, acknowledging one's mistake is hard for everyone, let alone such a proud lady. The phrase "can no longer help" acts as a hedge, suggesting that her expression of gratitude is very hard to express, driven by overwhelming feelings. This hedges the directness of her thanks. "Your unexampled kindness" uses the intensifier "unexampled" to emphasize the extraordinary nature of Darcy's actions. This serves to amplify Elizabeth's gratitude and highlight the exceptionalism of Darcy's behavior." The intensifier "most" in "I have been most anxious to acknowledge..." emphasizes her strong desire to express her gratitude, underscoring the urgency and depth of her feelings. "Were it known to the rest of my family, I should not have merely my own gratitude to express." This statement recognizes the collective social obligation and reinforces the significance of Darcy's kindness. It situates her personal gratitude within a broader social context, showing her awareness of the social norms regarding familial gratitude. By embedding her thanks within a narrative of self-disclosure and social context, Elizabeth manages to convey her message without appearing overly direct or imposing. Elizabeth's speech to Darcy is a masterful blend of hedges, intensifiers, and metapragmatic strategies. These linguistic tools help her navigate the social intricacies and emotional weight of her gratitude. Hedges soften the directness of her thanks, making it more polite. Simultaneously, hedges reflect the hesitation and difficulty for her in admitting misjudgment, making an apology, and expressing gratitude. Intensifiers underscore the depth of her feelings, enhancing the sincerity of her message. Other metapragmatic elements, such as self-disclosure and acknowledgment of social expectations, further enrich her communication, demonstrating her keen awareness of the social dynamics at play. Through this carefully constructed speech, Elizabeth manages to convey her heartfelt thanks while respecting the norms of politeness and social decorum.

This revelation is both surprising and enlightening to Darcy. Darcy realizes the mistakes caused by his pride and always seeks mutually beneficial solutions. He responds with an "exceedingly sorry" attitude. They build trust by being honest and transparent in their communication, expressing their feelings with sincerity and authenticity. This self-awareness leads to a gradual transformation in their attitudes toward each other. By the end of the novel, Elizabeth and Darcy have overcome their initial prejudices, learned from their misunderstandings, and established a strong romantic connection based on mutual respect, understanding, and affection. Their journey is a testament to the power of self-reflection, personal growth, and the ability to see beyond first impressions. They both mature and put aside their pride and prejudice, balancing reason and emotion. Since then, their conversations appear frank and sincere.

5. Discussion

Delving into the conversations in *Pride and Prejudice*, we uncover a fascinating transformation in character communication and relationship development, intricately woven with the threads of metapragmatic awareness. At first, their exchanges are marked by violations of the Cooperative Principle (CP), with Darcy's pride and Elizabeth's sarcasm threatening each other's social faces. These violations, while strategic in nature, underscore the complexity of their language use and the intentionality behind it. These violations shape their initial negative perceptions of each other, illustrating pragmatics' view of communication as a dynamic process with profound

consequences. The significance of the elaboration lies in its recognition of the nuanced nature of communication and the CP. It underscores that while the CP provides a framework for effective communication, deviations from it can still serve communicative purposes and maintain cooperative intentions. As their relationship progresses, their communication style aligns more closely with the CP, reflecting a shift in context and intentionality. By acknowledging that both adhering to and flouting the CP can be rational strategies, the elaboration highlights the flexibility and complexity of language use. This perspective fosters a deeper understanding of communication dynamics, urging us to consider context and intentionality in interpreting linguistic behavior, thereby engaging us in a more thoughtful analysis.

The protagonists' strategic use of metapragmatic strategies showcases their profound ability to achieve rhetorical effects through language, showcasing their linguistic competence and originality. This underscores the intentional and strategic use of language in communication. The literary work serves as a testament to their originality and linguistic dexterity, inviting us to appreciate the intricacies of their communication. This not only demonstrates the complexity of human communication but also highlights the practical value of pragmatics in analyzing the dynamics of the literary discourse.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Elizabeth and Darcy's social status and gender roles play significant roles in shaping their interactions and relationship dynamics, which also reflects in their communication styles. Elizabeth, a member of the lower gentry, is portrayed as independent-minded, spirited, and witty. Despite her lower social standing, she exhibits intelligence and confidence, challenging traditional gender norms of the time. Her refusal to conform to societal expectations of marriage for financial security and her insistence on marrying for love reflect her defiance of gender and social conventions. That may be the reason behind all her violation of the Cooperative Principle. Those effects of humor, sarcasm and pretending to be politeness are used to cover her rebellion to the society traditional expectation in 19th century. On the other hand, Darcy's violation of CP reflects his initially dismissive attitude towards Elizabeth and her family, a wealthy aristocrat, initially embodies the epitome of upper-class privilege and entitlement. His pride and aloofness stem from his elevated social status and upbringing, contributing to his initially dismissive attitude towards Elizabeth and her family. Darcy's initial interactions with Elizabeth are characterized by condescension and arrogance, reflecting his belief in his superiority due to his wealth and social standing. However, as the novel progresses, both characters undergo significant transformations. Elizabeth's steadfastness and refusal to be intimidated by Darcy's social status challenge him to reconsider his prejudices and assumptions. Darcy, in turn, learns humility and the importance of empathy through his interactions with Elizabeth and her family. Their communication style is more consistent to CP and Politeness Principle. Their evolving relationship transcends social barriers and traditional gender roles, culminating in mutual respect and admiration.

Therefore, analyzing *Pride and Prejudice* from a pragmatic perspective enriches our appreciation of literary works by illuminating the intricate interplay between language, context, and meaning, thereby deepening our understanding of both the text itself and the socio-cultural contexts in which it is situated. In this light, The Cooperative Principle (CP) serves as a theoretical framework for understanding the literary work. Adhering to the Cooperative Principle facilitates smooth communication, fostering mutual understanding and successful conversations. However, at times, individuals may intentionally violate the principle, and which may make the conversation become much more "meaningful" (Carnap 1955). The violation of CP can lead to conversational implicatures for achieving politeness, humor, and other rhetorical effects. People frequently deviate from the CP in real conversations, creating meaningful interactions. The excerpts we selected from *Pride and Prejudice* further support the existing theory that violations of the CP are employed to achieve politeness, humor, and rhetorical effects such as sarcasm and emphasis, as researched by numerous scholars (e.g. Brown and Levinson 1987, Leech

2014). The protagonists' strategic use of metapragmatic strategies underscores the intentional and strategic nature of language use in communication, emphasizing the importance of considering context, intentionality, and metapragmatic awareness in interpreting linguistic behavior. This deeper appreciation of the literary work and its socio-cultural contexts enhances our understanding of both the text and the world it reflects.

6. Conclusion

This paper underscores the pivotal role of the CP framework in pragmatics, particularly in the analysis of communication dynamics, metapragmatic strategies, violations of the CP, and the evolution of communication styles in *Pride and Prejudice*. By viewing communication as a strategic, intentional, and interactive process, pragmatics provides a lens through which the Cooperative Principle framework can offer profound insights into the communication dynamics in *Pride and Prejudice*. This framework illuminates how effective communication serves as a catalyst in resolving social prejudices and fostering romantic relationships in the novel. The protagonists, guided by the Cooperative Principle, tactfully employ metapragmatic strategies to achieve rhetorical effects such as irony, intensification, and challenging conventions, thereby shaping their dynamic relationship. Their frequent violations of the Cooperative Principle significantly impact their early interactions and perceptions of each other. These violations form the basis of their initial negative perceptions of each other. As their relationship progresses, both characters learn to modify their communication styles in response to personal growth and changing circumstances.

Their evolving communication styles contribute to a deeper mutual understanding, as they engage in meaningful conversations and demonstrate mutual respect for each other. Hence, delving into this topic can enable readers to deepen their comprehension of the intricacies of literary language, unraveling the meanings embedded within literary discourse and enriching their appreciation of the complexities inherent in textual interpretation. It demonstrates the intimate link between literary discourse and the essence of literariness, emphasizing the role of pragmatics, particularly the CP framework and metapragmatic awareness, in unraveling the depths of human communication and its impact on relationships.

While the Cooperative Principle framework provides valuable insights into communication dynamics in *Pride and Prejudice*, its application in analyzing the novel has certain limitations. One such limitation lies in the scope of the paper, which has focused primarily on the conversations involving the main characters. However, the interactions of the novel's other characters are equally significant in understanding the complexity of human interaction. Moreover, the interpretation of character interactions and communication styles is inherently subjective, as readers may differ in their perceptions of characters' intentions and motivations. This subjectivity invites readers to engage with the text on a personal level, fostering a deeper connection with the characters and their communication dynamics. Therefore, while the Cooperative Principle offers valuable analytical tools, its application to *Pride and Prejudice* must be approached with a nuanced understanding of the novel's context and the complexities of human communication. There remains much more for further research and exploration within this topic, which in turn open up new spaces for future investigation and inquiry.

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Examples in: English
Applicable Languages: English
Applicable Level: Tertiary