

## Overlap of Meaning: Praise and Flattery in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*

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### Abstract

*The obvious overlap and similarity between praise and flattery makes it difficult sometimes for readers or hearers in general to distinguish between these two acts when facing them. Despite this, little attention has been paid to the overlap between praise and flattery in general and the effect of social variables (power and distance) in particular. The current paper will examine these two acts, praise and flattery as speech acts (that are affected by the truth conditions) in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. It will further present a comprehensive study of the lexical, structural and pragmatic issues involved in praise and flattery. Besides, the present study will examine the relationship between social variables (power and distance) and these two acts. Generally speaking, the obvious overlap between praise and flattery remains a challenge for scholars since many of them till recently use the two acts interchangeably. Therefore, the researcher must assure the fact that praise should be kept distinct from flattery. To attain the objective of the study, the researchers adopt Recanati model of truth conditional pragmatics TCP developed in (2010).*

**Keywords: Speech Act, Praise, Flattery, Recanati's TCP, *Pride and Prejudice*.**

## 1. Introduction

Human language is a highly communicative system, where people use so many speech acts in order to communicate. Foers and Jones (1960, p. 122) state that, "[w]e use language in order to communicate with one another, to express our personal reactions to situation, to stimulate a response in someone else, and for the sake of thinking something out". Thus, language is affected by social relations. Accordingly, the context should be taken into consideration in the analysis of language and this is what pragmatics does. The term pragmatics was coined in the 1930s by the philosopher C.W. Morris who defined it as "the study of the relation of signs to interpreters"(1938:6). Accordingly, pragmatics is concerned with the use of language in social contexts and the ways in which people produce and comprehend meanings through language. Searle (1979, p. 31) asserts that in an indirect speech act "S communicates to H more than he actually says by way of relying on their mutually shared background information, both linguistic and nonlinguistic, together with the general power of rationality and inference on the part of the hearer". This means that the perlocutionary act is not usually explicit to the hearer; especially with some problematic acts such as praise and flattery. Praise sometimes overlaps with flattery and vice versa. The reason behind this overlap is that praise and flattery are subjective to the pragmatic situation. This depends on three dimensions which are: linguistic items, the users of these linguistic items and the situation in which they are used (Holmes, 2008: p.9).

This confusing aspect of the two acts leads the researchers to explore and clarify the nature of praise and flattery acts from a pragma-linguistic point of view. The major aspects of the two acts that will be examined are: the differences between the standing and occasional meanings of praise and flattery encountered in Jane Austen's Novel *Pride and Prejudice*, and the effect of social variables, namely power and social distance, on these two acts. The researchers have a keen interest to shed light on this problematic area by examining these acts in a literary work, namely, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* to see to what extent both speech acts vary or similar. In this regard, it must be made clear that there were many attempts to analyze the novel from literary and linguistic points of view. But from a pragmatic perspective, to the researchers' knowledge, no attempt has been done. That is why the researchers of this study intend to conduct a pragmatic study to see to what extent praise and flattery are pragmatically different.

## 2. An Overview of Speech Acts

Crystal (2008) defines speech acts as "a theory by J. I. Austin (1962) which analyses the role of utterances in relation to the behaviour of speaker and hearer in interpersonal communication". This theory starts with the distinction between two types of speech which are constative and performative. Constative expressions are those expressions which have no action in uttering them, while performative expressions are those which have an action by uttering them. To clarify this idea, Austin presents his famous two examples:

- "The name of this ship is Queen Elizabeth", and,
- "I name this ship Queen Elizabeth" (Austin, 1962: pp.103-106).

Leech (1983, p. 199) asserts that when a speech act is uttered, three basic acts are formed; these include the following:

**1. Locutionary act:** This component implies performing the act of saying something;

**2. Illocutionary act:** This component involves performing an act in saying something; and

**3. Perlocutionary act:** This act maintains performing an act by saying something.

Concerning these three acts, Huang (2007, pp. 103-104) states that the illocutionary acts are under the control of the speaker while the perlocutionary effects are not. Thus, the illocutionary acts are usually determinate whereas the perlocutionary effects are indeterminate and are tied to linguistic forms.

Thomas (1995, p. 50) discussed the notion that there are some cases where the locutionary could have more than one illocutionary force. That is, the meaning of the locutionary act is context-dependent, as illustrated below:

- What time is it?

This utterance could mean one of the following:

- S wants to know the time.
- S is upset because H is late.
- S wants H to leave.

Later on, the student of Austin, Searle developed the speech act theory. He asserted that there are two kinds of speech acts which are direct and indirect speech acts. For instance:

- Switch the fan off.

It is a direct order.

- It becomes cold here, right?

It is a question but an indirect order. (Atchison, 1999: pp.99-100)

### **3. What is Praise?**

To praise someone or something means to offer an assessment of it. But not just any kind of assessment; it must be a favorable assessment (Searle, 1972: p.151). The speech act of praise has been studied by different scholars. For example both Austin and Searle agree that praise is an expressive act. While others, such as Leech (1983: p.104), call praising a speech act whose illocutionary force depends on the social goals. It is essentially polite and takes the form of positive politeness. This relates to Austin's class of behabitives and Searle's expressive (Khudhair Al-Abodi et al., 2007: p.8).

Austin (1962: p.159) states that behabitives have to do with attitudes and social behaviour. Searle (1979: p.15), on the other hand, classifies speech acts in different categories than that of Austin. According to Searle, 'praise' as a speech act belongs to expressives category, which has the function of expressing the speaker's psychological attitude specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content which the illocution presupposes.

According to Mey (1993: p.165), expressive speech acts express an inner state of the speaker, which is considered as a subjective speech act. This supports Austin's idea about expressives that such acts reflect the psychological state of the speaker. Searle (1979: p.15) discussed this point and stated: "In performing an expressive, the speaker is neither trying to get the world to

match the words nor words to match the world; rather the truth of the expressed proposition is presupposed".

As for Leech (1983: p.206), he argues that expressive verbs are normally found in the construction SV (Prep) (O) (Prep) XN, where (Prep) is an optional preposition, and where XN is an abstract noun phrase or a gerundive phrase. For example:

- I praise you for your excellent cooking.
- They praise you.
- He was praising the beauties of English poetry.

Moreover, the speech act of 'praising' can be effectively expressed by what is called 'hedged performative'. A 'Hedged performative' indicates the performance of a speech act indirectly, even though a performative verb is present. Such a type of sentences contains a modal or a semi modal which may carry the illocutionary force (Fraser, 1975:187) as in:

- They who seek the Lord will praise Him. (Psalm,22: p.26)
- I will extol the Lord with all my heart. (Psalm,111: p.7) (Khudhair Al-Abodi et al., 2007: p.9).

#### **4. What is Flattery?**

Since flattery is defined as insincere praise, so it takes the form of praising speech act. According to Austin, flattery belongs to behaviorives. Behaviorives, as what Thakur state, are those speech acts which are used in everyday communication activities (1999, p. 105). Searle, on the other hand, considers it as an expressive speech act. Just like the speech act of praise, it is an act of expressing the speaker's feeling toward the hearer. Some dictionaries consider flattery as the excessive act of compliment.

This arises a question that is why people use the speech act of flattery? In fact, there are two reasons for this question. Firstly, which is the positive side of flattery, it means giving flattery for the sake of compliments only. Secondly, which is the negative side of flattery, it means giving flattery for the sake of deception and bribery (Eylon and Heyd, 2008). But, in both forms of flattery, it is similar to the speech act of praise lexically and syntactically.

In (2008), Eylon and Heyd conducted a study entitled "Flattery" in which they show that flattery is an ordinary vice in a double sense, virtue and vice. Flattery is considered as virtue if its aim was just a form of compliment (by which they mean praise). But, it is considered as a vice if it was for the aim of deception. Concerning the distinction between sincere and insincere flattery, they argued that this is not by the content but it is by the motive of the flatterer, the way these are understood by the flatteree and by third-party observers. This study is concerned with the psychological aspect of praise and flattery. Eylon and Heyd discussed the process of flattery as "this process goes against human nature and can succeed only with the aid of natural human pleasure in praise" (2008: p.13). Their idea is contradicted with Mandeville (1964) who states that "flattery must be the most powerful argument that could be used to human creature" (p.349). This study concludes that praising belongs to politeness strategies, whereas flattering is beyond morality. Unlike this, many studies use these terms praise, flattery, compliment interchangeably. Iman Khudhair et al. (2007) conducted a study entitled "The Use of Praise Speech Act in Selected Texts of the Holy Bible" where they reached to a conclusion that any researcher in this field has to specify his study whether s/he studies the sincere or insincere praise. This is the only way to avoid the overlap between these two acts.

### **5. Social power and distance influence on praise/ flattery**

Social power and distance are among the social variables which may affect the illocutionary act of flattery. Concerning the act of praise, social power does not affect it, since praising act is given for anyone whether he/she is powerful or not. Returning to flattery, it is one of the most important techniques in everyday social interaction, or what Edward Jones (1964) calls 'complimentary other-enhancement'. And Dale Carnegie's, in "How to Win Friends and Influence People" (Carnegie, 1936), defines flattery as 'dole out praise lavishly'. Thus, it is argued that there is now a considerable body of empirical evidence indicating that people do indeed typically increase their liking for someone who expresses approval of them (Backman & Secord, 1959; Jones, Gergen & Davis, 1962). In a broad sense, and in this regard, findings are not surprising, although as Jones has pointed out, one might expect excessive flattery to backfire in certain circumstances. That is why flattery is very influenced by social power.

As mentioned previously, flattery is an unreal intended praise and this act is usually given for a beneficial reason for the speaker. This definition provides a gap for the social power to play an important role in performing this speech act. Usually people flatter those powerful characters in their society in order to get something from them.

According to Brown & Levinson (1987), power and distance of relationships should be taken into consideration when conveying speech acts. In the case of unequal role relations, people always give a flattery to someone with more power whether they like the possession or not. Therefore, people would give flattery when they feel the addressee expects it, regardless if the addressee is an acquaintance or a friend or whether they like the possession.

In a net shell, Rummel (1976) asserts that we found the essence of power in the capacity to produce effects. Social power must also be such a capacity, but one with special attributes, intentionality and orientation towards another person. These two attributes lead other conversational participants to flatter them.

### **6. Recanati's Truth Conditional Pragmatics (2010) Model**

Although this theory is considered as a modern theory, its history is very old. It is even related to the philosophy of Plato about truth. Thus, philosophers like Schlick, Carnap, and Ayer argue that the business of a sentence is to state some fact, which it must do either truly or falsely. This philosophical idea of truth is developed by William James into his theory of truth from Peircean concept of meaning. Peirce in his article entitled "How to Make Our Ideas Clear"(1878) argues that the function of pragmatism is the clarification of our concepts and the determination of the meaning of an utterance by its context effect. James turns Peircean theory of meaning into a theory of truth by explaining meaning in terms of truth. While Peirce emphasizes the general context of a concept, James looks for particular situations in which the meaning of the concept is true. The problems of this theory are: first, what is justified for one community to believe may not be true, second, is how to explain errors or falsehoods? ( Razzaque, 1999: pp.475-476).

Strawson (1973:p.54) reaches to a conclusion that the way the locutionary meaning is assessed (either true or false) depends on what it is that being assessed. So the traditional view about a statement is only a description of state or fact. Yoshitake Masaki (2004) discussed this way of thinking where each statement itself should hold either truth or falsehood. For instance, the sentence,

- “You are a beautiful girl”

is in one sense either true or false in the light of the real world, namely whether the girl is really beautiful or not. Though, Austin points out that this utterance is more than mere description but it does things on its own. The sentence “You are a beautiful girl” can function as praise or flattery. To know the function of such a statement, it should take into consideration the pragmatic context. This was the base of Recanati's theory. Recanati (2010) suggests, in his Truth conditional Pragmatics, that the notion of what is said should be extended to cover such cases.

Recanati, unlike strawson, asserts that the illocutionary meaning amounts to the propositional content of the utterance together with all linguistic meaning (including indicated, or non- truth condition and linguistic meaning) (Corinne Iten, 2005: 48-50).

Truth-Conditional Pragmatics, by Recanati, claims that the meaning of an utterance does not alone lead to a truth-conditional content. The meaning can be pragmatically identified by many truth conditions. This pragmatic movement gives a new direction against the traditional one. Recanati calls the traditional view “Minimalism” [Recanati (2010), p. 5]. Minimalism claims that the content is essentially thought to be “what is said” by the utterance and its constitution is typically thought to be a semantic matter. TCP has new qualifications which are:

(1) An expression will frequently be ambiguous: more than one meaning is conventionally associated with it. If an expression is ambiguous, its contribution to “what is said” will depend on *which* of those conventions the speaker is participating in, on which of its meanings she “has in mind”.

(2) An utterance may contain indexicals (and tenses), deictic demonstratives, or pronouns, the references of which are not determined simply by conventions. What is said by one of these terms depends on reference fixing in context, on what Recanati neatly calls “saturation” (Recanati, 2004: p. 7).

(3) It follows from this, note, that the reference of the term is determined by *a mental state of the speaker*. The context external to the speaker’s mind plays a reference-determining role only to the extent that relations to that context partly constitute the mental state.

(4) So variation in truth-conditional content arising from disambiguation and reference determination is not the issue. The issue is whether there are other variations in content from context to context and if so whether they are semantic or pragmatic. According to truth-conditional pragmatics, there are many more and the extra are pragmatic not semantic; semantics *underdetermines* the content (Devitt, 2013: pp.85-100).

## 6.1 Ideas of TCP

1. The compositionality idea: it holds that semantic interpretation proceeds in two steps. First, simple expression is interpreted by means of lexical rules, which gives meanings to them directly (Recanati, 2010: p.50).

$I(\alpha) = m$

$I$  = interpretation

Simple expression

$m$  is a certain entity

Second, complex expressions are interpreted by means of compositional rules, which give meanings to them indirectly, as a function of the meanings of their parts.

$$I(\alpha*\beta) = f(I(\alpha), I(\beta))$$

$\alpha*\beta$  = complex expression

\* = is an arbitrary mode of combination

f = the value of certain function

2. Semantic flexibility: the idea of semantic flexibility is that the meaning of a word may vary from occurrence to occurrence, and it may vary, in particular, as a function of the other words it combines with (Recanati,2010: p.54). For example:

"He likes my sister"

3. Standing meaning VS occasional meaning: the standing meaning is the meaning which the linguistic form has in isolation. The occasion meaning is the meaning which an occurrence of the word takes on in a particular linguistic context. What varies as a function of the other words in the sentence is the occasion meaning, not the standing meaning (Ibid. p.61).
4. Context-dependence: Recanati calls those expressions which depend mainly on the context to get their meaning as "context-sensitive expressions". He argues that the content of a context-sensitive expression depends on the context of the utterance, so what we need is a context-sensitive lexical rule(1\*) (ibid, pp.67-68):

$$(1^*) I(\alpha)_c = f(c)$$

As for Kaplanian's discussion to this rule (cited in Recanati(2010), f here no longer corresponds to the linguistic expression with which the expression at issue combines, but the function takes the context as an argument. For instance, in the case of praise expression, f is not a matter of that the person who is praised is good or not but what the function of this goodness in the context.

This leads to two terms: the character and content. The character is the constant meaning of the expression, represented as a function from contexts to content. The content (1\*) is the value, which the character determines, given in a particular context.

Recanati calls this notion as "contextual theory". Contextual theory sees the occasion meaning as the context-dependent content of the expression, determined by (i) the standing meaning (character) of the expression and (ii) the context of utterance.

5. Saturation and modulation: there are two types of contextual processes affecting truth conditions: first, mandatory process of 'saturation' through which indexicals and free variables in a logical form are assigned a contextual value. The second is related to the optional process of 'modulation' through which the meaning (m) of an expression is mapped to distinct meaning g(m), where 'g' is a pragmatic function.(Recanati,2010: pp.72-74)

Recanati gives his general point view for this notion which is:

There may be a semantic flexibility even if the expression whose occasional meaning is affected by the neighbouring words is not context-sensitive in the way in which indexical and semantically under-specified expressions are. (2010: p. 75)

To clarify this idea, Recanati presents this example:

"The city is asleep"

A city is not that thing which sleeps. But the interpretation of this expression is either 'sleep' must be interpreted in a metaphorical way meaning Quiet, or 'the city' has to be interpreted metonymically as referring to the people of the city.

According to saturation and modulation, standing and occasion meaning is not distinguished by the expression's character and its context-dependent content, but by means of the distinction between the expression's meaning in the language and the non-literal sense it takes on through the context.

6. Compositionality and modulation: Recanati (2010, pp.78-79) argues that the modulated meaning of an expression  $\alpha$  in context  $c$ , is:

(1\*)  $I(\alpha)_c = f(c)$  where  $f$  is the character of expression  $\alpha$

But in this formula, there is no place for modulation, so it should be changed into:

$I(\alpha*\beta)_c = f(I(\alpha)_c, I(\beta)_c)$

And in a broader sense:

$I(\alpha*\beta)_c = f(\text{mod}(\alpha, c^1)(I(\alpha)_c^1), \text{mod}(\beta, c^2)(I(\beta)_c^2)) = f(g_1(I(\alpha)_c^1), g_2(I(\beta)_c^2))$

## 7. Data Analysis

In order to make the analysis process highly organized and directed to achieve comprehensible results, the researchers follow a particular procedure in the light of the research questions they try to answer; the theoretical framework they apply; and the literary text they choose to be anatomized. This procedure, which is meant to make it easy for the reader to understand the analysis and be convinced with the results, consists of certain steps namely: specifying praise and flattery's utterances within the selected extract; examining the overlap in meaning between praises and flatteries. Besides, examining the effect of social variables, power and distance in the extract and identifying the extract in terms of Recanati's TCP (2010). The researchers have selected purposely the following extract from chapter one of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, to apply the steps of the analysis procedure mentioned above.

### 7.1 The Selected Extract

#### Mrs. Bennet to Mr. Bennet (Ch1, p. 2)

**Mrs. Bennet:** "Oh! Single<sup>(1)</sup>, my dear, to be sure! A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year<sup>(2)</sup>. What a fine thing for our girls!<sup>(3)</sup>"

**Mr. Bennet:** "How so? How can it affect them?"

**Mrs. Bennet:** "My dear Mr. Bennet," replied his wife, "how can you be so tiresome! You must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them."

**Mr. Bennet:** "Is that his design in settling here?"

**Mrs. Bennet:** "Design! Nonsense, how can you talk so! But it is very likely that he *may* fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes."



**Mr. Bennet:** "I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for as you are as handsome as any of them<sup>(4)</sup>, Mr. Bingley might like you the best of the party."<sup>(5)</sup>"

**Mrs. Bennet:** "My dear, you flatter me. I certainly *have* had my share of beauty, but I do not pretend to be anything extraordinary now. When a woman has five grown-up daughters, she ought to give over thinking of her own beauty."

**Mrs. Bennet:** "In such cases, a woman has not often much beauty to think of."

**Mr. Bennet:** "But, my dear, you must indeed go and see Mr. Bingley when he comes into the neighborhood." "It is more than I engage for, I assure you."

**Mrs. Bennet:** "But consider your daughters. Only think what an establishment it would be for one of them. Sir William and Lady Lucas are determined to go, merely on that account, for in general you know they visit no newcomers. Indeed you must go, for it will be impossible for us to visit him if you do not."

**Mr. Bennet:** "You are over scrupulous surely. I dare say Mr. Bingley will be very glad to see you<sup>(6)</sup>; and I will send a few lines by you to assure him of my hearty consent to his marrying whichever he chooses of the girls; though I must throw in a good word for my little Lizzy."

### 7.1.1 Contextualizing the first extract

Mrs. Bennet, in this extract, is having a conversation with her husband, Mr. Bennet. She is telling him the news of the coming of a rich single gentleman to their village. Besides, she is thinking of marrying one of her five daughters to this gentleman. So she tries to convince Mr. Bennet to pay him a visit when he comes in order to know them. But, Mr. Bennet has no interest in such a thing. Mrs. Bennet continues her insisting to visit the gentleman because such a marriage is acquired by visiting him to fall in love in one of them. Otherwise, he will fall in love with another girl in their village. Moreover, Mr. Bennet, in this extract, tries to convince Mrs. Bennet to go without him to see Mr. Bingley. Mr. Bennet talks about Mrs. Bennet's beauty which may be admired by everyone even such a gentleman, Mr. Bingley. But Mrs. Bennet does not believe him and thought that he is flattering her. Then, Mrs. Bennet continues her persuasion to Mr. Bennet by making him think about the good fortune that could be for her daughters. Though, Mr. Bingley is not convinced, he insists on that Mr. Bingley will be glad to see Mrs. Bennet.

### 7.1.2 Analyzing the first extract

The first extract contains six utterances that reflect the speech acts of praise and flattery. This extract is taken from chapter one. Two characters are involved in this extract, namely, Mrs. Bennet and Mr. Bennet. The following table (6.1) summarizes the selected utterances, their producers, receivers, social power and distance:

**Table (6.1): Utterances, their praiser/flatterer, praisee/ flatteree, social power and distance in the first extract**

No.	Praiser/ flatterer	Utterance	Praisee/ flatteree	Form	Social power	Social distance	line no.
1.	Mrs. Bennet	Oh! Single	Mr. Bingley	non- sentence	Low-high	Close	1
2.	Mrs. Bennet	A single man of large fortune; four or five thousand a year.	Mr. Bingley	Phrase	Low- high	Close	1
3.	Mrs. Bennet	What a fine thing for our girls!	Mr. Bingley	Sentence	Low-high	Close	2
4.	Mr. Bennet	for as you are as handsome as any of them,	Mrs. Bennet	Clause	High-low	Close	14
5.	Mr. Bennet	Mr. Bingley might like you the best of the party.	Mrs. Bennet	Sentence	High-low	close	15
6.	Mr. Bennet	I dare say Mr. Bingley will be very glad to see you.	Mrs. Bennet	Sentence	High-low	Close	30-31

#### 7.1.2.1 Examining the overlap in meaning between praise and flattery

Mrs. Bennet, in the first utterance, gives a good feature about the gentleman which is that he is single, preceded by an appreciation interjection "Oh". Mrs. Bennet says that the gentleman has no wife which is good news according to any mother in that village. Mr. Bennet, on the other hand, does not care for such a thing. The standing meaning of "Oh! Single" is praising according to the lexical and syntactic structures, but it may also mean flattery.

The three utterances given in this extract represent the speech act of praise. Though in the answer that is given by Mrs. Bennet for the first utterance indicates that it is not a praise but flattery as she said "you flatter me". This produces an overlap in the understanding such utterances, though they are said in a very simple understandable language.

This overlap is represented through the ambiguous truth for the reader. May be Mr. Bennet has really intended his utterance to be something like Mrs. Bennet is "as handsome as any of them, Mr. Bingley might like you the best of the party" and "I dare say Mr. Bingley will be very glad to see you". At the same time there might be another function for uttering such praises.

### 7.1.2.2 Identifying the social power and distance among the characters in this extract

The above utterances take place between a wife and her husband which means that they are in the scope of the family. The one whom they are talking about has a higher social power than them.

Mr. Bingley is a powerful young man according to the referent Power. This gives him the ability to convey a sense of personal acceptance or approval because of his richness and charisma. These are positive qualities of a young man to be a husband for any woman in the village at that time. Accordingly, Mrs. Bennet is very admirable with Mr. Bingley.

As far as Mr. Bennet is concerned, he is more powerful than Mrs. Bennet according to the legitimate Power. Since, as in the Arabic society, the position of a husband gives the ability to over control the other members of the family. That is why Mrs. Bennet tries to compliment Mr. Bennet in order to convey him because might refuse.

### 7.1.3 Applying the TCP theory of truth

In accordance with the TCP theory of truth, truth is created when the propositional contribution of many context-sensitive expressions to what is directly said is a meaning that undergoes pragmatic adjustment and thus differs from any of the literal contents that the expression might fix. These pragmatic adjustments (or 'modulations' as Recanati calls them) are part of what is said, that is, the relative truth-conditional content of the utterance and the articulated aspect of the Austinian proposition. The Austinian proposition is the full content which is, for example, the possible content of an assertion and which is capable of being true or false (Romero and Soria, 2013: Pp. 159-160).

In particular, this creation is basically a conflict between what is expected and what actually occurs. According to Recanati's TCP, this extract can be analyzed by applying TCP theory of Recanati in which Mrs. Bennet intends something by saying her utterances. Thus, she gives exaggerating praise about the gentleman by which she intends to persuade Mr. Bennet. First of all, these utterances have semantic flexibility; the above three utterances could indicate the meaning of praising or flattery. The function of those utterances is convincing Mr. Bennet to visit him; and it is not only to show the real good feature of that gentleman. Being a single gentleman, concerning their society, is a very admirable feature; yet, it is a matter of self-benefit. In the second utterance Mrs. Bennet repeats that he is single and a rich man. Then, in the third utterance Mrs. Bennet gives the reason why she has given all previous admiration utterances. She asserts that such a gentleman is a suitable husband for one of her daughters. To decide whether they mean praise or they are just a flattery, the researcher will apply Recanati's general formula:

- ❖  $I(\text{utterances}) = \text{function of}(\text{utterance, as praise}) + \text{function of}(\text{utterance, as flattery})$ .
  - The function of these utterances as praise has no benefit for Mrs. Bennet.
  - The function of these utterances as flattery has a benefit for Mrs. Bennet.
  - According to the context of the utterances, Mrs. Bennet cares for her benefit since she has five daughters that she wants husbands for them, so the most appropriate function is the benefit for Mrs. Bennet.

Accordingly, the interpretation of these utterances is the following:

- The standing and occasional meaning of such direct speech acts is praise. Since these acts are true; Mr. Bingley is really single and a rich man. But concerning third, fourth and fifth utterances, their standing meaning is praise while the occasional meaning is flattery. That is because Mrs. Bennet has heard news about a gentleman coming, and she wants to go and see him. So Mrs. Bennet flatters Mr. Bingley just for the sake of persuasion. Though, Mrs. Bennet is not sure about her news about that gentleman though she is not lying, she admires a man who she has not seen yet.
- Concerning Mr. Bennet, he intends something by saying his utterances. Thus, he gives an exaggerated praise about Mrs. Bennet by which he intends to persuade her to go without him. First of all, these utterances have semantic flexibility; they could mean praise or flattery. To decide whether they mean praise or they are just a flattery, the researcher will apply Recanati's formula of compositionality:
  - ❖  $I(\text{utterances}) = \text{function of (utterance, as praise)} + \text{function of (utterance, as flattery)}$ .
    - The function of these utterances as praise has no benefit for Mr. Bennet.
    - The function of these utterances as flattery has a benefit for Mr. Bennet.
    - According to the context of the utterances, Mr. Bennet told Mrs. Bennet such praises in order to not to visit Mr. Bingley himself. So the real function of such praises is for Mr. Bennet benefit.

Accordingly, the interpretation of these for utterances is the following:

- The standing meaning of such direct speech acts is praise, while the occasional meaning of them is flattering since the basis of these flatteries is the news of a rich gentleman's coming. This is very beneficial to Mrs. Bennet because he may be a very suitable husband for one of her five daughters. So, these acts have the right subjectivity according to Recanati(2010,p.88) formula:

AB → A&B (i.e.) utterance → praise& flattery

Either,

AB → A (praise) left subjectivity

Or,

AB → B (flattery) right subjectivity

## 8. Conclusion

This paper is different from other studies already dealt with praise and flattery in many aspects. The first aspect is embodied in the model followed; in other words, the researchers have relied on Recanati's TCP model (2010) in analyzing those two acts while illocutionary force of Austin's and Searle's model is followed in other studies. The second aspect is that praise and flattery, in this paper, has been studied as a

pragmalinguistic phenomenon whereas in the other studies it is considered as sociolinguistic or psychological phenomenon. The researchers of the present study have employed Recanati's TCP theory (2010) as a theoretical framework; so as to test its rules to get the standing and occasional meaning of such acts. The present study has reached to the conclusion that praising act has the same standing and occasional meaning which means it is always a direct speech act. Flattering, on the other hand, has a different standing and occasional meaning which means it is an indirect speech act. This difference between literal and occasional meanings produces a kind of irony in Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Furthermore, praise is a voluntary act without any benefit for the speaker, while flattery is given to fulfil a specific benefit for the speaker. Concerning the social power, praising act is affected by the power of love. In flattery, there is an effect of the legitimate and referent power. As for distance, praise and flattery are not affected by distance since there is always praise and flattery among the family members. Besides, among strangers there is also praise and flattery.

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