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A Psycho-Pragmatic Study of Superstition in Literary Texts

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Abstract: ***The present study investigates the concept of superstition in some literary texts from a psycho-pragmatic view. It aims to present the conceptualization of the superstition in literary texts by employing psycho-pragmatic tools as implicatures, specch acts, items of relevance theory, perceptual organizations and types of deictic expressions. It comes up with two types of superstition which are causal and coincidental in which pledges, condemnation, request, states, description speech act have been used; scopal, epistemic, existential, partitive, and privatalization are utilized as relevance items to avoid ambiguity in the representation of superstition; and perceptual organization as similarity, focus, elaboration are played psychological role to reflects inner feeling and belief of the character in the chosen texts.***

Keywords: ***Superstition, Psycho-Pragmatic, Speech Act, Relevance, Floutings, Perceptual Organization.***

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is never regarded as a medium beyond which exists the subject matter or content of the text. Language permits effective and quick expression, and provides a developed means of conveying complex ideas [1]. The task of connecting language and communication to brain function is multifaceted and complex. It is truly interdisciplinary and it can involve a number of methods and theories.Various aspects of brain functioning and language/communication can be in focus, and it is a challenge to make the results compatible and combine them into a more comprehensive picture [2].

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The concept of psycholinguistics is to unravel the processes of mentality which are implied in acquisition, comprehension, and production of language. Just as psychology is defined as the study of the control of behavior. The mental process of psycholinguistic theory is an account of what constitutes the input to them – In other words, what information is utilized by those processes [3]. Psycholinguistics studies the mental representations and processes involved in language production and interpretation, especially the kinds of knowledge such as factual (encyclopedic), linguistic (linguistic competence), pragmatic (including the ´rules of speaking) and intertextual [4].
Speech production has various broad areas which are stated as follows:

a. Conceptualization, one determines what to say or talk, sometimes, the area of conceptualization is acknowledged as the processing of message-level. One needs to formulate the concepts into the forms of linguistics.
b. Formulation undergoes conceptual items like input and relates them with the connected words which are concerned with them to construct a phonological, morphological and syntactic structure.The structure is phonetically build and articulated, it is resulting in speech. Throughout conceptualization, one develops an intention and selects the concerning information from the memory or stimuli environment to create an utterance [5].

The language of literature is seen as creative and it presents the most unique and delightful expression of the human soul. It is a prominent divergence from what language users grasp the words as their prestigious meaning or their standard order to achieve special effect or meaning. Literature language enables a writer or a poet to convert his concept into an meaningful and effective message. This language that enables a addressee to comprehend its meaning, therefore, it needs painstaking use of linguistic elements to express the sensibility of language. When composing a piece of literature, one needs concern themselves with the phonological, syntactical, and semantic constituents of language, amongst others are the additional linguistic aspects as plot, setting, theme, characterization, imagery and motif [6].

Superstition is a practice or belief which results from fear of the unknown, ignorance, trust in chance, or magic or a false conception of causation [7] Superstitious behaviors have origins of false designation of cause and effect. It is an component of an illogical or supernatural idea which is found in most cultures and is related to good, or bad luck. Superstition as a term is myth, fabricated, spurious action, legend, absurd narration, or a half-belief.it is a practice which has not a rational thought. Such practice has its own functions in societies.Superstitions can be religious, personal, and cultural[8].

The study answers the questions:

1. What are the types of superstition employed in selected literary texts?
2. How are the kinds of speech acts embedded in the literary texts?
3. What are the flouted the maxims in chosen texts?
4. How are items of relevance theory effected to remove ambiguity in texts?
5. What are the perceptual organization in such texts?

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The study aims for

1. Investigating the kinds of superstitions in texts.
2. Figuring out the kinds of speech acts in the superstitious literary texts.
3. Identifying the flouted maxims.
4. Pinpointing the items of relevance theory in the selected text.
5. Tracing out the perceptual organizations in the texts.

2. RELATED WORKS

2.1. Superstition

Superstition can not seen as abnormal or irregular behavior and it is not specified to cultures, religion, race, or nationality. It is not merely as a result of people of low conscious, and lacking education, but humans comprises it like a part of nature, built into one's neuronal mainframe.

i. Causal superstition has a sense of a conscious belief in that it is a interplay between the events or actions, as it is explored in Skinner's experiment
ii. Coincidental superstition is the ambiguous correlation between a behavior and an outcome which is casual like explored in beliefs of the origin on disasters which is natural in different cultures[8].

Superstition concentrates on a motivationalconstituents. Researchers observe fear and uncertainty as main motivators, they argue that the main aim of superstitious behavior is to lessen the tension which associated with doubt and fill the space of the unknown. Uncertainty entails psychological cost in which the feeling one observes, understands, predicts, and controls one's environment grants psychological benefits since superstitions offers people an understanding even when there is not information enough to develop and enhance an accurate causal explanation superstitions sound to be particularly when people are motivated to grasp and control their environment [9].

Superstition as subjectivity matters which indicates the manner of which the natural languages, their structure and their normal way of operation, are employed to supply the locutionary partipant's expression of himself and his attitudes and thoughts. This is an instance of subjective analysis.Traugott states that subjective utterances have a best semantic or pragmatic meaning which clues speaker viewpoint or attitude "John waved as he passed" [10].

2.2.Psycho- Pragmatics

According to Allott [11], psycho-pragmatics which is the new and recent developmental field of experimental pragmatics, it rises from being the interconnection of psycholinguistics and pragmatics, reasoning of the psychology and late developmental pragmatics, this new field is a relatively new area of work.

Psycho- pragmatics is the psycholinguistic approach of facets of language in both mind and use. It is primarily concerned with the conditions of how human beings comprehend, store, produce and conceive the utilization of language from the edge point of psychology. Psycho-pragmatics involves acquisition, or developmental pragmatics researches the empirical advancement of pragmatic competence in children, employing both experiments as well as observation. Experimental pragmatics explores controlled experiments, such significant

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pragmatic theories and issues, for instance, metaphor, scalar implicature, speech acts, reference, relevance theory and Gricean pragmatic theory [12].

2.2.1. Implicature

Implicature is a constituent of speaker's meaning which comprises a facet of what is intended in a speaker's expressions without being involved of what is stated. What a speaker wants to communicate is far richer in distinguished manner than what she explicitly expresses; linguistic meaning in the message conveyed and understood basically underdetermines. Speaker embeds pragmatic principles to fill this gap and enumerates on hearer to promote the principles for the purposes of utterance interpretation which are similar. [13] Quantity adheres to the quantity information in which the following maxim is observed, make speaker's contribution as informative as required. The quality is seen in the maxim of telling the truth, and third is manner in which how what is said is to be said [14].

2.2.2. Deixis

A term which is technically utilized in semiotics, semantics, and pragmatics for particular linguistic items which construct in sensitivity way to context and for the uses of linguistic items which include this type of sensitivity. The word of deixis comes from the Greek word has meaning to point out or to show ([15] & [16]). The personal grammatical category reflects the different roles or contributions which persons perform in the speech event: addresser, and hearer. These individual and social roles shift in the conversational turn-taking course in which the origin shifts with them "A's I becomes B's you, A's here becomes B's there " [13].

2.2.3. Context

The term context utilizes any text which accompanies or precedes specific signifying unit, and on that its meaning depends. In this sense context can be divided into explicit, implied or situational.For instance, the explicit context in political context is documented on which the speaker establish his arguments; the implied context can be reasons or events which give rise to the speech while the situational context refers to the set of circumstances under which it might take place and which also have a bearing on the meaning produced [16].

i. Content (meaasage). One context denotes different message form from message content would be: "He prayed, saying."(quoting message form) in contrast with "He prayed that he would get well" (reporting content)
ii. Setting indicates the place, circumstances, and time of the action.
iii. Scene can be differentiated from the setting since it has the "psychological sense,"
iv. Purposes- outcomes. it conventionally expected outcome [17].

2.2.4. Relevance Theory

Relevance can be observed in senses of processing efforts and contextual impacts. Contextual effects or impacts are comes out from the interconnection of current information with an existing assumptions.The contextual effects needs mental effort, that relies primarily on the complexity of linguistics and contextual assumptions. expressions are not relevant unless they accomplish the needed contextual effects to be deserve the addressee's attention instead of getting him to gratuitous processing effort in achieving those effects. Linguists like Sperber

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and Wilson says that the hearer requires the interpretation which is relevant. Processing effort is a notion which has a major function in the relevance theory, and it permits the readers to clarify the reason of preferences one's interpretation rather than another [18].

In the framework of relevance-theoretics, implicatures and explicatures are taken into consideration. Sentences are seen as abstract semantic representations that do not express propositions if they do not have truth circumstances, their sensible (logical) forms is completed and developed in inferential way. Disambiguation, reference designation, and enhancement of ambiguous expressions which have inferential tasks under consideration related to the determination of the lower-level, propositional, or explicatures of an expression [18].

It is clarified that the attributive and referential ambiguity for indefinite descriptions is pragmatics. It can be dealt by means of relevance [18]. Means of relevance theory are:

i. scopal specificity that is concerned with the state of the indefinite which is dependent either on intentional predicate or quantifier,
ii. Epistemic specificity is established on the addresser's mental and cognitive state, that is. if there is in mind an intended referent or not.
iii. Partitive specificity which is interested by the existence of a known discourse set that contains the referent of the indefinite noun phrase.
iv. Existential indefinite noun phrase denotes the number of items which is involved to validate a content.The noun phrase affects its interpretation from being limited by existential closure or sentential operator[18].
v. Privatalization is the way or process of the agent individualization the collective. He mixes his previous experience with the existence one. In other words, he makes an individual understanding of collective experience [19].

2.2.5. Speech Act

The theory of speech act which is presented by the Austin to refer to the producing of a linguisti cutterances. It has the role of doing things or perform actions rather than saying only. The theory is refined, systematised, advanced by John Searle. Inter-language and cultural differences in speech acts can be main pursuits of inter-language and cross-cultural pragmatics [20].

Huang says [21] that there are five classes of speech act are explained below.

a. Assertives (representatives) in which speakers express his speaker’s intention. They comprises asserting, claiming, concluding, stating, as well as reporting. The addresser represents the world in performance of such acts like one believes it is, hence, the words suit the world of thought.
b. Directives are acts that introduces attempts by the addresser to get other participants to do something. They introduces the speaker’s wish or desires for the recipients to perform the action. Such (paradigmatic) cases consist of requests, advice, questions, and commands, and In the employment of a directive, the speakers desires to conclude course of action on the side of the hearer in the future, thus, making the world fit the words across the participants other than addresser.
c. Commissives are acts which commit the addresser to do future actions. They present the intention or wishes of the speaker’s to make something done. It includes pledges, refusals,

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promises, in addition to threats d.Expressives which are forms of acts in that present a psychological states or attitudes in the speaker like sorrow, joy, and dis/likes. They consist of congratulating, blaming, apologizing, thanking, and praising.

d. Declaratives are those acts that impact instant changes in existence state of affairs since they depend on the elaborate extralinguistic positions as president or head of institutions for their successful performance. Considering that agent A produces an expression in a dialogue which is directed to the other recipient B, one distinguishes five steps which are connected in logical way in B' s mental processes:

Stage 1. A' s states of mentality is rebuilt by B embarking from the locutionary act.
Stage 2. The meaning of speaker in which B reconstructs communicative intentions of the first agent (A), involving the case of indirect speech.
Stage 3. The impact of communications, which comprises the following processes which are: (a) attribution, where recipient (B) attributes to agent close mental states like intentions and guesses; and (b) adjustment in that B'smental circumstances relating the issue of the conversation is changed as a consequence of agent's expressions.
Stage 4 designates reaction in which recipient produces the specific intentions that he communicates in his reply.
Stage 5 indicates response one through which B or recipient produces a clear communicative response [22].

2.2.6 Perceptual Organization

a. Elaboration is a part of the process of constructing a mental representation in comprehension and it has been displayed to support recall of the particular information.
b. Focus is the way in that specific items of information in the text are easier to recall or retrieve than others. A distinction is made between items in explicit focus, that have been observed in a text and it foregrounded by the reader, and the items which is in implicit focus, which are have been specifically mentioned.
c. Simile is one of comparison models, where the listener or reader balances the attributes of two items as" Sermons are like sleeping pills"(23:111)

3. METHODOLOGY

3. 1. Data Description

Five texts are taken from Synge ' s play of Riders to the Sea [24] to be the data of the concept of Superstition. The place of the play is the Aran Islands. The play explores the effect of superstition on the lives of its people.

3.1. Research Design

A mixed method is used in the analysis of the chosen data. According to Creswell [25] a mixed methods research design is seen as a procedure for collecting and analyzing the data. It is "mixing" both quantitative and qualitative research methods in a selected study to grasp a research problem. First, the qualitative method of analysis which is employed to figure out the

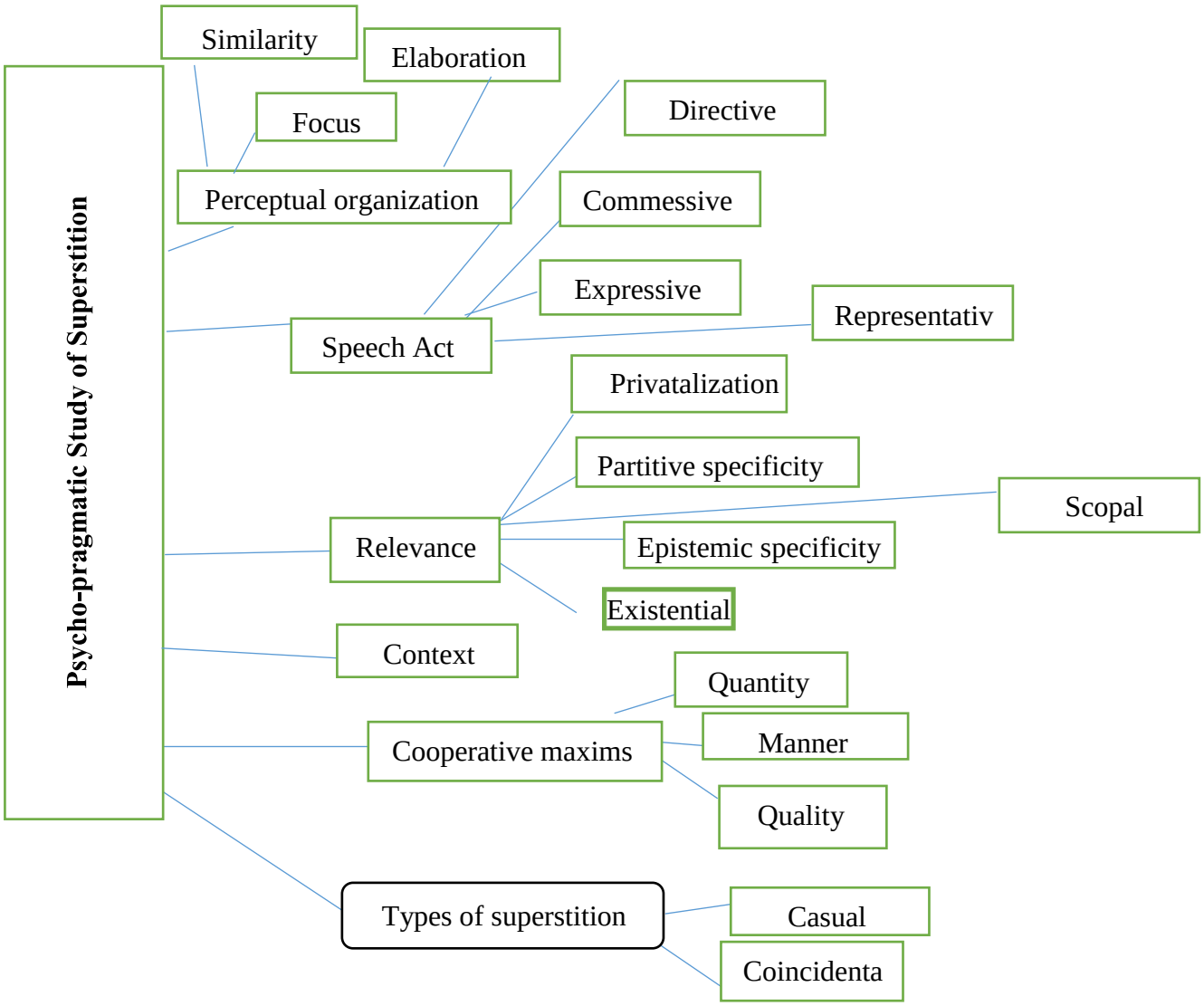
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psycho-pragmatic items that are used in the representation of the concept of superstition. Second, the quantitative method is utilized to conclude which item is frequently repeated.

3.2.The Model

The developed model of the study consists of Searl's [20] model of speech act, Hymes' [18] contextual model, Sperber 's and Wilson's ([18] & [19]) theory of relevance, Field'[24] perceptual organization, and Mandal's [8] types of superstitions. The developed model is summed in the following figure1:



3.3. Data Analysis

The causal superstition is employed in the text links events together. The overuse of if conditional in the texts puts the setting, hints, and illustrates the scene of Maurya's psychological frustration because of her fear of losing her son. Privatalization is also utilized

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supernatural actions to her sons' death as in "wind … it rising in the night". Existential epistemic is observed in "there was" to confirm her superstition beliefs. Epistemic specificity is Murya 's intention that she loses her son. Maurya utilizes two kinds speech acts which are representative and expressive. She expresses her grief, sorrow through description of the state. The superstition is observed in her belief of supernatural actions in "there was a star up against the moon, … " Maurya flouts cooperative maxim of manner since her speech does not come in right order and it is not plain. Focus is seen in "thousand horses you had" and "where there is" to display the amount of her grief. She also flouts the maxim of quality through utilizing hyperbole in her comparison between her son thousands of horses and rhetorical question "where there is one son only?" She also flouts quantity maxim because of repetition in "hundred horses"

Text 2
Casual superstition is used in this text. She state Bartley's situation. Maurya utilizes representative (state) and directive (pray in "Son of God spare us") Irony and similarity flouts the maxims of quality in her attempts to hide something from herself. Her deviation from the right syntactic structure as ellipsis of auxiliary flouts the manner maxim.

Text 3
The casual superstition is observed in the correlations between the fearful dream of Bride Dara and the death of her son. Expressive speech act is seen in her fear. Hyperbole flouts the maxim of quality in that the mother sees a terrible, fearfullest thing as she describes it like no one has seen it before. Manner maxim is in "Speaking very slowly". Scopal specificity is noticed in qualifier (very) to show her state of fear.

Text 4
Maurya uses coincidental superstition because she links between behavior and its outcome. Three kinds of speech acts are seen in the texts which are representative in description the situation, directive in prays" God speed you," " the blessing of God on you", and expressive in her action of crying. Maurya flouts the maxim of quality in "something choked the words". She flouts manner. Scopal specificity are embeded in qualifiers as" A little defiantly" and "He went by quickly" which come after seeing Bartley in his horse to predict what will happen next. Epistemic specificity is seen in" God speed you," which is the Maurya 's intention or what is found in her head. Existential is in "there was Michael upon" to build her mental state of her belief(superstition). Many instances of personal deixis are he, I, and him. Temporal deictic shifts between past to present have been observed in the texts to state the correlation between past and present. One can observe the focus in "says he" to show a motivation of superstition.

Text 5
Coincidental type of superstition is embedded in the text. This scene is in front of corps of her son. Muraya states the bad behavior of the sea and its outcome. The sea leave no son alive. State speech act is seen in " I won't care what way the sea is…" Contamination is the expressive speech act which is seen since Muraya condemns sea of her losing. Pledges as commessive

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acts which are used many times in "I'll … crying…". Directive speech act is observed in requests when Muraya's request Nora "Give … Water". The utilization of Tautology and elaboration flout the quantity maxim. The mother flouts qualitative maxim through utilizing irony. She depicts sea as a power which kill her sons. Existential is used in the expression "there's " to stress her belief of illogical things. Partitive and specificity can be observed in the indefinite "a great stir", "a small sup". Personal deixis is seen in overuse of pronoun I which represent her mental states and commissive (pledges). Temporal deixis is utilization of "will" there was Michael upon which refer to future events. Spatial deixis is employed in east, west, south, north, to show her great suffering. Focus as perceptual organization is seen in "They're all gone now".

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The tables below show that representative act records 51.51%. Relevance strategies are used to avoid ambiguity. Three of them record 23.07 %since they reflect the intended referent of the addresser. Quality maxim is flouted and it marks 44.44% in the selected texts because of irony, and rhetorical question. The most prevalent type of superstition is casual in which it marks 62. 5%. Personal and temporal deixis have high percentages in the texts. They marks 39.02% since they uncover the mother's inner suffering and fear. The perceptual organization is highly seen in focus 50% in which the character in the play attracts the addressee 's attention and sympathy to her illogical belief (superstition) so that they do not travel or ride the sea.

The following figures and tables are utilized to illustrate the percentages of psycho-pragmatic strategies in the texts of superstitions;

Table 1. Types of Speech Acts

Speech Acts	Freq.	Percentages
Representative	17	51.51
Commessive	5	15.15
Directive	4	12.12
Expressive	7	21.21
Total	33	99.99

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Fig 1. Percentage of Speech Acts

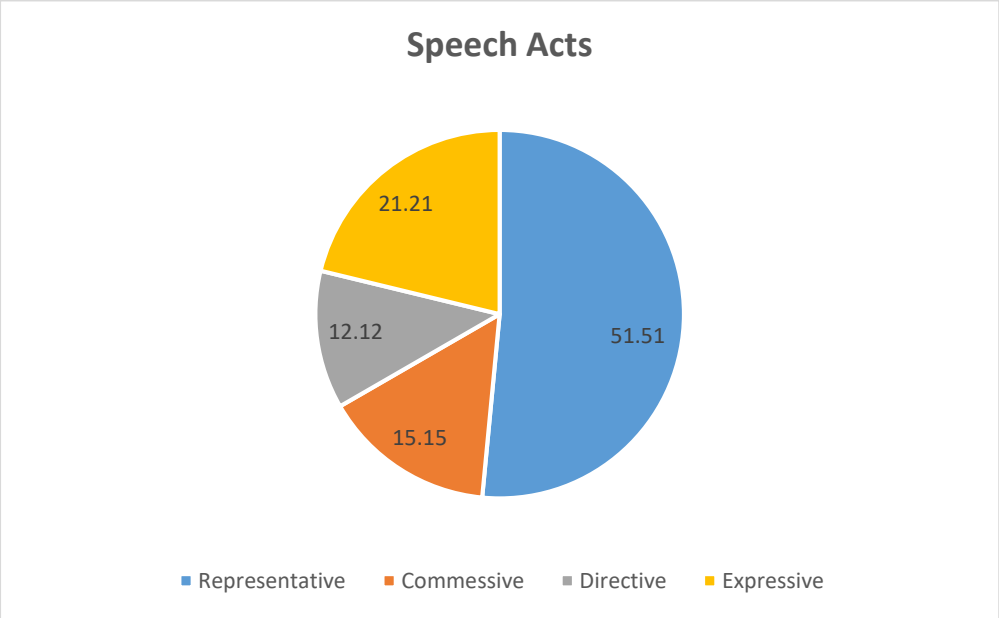
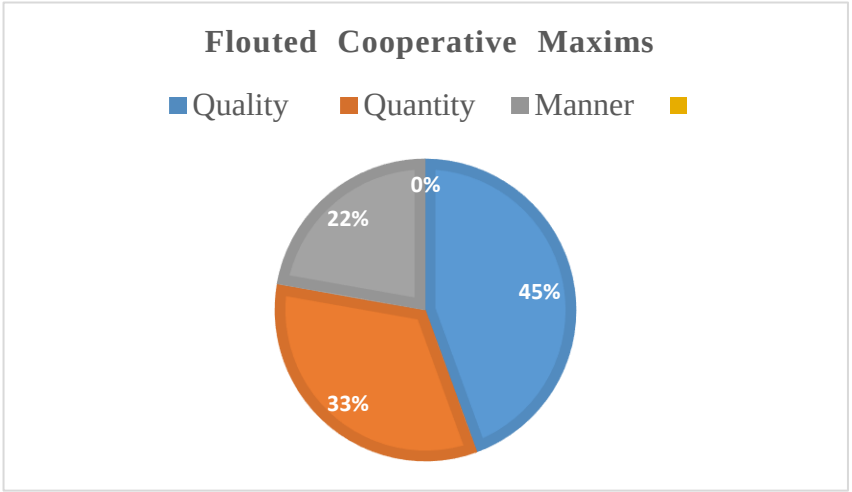


Table 2. Flouted Cooperative maxims

Cooperative Maxims	Freq.	%
Quality	4	44.44
Quantity	3	33.33
Manner	2	22.22
Total	9	99.99

Fig 2. Flouted of Cooperative Maxims



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Table 3. Relevance Strategies

Relative Strategies	Freq.	%
Scopal	3	23.07
Epistemic	3	23.07
Existential	3	23.07
Partitive	2	15.38
Privatalization	2	15.38
Total	13	99.97

Fig.3 Relevance Strategies

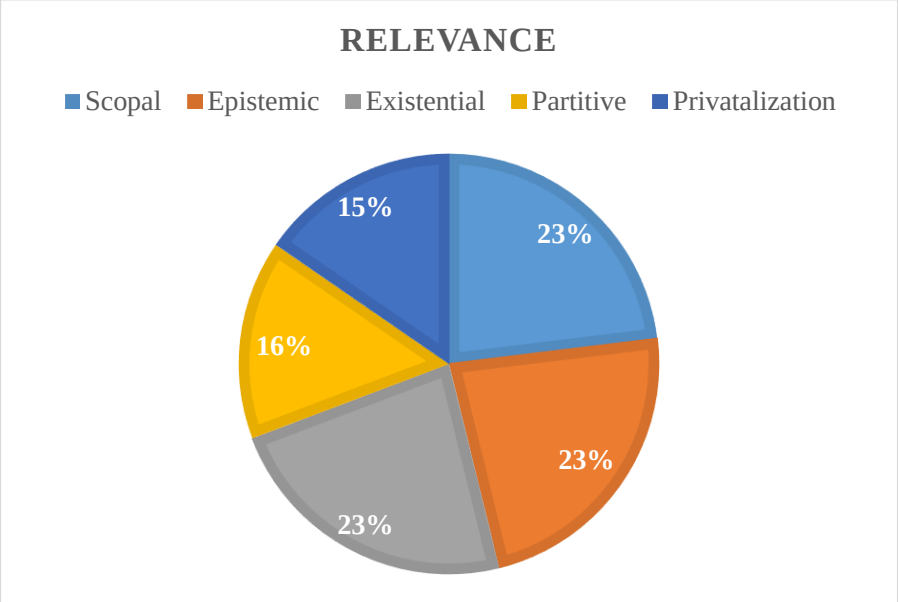


Table 4. Types of superstition

Types of superstition	Freq.	%
Casual	5	62.5
Coincidental	3	37.5
Total	8	100

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Fig 4. Types of Superstitions

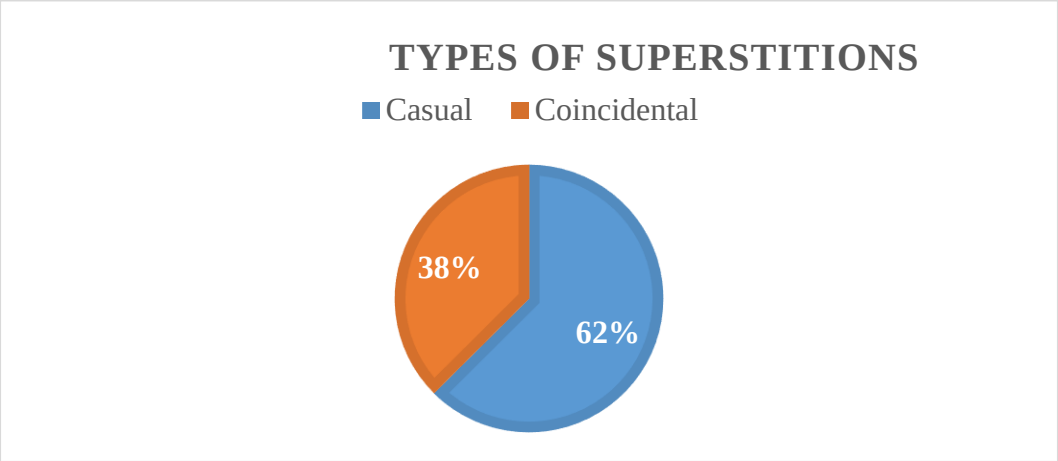
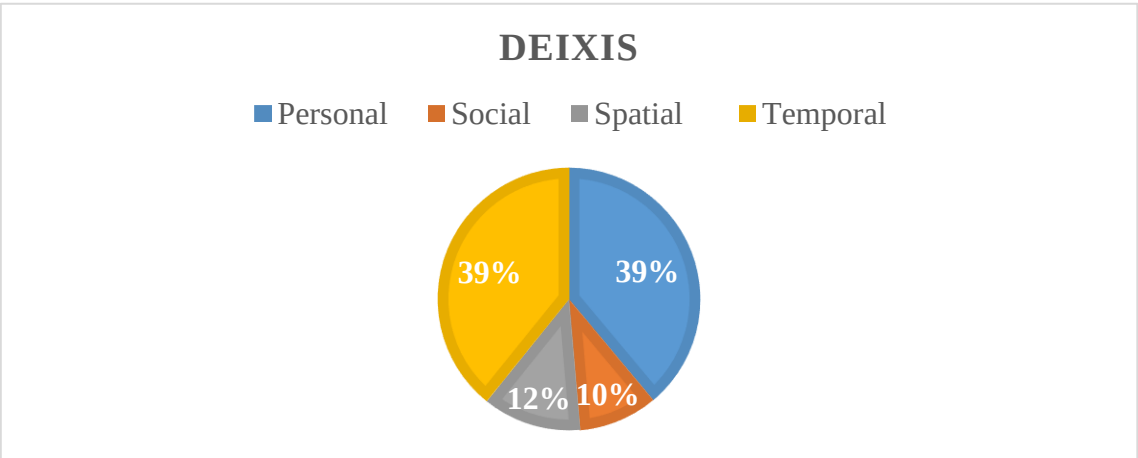


Table 5. Types of Deixis

Types of Deixis	Freq.	%
Personal	16	39.02
Social	4	9.75
Spatial	5	12.19
Temporal	16	39.32
Total	41	99.98

Fig. 5. Deixis



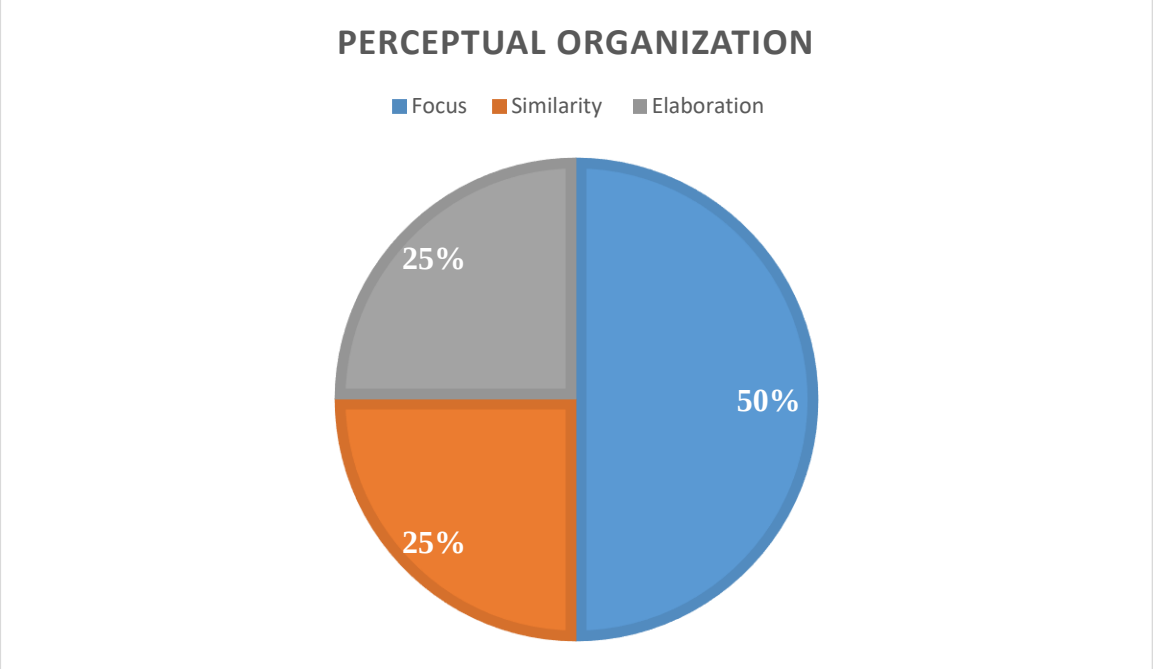
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Table 6. Perceptual organization

Perceptual organization	Freq.	%
Focus	6	5
Similarity	3	25
Elaboration	3	25
Total	12	100

Fig 6. Perceptual organization



Appendix
Text 1
If it wasn't found itself, that wind is raising the sea, and there was a star up against the moon, and it rising in the night. If it was a hundred horses, or a thousand horses you had itself, what is the price of a thousand horses against a son where there is one son only? [24: 24]

Text 2
I went down to the spring well, and I stood there saying a prayer to myself. Then Bartley came along, and he riding on the red mare with the gray pony behind him (she puts up her hands, as if to hide something from her eyes.} The Son of God spare us, Nora 24:
36]

Text 3
"Speaking very slowly. I've seen the fearfulest thing any person has seen, since the day Bride Dara seen the dead man with the child in his arms "[24: 36].

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Text 4
A little defiantly. I'm after seeing him this day, and he riding and galloping. Bartley came first on the red mare; and I tried to say " God speed you," but something choked the words in my throat. He went by quickly; and " the blessing of God on you," says he, and I could say nothing. I looked up then, and I crying, at the gray pony, and there was Michael upon it with fine clothes on him, and new shoes on his feet [24: 37].

Text 5
They're all gone now, and there isn't anything more the sea can do to me. I'll have no call now to be up crying and praying when the wind breaks from the south, and you can hear the surf is in the east, and the surf is in the west, making a great stir with the two noises, and they hitting one on the other. I'll have no call now to be going down and getting Holy Water in the dark nights after Samhain, and I won't care what way the sea is when the other women will be keening. Give me the Holy Water, Nora, there's a small sup still on the dresser [24: 42].

5. CONCLUSIONS

1. Superstitions is represented in the texts by using various kinds of speech acts as states, description(representative), pledges (commessive), request as directive, and condemnation as well as grief (expressive).
2. Relevance strategies as scopal, epistemic, existential, partitive, and privatalization are embedded to show mental image, hence, they are used to link mind and the use of language.
3. The flouting of cooperative maxims as quality, quantity, manner are contributed tillustrate the theme of superstition.
4. Two types of superstitions are casual and coincidental in the data.
5. Perceptual organization in the selected texts are explicit focus that is represented in foregrounding, similarity, and elaboration which are used to show the motivational production of the superstitions as fear, disappointment, and suffering.

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