

**DISCOURSE ANALYSIS ON SIGNIFICANT USAGE OF VAGUE LANGUAGE IN
EDWARD ALBEE'S *THE ZOO STORY***

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ABSTRACT: *Vague language is only one of the many aspects of English language. But we cannot disregard the fact that vague language plays an important part in our daily lives in communicating with others. As a matter of fact, we see no reason why we have to discourage its usage, instead we have to make a deliberate attempt to encourage all interested parties and those intellectuals to make further research leading to vague language acceptance. To be able to appreciate vague language usage we have had our goal to expound how the linguistic theories and well-founded methodology would serve its purpose. You would later realize that analysis of vague expressions showed that their meanings were themselves vague. By this, we meant that it was not possible to turn them into something precise but only for the purpose of clarification and analysis. It was not our aim to present an all-knowing solution to queries surrounding vague language but to provide better understanding that motivated even the least appreciative particular person or society to embrace its usage. There were various reasons for vagueness as vague expressions occurred more frequently in spoken English, and that some were highly unfavourd in written English. In this paper, we tried to figure out how vague language was applied in *The Zoo Story*, a short play written by Albee.*

KEYWORDS: Vagueness, Implicatures, Imprecision, Ambiguity, Memory Loss, Co-Operative Principle

INTRODUCTION

First of all, we must define what does vague language means and why is it necessary to have at least sufficient if not a comprehensive view on the topic. We will notice a lot of words that would remain vague even our intention is to use them as clear and precise as much as possible. So this becomes our motivation in this report to present salient features of vague language that somehow clear the path and make us appreciate it's usage in our everyday life.

Channell (1994) has pointed out that there are in English a number of ways of 'being vague'. "Vagueness has been observed to occur widely in language use, and we have noted some investigators wishing to maintain that *all* language use is vague in some way" (19). She defines that "an expression or word is vague if:

- a. it can be contrasted with another word or expression which appears to render the same proposition;
- b. it is 'purposely and unabashedly vague';

- c. its meaning arises from the 'intrinsic uncertainty' referred to by Peirce" (20).

The desire to do something that might help people understand each other and avoid conflicts is such a huge task. It is done through clearness of speech that this can be attainable. Tashi (2006) says that:

the word is the most direct manifestation of the thought; hence it is one of the most important agents of influence when it clothes itself with precision and clearness, indispensable in cooperation, in creating conviction in the minds of one's hearers. The first quality of the speakers who could be convincing should be able to think deeply of what they wish to say. Speech is the distributor of the thoughts that surround us. The thought was always expressed in language – clear and exact, formed of words that all could comprehend or merely understand the ideas (33).

In this study, we will try to figure out how vague language is applied in *The Zoo Story*, a short play written by Albee (1958). The title alone is intriguing it makes you want to discover what is in it to merit attention. Actually, the title is used figuratively, but it does serve its purpose.

Significance of the Study

Nevertheless, vague language is such a broad term that denotes meanings beyond common sense and at times above comprehension. It's all up to the level of understanding of the hearer or recipient whether to interpret vagueness positively even when it's not so, since going to translate negatively might prove detrimental to our feelings, though failure to perceive might work to our disadvantage.

Black (2006) has stated that, "the ways in which we interpret ordinary language use are relevant to the ways in which we interpret literary discourse – which is only the language of the time, written by people who are more adept at manipulating its nuances than most of us" (1). Further, she is of the opinion that, "it is to be expected that literary discourse will differ from ordinary conversation and some written discourse since any published work is subject to a process of careful composition and much revision" (3). That is to say that there are procedures developed by linguists and pragmatists as a tool for interpretation whether we are listening to a friend, reading a newspaper, or reading a literary work. And this is where the significance of the study of vague language will be fully utilized.

Moreover, an excerpt by Black (2006: 80-82), we have learned that the study of vague language comes close to the study of relevance theory developed by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995). Since much of vagueness revolves around implicatures, and so is about relevance theory that rely mostly on implied interpretations. For an utterance to be relevant, it requires only that it makes some change in the hearer's cognitive environment. According to them, communication is seen as the joint responsibility of both speaker and hearer. The theory "assumes that the speaker will encode the message in such a way as to make it relevant to the hearer" (1995: 169). The implicatures the hearer derives from it are her/his own responsibility, and not wholly predictable by the speaker. However, if the hearer derives an implicature that the speaker could not have foreseen, it cannot be consistent with the principle of relevance – then ambiguity enters leading to a failure of communication. If two different interpretations of an utterance come

simultaneously to the hearer's mind, and both are consistent with principle of relevance, there is no way of choosing between them, and communication fails (1995: 169).

Objectives of the Study

By the mere definitions of vague language, there appear to have been two contradictory points of view:

- that vagueness in a language is a bad thing
- that vagueness in a language is a good thing

Our objective is to point out another important aspect of vagueness as noted by Ulmann (1962). He notes that "[i]f one looks more closely at this vagueness one soon discovers that the term is itself rather vague than ambiguous: the condition it refers to is not a uniform feature but has many aspects and may result from a variety of causes. Some of these are inherent in the very nature of language, whereas others come into play only in special circumstances" (118).

Here, Ulmann (1962) "attributes vagueness to four factors:

- a. general character of words;
- b. meaning is never homogenous (i.e. it is context-bound);
- c. lack of clear-cut boundaries in the non-linguistic world;
- d. lack of familiarity with what the words stand for or lack of knowledge or the words being used or the subject under discussion" (Cited in Channell 1994: 6).

According to Deese's (1974) approach "vagueness of communication is inherent in the structure of our ideas, rather than in the language system" (Cited in Channel 1994: 7). Channel (1994) indicates that Deese's "argument is that vagueness is not a concept which applies to language, but rather to the ideas which language expresses" (8).

Other scholars such as Crystal and Davy (1975) have also explained the feature of vagueness and call it, imprecision. "They give four reasons for vagueness: (a) memory loss – the speaker forgets the correct word; (b) the language has no suitable exact word, or the speaker does not know it; (c) the subject of the conversation is not such that it requires precision, and an approximation or characterization will do; and, (d) the choice of a vague item is deliberate to maintain the atmosphere" (Cited in Channell 1994: 8).

Hypotheses of the Study

This study seeks to justify or provide explanation as to why and how the existence of vague words and expressions come into play in the language system of English under the following major theses:

1. The use of vague language in accordance to applied linguistic study
2. Vagueness and communication reconciliation
3. Distinction between semantics and pragmatics

As Channell (1994) puts it, "the hypothetical division into semantics and pragmatics enables us to have useful insights into the nature of language understanding. Given this hypothetical division we can say that: semantics + pragmatics = meaning" (29). Semantics is the study of meaning while pragmatics is the study of language usage.

4. Distinction between vagueness and ambiguity

Confusing vagueness with ambiguity may lead to false attribution of polysemy (or the consistence of many possible meanings for a word or phrase). It is important to understand that a sentence or an utterance can be both ambiguous and vague.

5. The place of vagueness in the study of language

Our analysis about vague language therefore shall require us as an analyst to have sufficient knowledge on pragmatics as main prerequisite. This is necessary if we are to be effective in understanding and consequently processing vague words. We have learned from Levinson (1983) that it's crucial for pragmatics as Grice's theory (1975) explains "how there can be interesting discrepancies between speaker-meaning (Grice's meaning-nn) and sentence-meaning" (17). The distinction is sometimes talked about in terms of conveyed meaning vs literal meaning. Levinson (1983) claims that "there appear to be general conventions about the use of language that require ... a certain degree of implicitness in communication with the consequence that is virtually ensured that what the speaker means by any utterance" (17-18).

As van Dijk (1983) has noted that "we can specify some fairly general characteristics such as:

1. *Functionality*. If a discourse is taken to be the utterance of a sequence of sentences in some social context, then the various properties of such a discourse are assumed to be *functional* with respect to various aspects of the social context.
2. *Meaningfulness*. A textual sequence of sentences is distinct from an arbitrary collection of sentences in the sense that, in principle, such a sequence should be meaningful. One of the typical conditions for meaningfulness of a discourse is some kind of unity, which is usually described in terms of local or global *coherence*". (25).

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

There are two areas of work in theoretical pragmatics which are of particular relevance in the description and explanation of vague language use.

1. Conversational implicature by Grice (1975):

Channell (1994) has explained that "Grice's theory of implicature assumes that conversation is a co-operative venture, and that speakers adhere to what he called the Co-operative Principle (CP). According to this principle, speakers try to send understandable communicative messages within the context of any particular conversation, and hearers

assume that speakers are doing this. The CP involves both parties knowing, and using, four rules for conversation, which Grice called maxims. They are as follows:

1. the maxim of Quality [be truthful, according to the evidence you have]
2. the maxim of Quantity [be informative, but not overinformative]
3. the maxim of Relevance [be relevant to the conversation]
4. the maxim of Manner [say things clearly, unambiguously, briefly]" (32-3).

Channell (1994) claims that there are two ways in which Grice's theory is relevant to vagueness "[o]ne way in which the maxims are relevant to vague language is that vague expressions may be used to enable speakers to follow the maxims . . . The other way in which the CP is of interest for the study of vague expressions, is that they are often used when one of the maxims is flouted. Grice explained that in conversations, speakers very often break rather than follow one or more maxims. When this happens, specific effects are created for hearers, which he called implicatures" (33).

2. Scalar implicatures:

Channell (1994) also indicates that there is a "second important area of pragmatics that is within the theory of implicature, and is the analysis of what have come to be known as scalar implicatures. These are created by choice of one member from a set of related linguistic items, where the choice implies further meanings than are encoded" (33).

Under these circumstances, among all others, we will be applying approximating quantities with non-numerical vague quantifiers in Chapter 5, as well as another area of use of vagueness in English stated in Chapter 6 – reference to categories, from the ‘Vague Language’ book of Channell (1994). We consider them appropriate since *The Zoo Story* is densely populated with vague words that need the application of these approximators / quantifiers.

Analysis/Application

We come now to application of vague words or expressions from *THE ZOO STORY* based on Chapters 5 and 6 which are outlined above. For our reference, we will use the terms speaker and listener to be concise and avoid being redundant due to frequent use of these words which corresponds to Jerry (speaker) and Peter (listener) respectively, and vice versa depending on the role or from whose utterance where the excerpt with vague passage or expression is found. For our forthcoming analysis, we offer these words of caution and advice though. You may find that there are some contradictions at times when there's a need to expound since these result to offer some options which are both acceptable. Let's say for instance, when we are talking about CP there are two relevant application with its usage in vague language, either to follow all or flout one of the four maxims. Thus, in our analysis it is often the case that we can view both ways as situation requires that make the use of vague language significant.

- 1) Context: Jerry stands in front of Peter while he keeps on asking him personal questions trying to figure out Peter's reaction and position.

Jerry : ---“Wait until you see the expression *on his face*” (19).

Conversational implicature: The CP specifically the maxim of manner is flouted. By not saying things clearly while making reference to personal pronoun 'his' as if referring to someone else other than the speaker himself is quite confusing. However, the use of 'his' is aimed at prolonging the conversation with the speaker trying to divert attention from himself. And Jerry succeeds with such kind of style as we can see from the outcome of their conversation.

- 2) Context: In response to Peter's question when seeking clarification if the topic concerns something about the zoo, Jerry answers the question with a question 'the what?' that makes reply all the more vague if not downright confusing.

Peter : ..."Something about the zoo" (20).

Conversational implicature: The CP maxim of quality is flouted due to the fact that while Jerry is well aware of the answer he prefers not to confirm so he's not truthful. Thus, leaving Peter puzzled at the way Jerry treats the inquiry as he would to the inconvenience of Peter who then obliges himself to lead where and what the topic is about. Thus, with the use of 'something' is the effect of the implied meaning that is transmitted to Peter. He is begging to understand clearly things he just hears as he has understood it. Thus the maxim of manner is likewise flouted by Jerry.

- 3) Context: Jerry is deliberately shifting topic to distract Peter's attention though it implies something specific.

Peter : ..."your question about the classes bewildered me" (20).

Conversational implicature: If we are to expect our listener to follow our flow of thought there must be relevance of what we're trying to communicate. In this context, Peter gets vague himself with his response to what actually Jerry means to impart. So when we start irrelevant as speaker, most likely the response will be defensive, thus the CP maxim of relevance is evidently flouted.

- 4) Context: Peter is gentleman enough to say sorry when confronts and becomes apologetic at his own expense.

Peter: ... "I don't express myself too well, sometimes" (20).

Scalar implicature: Implicates that Peter 'sometimes' cannot express himself too well, but entails that he doesn't do it as often (otherwise he would have said so) intentionally or not. However, usage of 'sometimes' can be helpful when expressing ideas on some instances or on case to case basis otherwise, doing it regularly on purpose becomes customary or habit forming which is to our disadvantage that might reveal our doubting or questioning attitude. The short interval or period of time when utterance is made, is not sufficient to judge the speaker's intention; though it's a choice.

- 5) Context: At this point, Jerry seems to make an impression of himself as someone authoritative, trying to find out if Peter is someone quite intellectual.

Peter : ...Well, I like a great many writers; I have a *considerable* ... catholicity of taste if I may say so" (21).

Conversational implicature: The CP maxim of quantity is flouted. This reply of Peter is quite unexpected and implies that he may have known much more (perhaps too numerous to state) great writers than that of Jerry, and this may somehow offend him.

Up to what extent the amount or degree of catholicity is vague? That considerable amount must be substantial enough to affect the judgment of speaker. But if someone is given a choice of two writers beforehand the tendency is that the speaker will be able to identify character for each writer to show comparison who is finer or greater of the two.

- 6) Context: Jerry is trying to describe how he walks his way around before going to the zoo.

Jerry : ...” I walked *all the way up* Fifth Avenue...” (21).

Conversational implicature: The CP maxim of quantity is flouted for being overinformative. Whether Jerry is telling the truth or not is not for Peter to judge, neither interests or concerns him much. This is not about the distance walked but the effort exerted to get to the intended destination. And the listener is blank as to what does it imply where the speaker comes from? Does it really matter or of interest to the listener? It's just a casual utterance but has implied meaning.

- 7) Context: A defensive inquiry by Jerry needing no response, to bring about and describe his not so pleasurable living environment.

Jerry : ... “Make sense *out of things?*” (22).

Conversational implicature: It couldn't be denied that Jerry speaks fluently but often insincerely. He often dominates the conversation and the more he talks there's tendency to get vague himself. We can be vague yet consistent with our flow of thoughts that the listener can follow us no matter how vague we are of our language.

- 8) Context: Talks about empty picture frames in possession by Jerry.

Jerry : ... “*Two picture frames*, both empty” (23).

Peter : ... “*About those two* empty picture frames...?” (23).

Jerry : ... “Interesting that you asked me *about the picture frames*” (26).

Conversational implicature: Although Peter may have never doubted the existence of two picture frames, the mere mention of actual number makes it vague as about the exact quantity. At first we may be tempted to believe that the CP maxim of quantity by being overinformative is flouted when the speaker (Jerry) willfully misleads the hearer by not giving sufficient information. However, the CP maxim of quality is the more reason that makes this context vague especially so that Peter does not actually see the picture frames.

Scalar implicature: The speaker may be telling the truth about his possession of two empty picture frames. And why they're two not just one or even more than two, let's say three or four? Thus, it entails that Jerry has just one picture frame, and implicates that he has no more than two frames. But who are we to say that Jerry might be lying with the actual number. Unless someone may come up to prove that he has four picture frames. Perhaps the speaker wants to be consistent with the truth of having just two pictures when in fact he has four (because *four* entails *two*). This can be seen because one may say something like:

Jerry has two picture frames – in fact he has four.

- 9) Context: Peter is trying to reason out from Jerry's malicious insinuations about the playing cards.

Peter : ... "I didn't need anything like that, when I got older." ... "I'd rather not talk about these things" (26).

Conversational implicature: When we mention of 'anything', it's usually on the premise that immediately precedes it. This concerns about the playing cards which the hearer prefers to be vague when he counters 'anything like that', rather than be more specific or blunt about it, as he's too embarrassed of himself talking about things he is not comfortable talking that borders on sexual matters.

- 10) Context: Jerry offers to discuss about the zoo though he is not yet ready to make full disclosure. From his own discourses that follow we can read that its entirely a different topic.

Jerry : ... "But I imagine you'd rather hear about what had happened at the zoo." ... "well, let me tell you some things." ... "And you may have noticed that I very seldom use profanity..." (27).

Conversational implicature: We can speculate that when a speaker tries to speak of something which is not directly related to the topic at hand, then there's tendency that he will resort to shift the topic with the aid of vague language. The CP maxim of relevance is flouted until such time that the speaker keeps on being redundant just to make his point across. More often than not, we as reader / listener would just tolerate, learn to love and laugh at such antics.

Scalar implicature: After all the not so favorable words have been said about his residence and neighbors, Jerry has the nerve to clear his name and character. Jerry is true to himself if that's what he wants to believe in but with his usage of '*very seldom*' implicates that he rarely uses profane words but entails not employing them frequently. He wants to make it appears in front of Peter as someone worthy of time listening to.

- 11) Context: Jerry narrates series of events though unthinkable and apparently a make believe story. The inflection that goes with the mention of event denoting time, serves its purpose.

Jerry : ... "but, Love, wasn't yesterday enough for you, and the day before?" (28).

Scalar implicature: The mere mention of time ‘yesterday’ makes someone to think if it is really takes place on such date or just has invented to fill the conversation. This implicates that Jerry’s message to the lady on the 3rd floor ‘yesterday and the day before’ may not have actually happened on such period of time but entails that if it ever has done, it is made long way back.

Conversational implicature: Peter seems resigned to the fact that Jerry is only trying to make up things. That Jerry hardly convinces Peter to believe his story which makes the particular conversation segment irrelevant flouting the CP maxim of relevance.

This vague expression of the speaker is most likely an imaginary done for the purpose of saving himself. But it is turned out to be effective especially the lady (addressee) is naive when she wants to believe and relive as though it is actually happens what has never occurred.

- 12) Context: Jerry is trying to describe the dog and its characteristics in details.

Jerry : ... “I do believe it’s an old dog ... it’s certainly a misused one ... *of sorts*” (30).

Conversational implicature: The use of ‘of sorts’ may also mean ‘or something of that sort’ or ‘and all that (sort of thing)’ as well when narrating something that gives the impression that the hearer or reader is knowledgeable of what the speaker wants to say about a thing. The hearer would infer that speaker could not say things clearly thus, flouting CP maxim of manner.

- 13) Context: Jerry after narrating how he’d poisoned the dog, and how he'd tried to cover up his crime from the landlady.

Jerry : ... “Please understand, Peter, that *sort of things* is important” (33).

Conversational analysis: The use of ‘sort of things’ is synonymous to ‘or something of that sort’ is purely performance ‘fillers’, designed to give both speaker and hearer additional time for processing their communication. Nevertheless, the CP maxim of manner is flouted when vagueness happens as a result of this filler. It is to note that removal of such words ‘sort of things’ makes a difference in meaning that needs additional paraphrase to recover it.

- 14) Context: The series of events and activities that lead to the eight thousand dollar question. What makes it so special to be tagged, the eight thousand dollar question? And about the movie that Jerry has seen recently.

Jerry : ... “At any rate, and you’ve missed the *eight thousand dollar question*, Peter;...”
....“ a movie I’d seen, or one that was *very much like one or several* I’d seen” (33).

Scalar implicature: Apparently, this is an exaggeration making reference to money in great amount. What makes it vague is the fact that there’s specific value placed to what is only plain narratives make complicated by the speaker.

- 15) Context: The dog has recovered health. And the emotions have been felt by Jerry towards the dog.

Jerry : ... "I was heart-shatteringly *et cetera* to confront..." (33).

Conversational implicature: The vague word 'etcetera' means and other things of the same kind or and so forth which are by themselves vague. It may be short cut way of saying it but just the same idea. When speaker uses this word he is not providing enough information but gives the hearer something to think about. Thus, the CP maxim of quantity is flouted which is expected in this particular context where Jerry wants to justify his ambivalent feelings towards the dog after all what he has done.

- 16) Context: Jerry keeps on narrating to Peter who evidently is not amused listening any longer instead already showing disrespect. Jerry admits that he can concentrate longer looking into a dog's face than a dog can concentrate looking to Jerry.

Jerry : ... "But during the *twenty seconds or two hours* that we looked into each other's face, we made contact" (34).

Conversational implicature: This falls under a special category of approximation using an exact number, with a vague reading to exaggerate actual number of hours, i .e. to create a hyperbole. It is clear that the actual number of hours, if any is nowhere near as long as two hours. However, from this the hearer would infer that the speaker could not exactly say but already overstates the number of hours. Thus, the hearer is given almost no indication at all of the actual number of hours involved looking into each other's face. So here the CP maxim of quality that is to be truthful is flouted.

- 17) Context: Jerry is getting carried away and his mind is no longer cooperating to think of logical or rational ideas to share to Peter who becomes submissive in the process.

Jerry : ... "it's just that if you can't deal with people, you have to make a start *somewhere* – WITH ANIMALS!" ... "A person has to have some way of dealing with *SOMETHING*." ... If not with people ... if not with people ... SOMETHING" (34).

Conversational implicature: 'Somewhere' and 'something' are definitely not used as fillers since obviously not preceded by the word *or* to give it a different meaning. As a matter of fact, with usage of such words at a time when the speaker is highly emotional then the capacity to perceive good sense may have been greatly reduced or paradoxically heightened. Be that as it may, the speaker in an effort to make things clear tends to become overinformative, thus flouting CP maxim of quantity or even relevance.

- 18) Context: Jerry's response to Peter's protest wanting not to hear any more nor understand him.

Peter : ... "I don't want to hear *any more*. I don't understand you, or your landlady, or her dog..." (37).

Jerry : ... “I don’t know what I was *thinking about*; of course you don’t understand” (37).

Conversational implicature: There’s always saturation point in all that is human. When we reach that point as what has happened to Peter, then whatever else he could hear from the speaker has no longer relevance. Here, the CP maxim of relevance is flouted. Ironically, it is Jerry who comes as vague with what he is ‘thinking about’ trying to dramatize his own predicament.

19) Context: Peter gets bored with the conversation and therefore has interrupted Jerry who just keeps on ignoring and yet persuading him to stay a bit longer.

Peter : ... “Well, you may not be, but I must be *getting home soon*” (38).

Jerry : ...”Oh, come on; stay *a while longer*” (38).

Scalar implicature: The word ‘soon’ suggests that the speaker is in a hurry to leave as fast as he could, or as quickly as possible. This is the implication which means the speaker can yet be prevailed to stay a bit longer, but entails that he too can leave very soon if he wants too.

Jerry : ... “Well, *all the animals* are there, and *all the people* are there...” (40).

Scalar implicature: As Jerry speaks of these words, he pokes Peter to move a little from his sitting position. To gain a better understanding this vague word ‘all’, it’s necessary to picture this particular situation that while the speaker starts getting hostile yet Peter remains patient and friendly. The scalar analysis is useful in the sense that it draws attention to the relational nature of the meaning of such word ‘all’ and expression. In addition, this word ‘all’ becomes vague rather classified as weak quantifier in the sense that it says nothing absolute about the quantities involved.

20) Context: Peter while trying to defend his ownership of the bench as Jerry is doing his best to unseat him of his bench. Jerry is eager to prove himself that he can manage to grab the bench from Peter by all means.

Peter : ... “People can’t have *everything* they want. You should know that, it’s a rule, people can have *some of the things* they want...” (42).

Scalar implicature: The use of ‘some’ shows that its use entails quantifiers which are less than ‘some’, and implicates ‘not quantifiers which are greater’. Removing ‘some’ from ‘some of the things’ would mean increased or unlimited amount of things. Therefore, the implicature ‘not a lot’ comes into play with ‘some’. While ‘everything’ is obviously implies all things that exist or are pertinent compared to ‘some’ though it means having indefinite or unspecified in number or quantity, it could also a little of a few depending on the context or usage.

- 21) Context: Jerry is really looking for an action this time! Both Jerry and Peter have come to a point of heated argument as to who is the rightful owner of the bench.

Jerry : ... “You have *everything in the world* you want”... Can you think of *anything* more absurd?” (44).

Conversational implicature: The hearer can't decipher what the speaker is up to. I mean the hearer may be right in his own understanding of what that 'everything' or 'anything' is all about. However, the speaker doesn't acknowledge or consider at all if the interpretation will not be on line with his belief. Of course, we can say this opposing view is expected just for the sake of argument particularly when the hearer is accusing the speaker of not knowing what he is saying. When the speaker becomes sarcastic then the conversation gets stale and irrelevant, flouting the CP maxim of relevance.

- 22) Context: Peter doesn't really believe that Jerry needs the bench after all. Yet, he gives in to Jerry's provocation as if they are of the same mental stability and emotional level.

Peter : ... “I've come here *for years*. I have *hours* of great pleasure” (45).

Scalar implicature: The argument is getting heated to a point where both the speaker and hearer don't want to listen or understand each other. While the speaker tries to explain emphasizing the years without specifying the exact or approximate number simply means that he wants to give the hearer something to ponder upon, and the impression may be formed that the number of years may be more than actually is. The use of 'for years' and 'hours' by the speaker provide us with implication that he has spent considerable number of years visiting the vicinity and entails that with that number of years you can just imagine the many pleasurable number of hours have been.

- 23) Context: Peter is finally enraged with physical and verbal abuses from Jerry. Though hesitant to fight he gets himself ready not to attack but only on defensive mood.

Peter : ... “I'll give you *one last chance*; get out of here and leave me alone!” (47).

Conversational implicature: For the speaker, he's unaware that he is being vague. This comes as a warning or issuance of an ultimatum. Though he could be capable of giving many chances, it is made more intensified by emphasizing 'one' and 'last' chance which are just synonymous. It sounds threatening, but actually only a simple warning from the speaker. However, the hearer takes it seriously, as he sees opportunity that his own script might come true. It's an unfortunate day for the speaker that he gets involved in a situation he has never thought or imagined it could ever happen to him even in his wildest dreams.

Scalar implicature: Peter has issued warning after much struggle to get free from Jerry. Giving one last chance implicates giving a command or threat but entails that issuing a request is in order and a far better resolution.

- 24) Context: The mentally disturbed person meets his match with the unwilling participant. It's only a matter of fate or destiny that brings Jerry and Peter together at the park.

Jerry : ... “until I found you ... or somebody ... and I decided to talk to you” (48).

Conversational implicature: This is a confession of a dying man so we could just take at its face value and never doubt his sincerity. Even in that critical moment, Jerry wants to clear himself by telling the truth, confessing his real thoughts and intention before meeting Peter at the park. Though it gets vague with the use of the words ‘until’ and ‘somebody’, it could be understood to mean that Jerry is in the lookout of *someone* or just anybody for the furtherance of his aim.

Scalar implicature: This one certainly makes us to think with the use of vague word ‘until’ as applied in this context. Is it only by chance or coincidence as Jerry wants it to appear? ‘Until’ implicates that Jerry may have been discriminately looking for somebody until he finds the right prospect in the person of Peter but entails that the search is immediately over after sighting Peter for the first time.

- 25) Context: Finally, Jerry get’s back to his senses with gesture of magnanimity which is so unlike him. Ironically, this realization comes at his dying scene when showing remorse and concern over Peter’s welfare advising to just leave him before someone else could see them.

Jerry : ... “I would tell you things ... and things that I would tell you would ...” “You’d better go now. Somebody might come by, and you don’t want to be here when anyone comes” (48).

Conversational implicature: As the scene is almost coming to a close, Jerry at his dying scene manages to confess to Peter what has been elusive before. Utterances of ‘things’, and ‘and things’ are vague of minor degree especially so when spoken in a context of desperate attempt to clear himself. It speaks of things indefinite unlike specific things which have limits. But we leave it here since Peter must have understood well what is meant considering the situation. This finally speaks of everything Jerry has in mind before his chance encounters with Peter. Though he admits hesitantly that he plans things, he’s vague about it. He’s not certain whether he likes what he’s doing but he has just gone with the flow as opportunity presents itself. The hearer assumes that the speaker is trying to send understandable communicative message. The four rules of CP maxims could have been efficiently applied here.

Scalar implicature: On the other hand, the utterances of ‘somebody’ and ‘anyone’ in one text is showing consistency. For that somebody and anyone implicates making reference to just one person but entails there might be two different persons. Just for the sake of argument, somebody might come and go taking no notice and concern, while that anyone may have been another person but stayed as onlooker.

OBSTACLES AND RECOMMENDED WAYS TO OVERCOME THEM

The topic about vague language presents a great challenge that every researcher may have had to confront. It is necessary to adapt our mindset on a lookout to a more appropriate reading material such as *The Zoo Story* where the usage of vague language and expression is prevalent. And to seize the opportunity it requires effort and concentration to be able to show an exposition how we would be able to expound accompanying implicatures and entailment getting simplified by way of analysis. By so doing, we have to spend lots of reading relevant materials and browsing other background materials.

In order to succeed in our presentation, we recommend ways to follow and maximize the result for our analysis:

- 1) Identifying the main material considered most relevant to the topic at hand. To have better appreciation we must be motivated by some kind of ideas to share and make our final project report comprehensible to contemporary reader.
- 2) To make our research with the aid of relevant and background materials as support to widen our source of reference, and to gain sufficient knowledge and understanding about vague language.
 - a. Motivation - What motivates and inspires us and makes it special to do a research about significant usage of vague language in our daily lives?
 - b. Reading – to be able to grasp and set up a context through background knowledge of the characters, situation or environment (whether friendly, hostile or neutral).
 - c. Analyzation process – the application of acceptable method as theorized by concerned scholars and theorists. To state what have been the results of the study based on researcher's interpretation.

We all approach any topic with our own set of beliefs, views and experiences. It is simply a fact we cannot avoid and there's nothing wrong about this. The important thing is that our reader will become aware of their own background, and may identify themselves with the main characters in *The Zoo Story*.

This is because as researcher we take into consideration the interaction of our reader about the significance of vague language as presented in this report. That our readers will be able to relate themselves with either of the characters and understand why *The Zoo Story* is written, only then we could say with finality that we have succeeded.

CONCLUSION

A look at the title is quite ambitious, yet we cannot deny the fact that vague language is here to stay with us. The prevalence of vague terms has proven that we have to embrace its presence whenever there's opportunity, and not to avoid utilizing them when we feel like it.

There are really certain areas or field of expertise that precision in language is required such as the medical, engineering, accountancy, etc. where the terms that have been used, are derived from textbooks that are obviously tailored to suit the profession.

Based on the analyses after each utterance that is mentioned above, we could conclude that vagueness is here to stay with us. A reality we have to face and accept that we really need it for whatever purpose or purposes may be beneficial to both parties, i.e., speaker and hearer. Finally, we need to resolve some complex and difficult issues on vague language. We're not calling for immediate resolutions of these problems but recognition of existence and varied significance of vague language is more than enough covering wide aspects of our lives. For instance, "one reason for the use of vagueness is the speaker expressing deference to the tutor at the same time as disagreeing with [him or] her. Hence, vagueness is used as one way of adhering to the politeness rules for a particular culture, and of not threatening face (see Brown & Levinson 1987, for a comprehensive exposition of politeness and its relationship to face and power)" (Channell 1994: 190). We may disagree on solutions but ignorance and denial of something positive that may come forth is unacceptable at all.

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