



***COURTROOM INTERACTION FROM A SOCIO-COGNITIVE POINT
OF VIEW***

Asst. Lect. Salam Ishmael Armish
Al-Iraqia University – College of Arts
salam.i.irmish@aliraqia.edu.iq
Prof. Sundus M. Ali Alubaidy (Ph.D)
Baghdad University _ College of Arts
sundusalubaidy@co.art.uobaghdad.edu.iq



التفاعل القضائي من منظور تداولي إجتماعي-معرفي

م.م سلام اسماعيل عرمش
الجامعة العراقية / كلية الآداب
أ.د سندس محسن علي العبيدي
جامعة بغداد / كلية الآداب



Abstract

Since its emergence 'pragmatics' is perceived as one sided, either 'attention-oriented' (cognitive) or 'intention-directed' (socio-cultural). However, recently there has been some tendencies that pragmatics should be viewed as concerning with both individualistic and societal sides. This paper sheds light on the linguistic behavior of males and females' native speakers of English in courtroom interaction from a socio-cognitive pragmatic point of view. The study Examines the extent to which native speakers are driven by the principle of egocentrism and/ or cooperation in their communication. The study is also interested in the extent to which the proposition produces by the speaker can be exactly the same as that which would be recovered by the hearer. The study adopts Kecskes's (2008) Dynamic Model of Meaning to investigate 24 discourse segments taken from the famous YouTube channel 'Caught in Providence'. To this end, the study uses a qualitative method to data analysis; associated with a nonexperimental observational methodology. The study concludes that although interlocutors have the willingness to cooperate, however, they are subconsciously led by their egocentrism. For them, cooperation can be considered as a tradeoff between individual attention and social intention.

Keywords: Socio-cognitive Approach, Dynamic Model of Meaning, Salience, Relevance, Courtroom interaction.

المستخلص

منذ ظهورها تعتبر التداولية أحادية الجانب ، إما موجهة نحو الانتباه (المعرفي) أو القصد (الاجتماعي- الثقافي). ومع ذلك ، فإن في الآونة الأخيرة أصبح هناك ميول حول ضرورة النظر إلى التداولية على أنها تهتم بالجانبين الفردي والمجتمعي. يسלט البحث الحالي الضوء على السلوك اللغوي في تفاعل الذكور والإناث الناطقين باللغة الإنجليزية داخل قاعة المحكمة من وجهة نظر تداولية اجتماعية-معرفية. تبحث الدراسة في مدى تبني المتحدثين الأصليين لمبدأ الأنوية أوالتعاونية في تواصلهم. كما وتهتم الدراسة بمدى إمكانية تطابق المعنى بين ما يقصده المتكلم وما يفهمه المستمع. تتبنى الدراسة أنموذج Kecskes (٢٠٠٨) الديناميكي للمعنى للتحقيق في ٢٤ مساهمة تفاعلية مأخوذة من قناة اليوتيوب الشهيرة "Caught in Providence" وتحقيقاً لهذه الغاية، تستخدم الدراسة المنهج النوعي لتحليل البيانات؛ المرتبط بمنهجية الرصد غير التجريبية. وخلصت الدراسة إلى أنه على الرغم من أن المتحاورين لديهم الرغبة في التعاون، إلا أنهم يخضعون لا شعورياً لمبدأ الأنوية. بالنسبة لهم، يمكن اعتبار مفهوم التعاون بمثابة مقايضة بين الاهتمام الفردي والقصد الاجتماعية.

الكلمات المفتاحية : المنهج الاجتماعي- المعرفي ، أنموذج المعنى الديناميكي ، مبدأ البروز ، المناسبة ، التفاعل القضائي

Research Questions:

1. To what extent male and female native speakers are driven by the principle of egocentrism and/ or cooperation in courtroom interaction? If so, how do they differ or likened each other in delivering their intentions?
2. How far the proposition produces by the speaker can be exactly the same as that which would be recovered by the hearer?

1. Introduction

The socio-cognitive approach (SCA) contrasts with the two major axes of pragmatic research: cognitive pragmatics and socio-cultural pragmatics. These three lines of thought share one important point that they are all based on the Gricean tradition, however, they obtain three different views about it (Horn and Kecskes 2013). Cognitive pragmatics aims at studying the speaker's intention from the hearer's point of view within an utterance-based model that focuses on linguistic restrictions on language utilization. Sociocultural studies, on the other hand, argue that pragmatic research must be concerned with the cultural and social constraints on language use (Ibraheem, R. & Hayef, I., 2022). Socio-cognitive pragmatics, made by Kecskes (2008, 2010, 2014, 2017), merges the pragmatists' notion of cooperation with the cognitivists' notion of egocentrism and stresses that both of these notions are evident in all aspects of interaction, although with different degrees (Kecskes, 2020).

The societal nature of interaction and information exchange must not set community-of-practice theory in contrast with individualistic perspectives to knowledge. After all, social practices go “through the heads of people, and it is such heads that do the feeling, perceiving, thinking, and the like” (Bunge 1996, p.303). Although communities of practice occur, different interpretation for shared practices by members of those communities may still exist. This is an important matter in order to recognize what social interaction is all about. In other words, collective knowledge exists, however, it is understood, subjectivized, and privatized distinctively by each member according to his/her own prior experience (Kecskes 2003, as cited in Alsabbah, R., 2020).

Members of a particular community acquire collective cultural models in different private ways. For them to share the understanding of a specific practice, there must already be enough shared knowledge to grant common ground. Pragmatic theorists attempted to characterize the connection between the individualistic and societal factors by setting certain assertion on the idealized societal part, and concentrating only on cooperation and politeness. Meanwhile, the part of peoples’ pre-existed experience and egocentrism is nearly entirely neglected, despite the fact that these two parts are not mutually exclusive (ibid).

Courtroom interaction displays an authentic interplay between the legal requirements (as social rules) and the defendants’ individualistic tendencies to acquit themselves. Therefore, a socio-cognitive pragmatic analysis is expected to provide a more complete and accurate account of native speakers’ interaction in such situations.

2. Literature Review

The socio-cognitive approach (SCA) represents an alternative to the two main lines of pragmatics research: cognitive pragmatics and sociocultural interactional pragmatics. The main purpose of SCA is to bring together the two conflicting pragmatic research directions: the ‘individualistic’ intention-based cognitive philosophical line and the ‘societal’ context-based socio-cultural line. This seems to be a significant endeavor since people normally display a double nature: they sometimes behave as individuals and other times as social beings and this nature is clearly mirrored in their interactional attitudes.

The cognitive view and the sociocultural view behold different perspectives about the treatment of ‘intention’. the former treats intention as pre-existing state of mind obtained differently by interlocutors and supports their interaction, while the latter considers intention as a post factum construct that is accomplished jointly through the dynamic emergence of meaning in interaction in which social norms play a significant part. Apparently, the two approaches behold distinct perspectives, therefore, it is complicated to reject either of them completely. SCA argues that the complication of the matter demands the consideration of both the a priori and co-constructed, emergent sides of intention when analyzing the process of communication.

Kecskes (2008, 2013a, 2013b) as well as Kecskes and Zhang (2009) presents SCA to combine the two lines, in the belief that “there is a dialectical relationship between priori intention (based on individual prior experience) and emergent intention (based on actual social situational experience), as well as egocentrism (individual) and cooperation (social).” (Kecskes, 2010, p.61).

From SCA perspective, interlocutors are viewed as societal creatures looking for meaning by means of individual heads

underneath a socio-cultural ‘collectivity’. SCA refers to Grice as being reasonable when he linked cooperation to speakers-hearers’ rationality. Nevertheless, egocentrism should also be included within speakers-hearers’ rationality. “Human beings are just as egocentric (as individuals) as cooperative (as social beings)” (Kecskes, 2016).

In SCA, egocentrism is controlled by individuals’ prior experience result in ‘attention-bias’. This indicates that communicators trigger and boost the most salient knowledge to the required attentional resources in production (by the speaker) and understanding (by the hearer) of the interaction. (Kecskes, 2013).

Communication, within SCA framework is taken as a dynamic process, in which interlocutors are normally derived by social constrains but they simultaneously shape them back. As a result, “the process is characterized by the interplay of two sets of traits that are inseparable, mutually supportive, and interactive” (Kecskes , 2017, p. 9) and as follows:

Individual traits:	Social traits:
prior experience	actual situational experience
salience	relevance
egocentrism	cooperation
attention	intention

Each of these traits is a consequence for the other. Pre-existing experience leads salience that governs egocentrism which controls attention. Intention, on the other hand, is a cooperation-oriented exercise which is dominated by relevance that (partly) relies on actual experience. SCA combines the pragmatic perspective of cooperation and the cognitive perspective of egocentrism and

confirms that both are reflected in all aspects of interaction, however, in different ways.

Therefore, communication is based on the interplay of attention and intention inspired by sociocultural encyclopedic knowledge which is subjectivized privately by interactants. The socio-cultural background contains “the environment (actual situational context in which the communication occurs), interlocutors’ encyclopedic knowledge derived from their ‘prior experience’, linked to the linguistic expressions which they usually used, and their ‘current experience’, in which those expressions construct and deliver meaning”. Consequently, language is viewed as both individual and social notion (Kecskes, 2016, p. 7).

Kecskes (2008) presents a full account about the linguistic (The Dynamic Model of Meaning, Coresense, Consense, Culture-specific Conceptual Properties, and Word-specific Semantic Properties) and the nonlinguistic components (Intention and Attention, Cooperation and Egocentrism, Silence and Relevance, Understanding Context, and Assumed Common Ground) that are involved in the process of communication according to SCA perspective. (see Ishmeal, S., 2024; for the integration of linguistic and nonlinguistic components following Kecskes, 2008).

In essence, SCA is based on two important claims. First, speakers and hearers are equal participants in the communicative process. “They both produce and comprehend, while relying on their most accessible and salient knowledge as expressed in their private contexts in production and comprehension.” Second, communication is a dynamic process, in which individuals are not only constrained by social constrains but they also shape them subjectively at the same time. Consequently, less positive aspects of communication such as incomprehensibility,

misunderstandings, and struggles are inevitable (Kecskes , 2017, p. 9).

3. Methodology

The present study uses data of Native speakers' civil trials (traffic violations) published on the famous YouTube channel **Caught in Providence**. The total trials considered for analysis are 12 in number. The selected trials were published in the period between 2017 and 2022. Their lengths range from three minutes to six minutes. They are chosen with regard to two main variables, namely, 'Nativeness' and 'Gender'. It is worth mentioning here that after observing more than 50 trials in the archives of the website mentioned earlier, the researcher chooses only those that contain clear indications about the related variables and best serve the aims of the study.

However, what the current study is interested in is not the number of the trials, rather it is what Kecskes (2007, as cited in Salah, A., 2022) calls a 'discourse segment' or as it is called here a 'contribution'. A contribution can be considered as "a dialectic model of communication because it extended the traditional sender/receiver model of communication by enlarging the unit of analysis from the single message unit (utterance) to an interactionally developed contribution" (Clark, 1996).

Eventually, equal distribution is obtained for the contributions involved in the analyses, namely, 12 contributions for male-native speakers' data analysis and 12 contributions for female-native speakers' data analysis. It is worth mentioning that the trials are transcribed following Gail Jefferson (1974) transcription system. This paper adopts a qualitative method for the analysis supported by samples to boost the study findings. Such kind of research method is carried out by observing reality to interpret its meaning. It is originated from the depth, nuance, context, multidiscipline,

and complexity. In addition, analyses of authentic samples bring up valid findings that aids conclusions of a qualitative research. (Somantri, 2005).

4. Data Analysis

This section is divided into two sub-sections. The first one is preserved for male native speakers' data analysis and the second contains female native speakers' data analysis.

4.1 Analysis of Male Native Speakers Contributions

This section contains a total number of 12 contributions which are embodied in four trials that are all chosen with regard to gender and nativeness. The first trial consists of three contributions, the second trial contains three contributions as well, the third trial embodies five contributions, and the last trial has only one contribution; all of which are analyzed qualitatively using natural language.

4.1.1 Contribution No. (1)

The setting for contributions number one, two, and three: Judge Caprio is captivated a man who turned his life around by quitting drugs addiction and is now helping other people to do the same. The man runs a service association for two years now, helping addicted people to restructure their lives. He has two traffic violation tickets go back for 18 years (see appendix 1).

Judge: Mark Serra.

Defendant: Good morning, your honor.

Judge: You have some violations going back(.) you have two violations.

Defendant: I had a crazy girlfriend back then.

The defendant's reply "I had a crazy girlfriend back then" for a moment looks patently irrelevant to the situation. In this case, the utterance is taken not as the intended meaning but as a cue

provided by a rational speaker, given the situation, in order for the addressee to infer the further proposition that is actually intended (my crazy girlfriend did those violations). This is why pragmatic processing is taken to be essentially inferential. But this can be seen only from the addressee's level of self-perception. However, from the speaker's self-cognition level, another facet of intention can be seen. In order to create a new common ground with the judge (drugs recovery) that can facilitate all the upcoming utterances, the speaker behaves egocentrically by considering his conversational experience as more important than prevailing norms of informativeness.

4.1.2 Contribution No. (2)

Judge: She would just take it?

Defendant: Yeah.

Judge: What was she doing in Providence?

Defendant: I have no idea (1.0) well, I have an idea what she was doing but (2.0) umm...yeah.

Judge: I mean, I don't mean to embarrass you.. what do you think she was doing?

Defendant: Drugs. Because I used to do them.

“I have no idea” is a salient subconscious utterance that hits first in the speaker's mind. It is formulated abruptly, rather carelessly without specific planning. “This excerpt appears to support the claim of cognitive psychologists according to which the initial planning of utterances ignores common ground, and messages are adapted to addressees only when adjustments are required”. However, the actually situational context which requires the speaker to be more cooperative prompts the speaker to adjust his utterance in such a way that shows the speaker's hesitation to mention the word “Drugs” in the court room.

This shows the involvement of attention in the process of production. The speaker is also led by his private context about the coresense of the word “Drugs” which cannot be concealed by the actual context. This is a clear indication that actual situational context is viewed through prior context, and vice versa, prior context is viewed through actual situational context when communication occurs.

4.1.3 Contribution No. (3)

Judge: I mean I wanna congratulate your success story. Number one you were addicted yourself, now you're helping other people [with the same problem].

Defendant: Yes. Every day your honor. I was sitting here I got three calls from people looking for beds.

Judge: Really?

Defendant: Yeah, they come out of like CSU, ASU.

Judge: what's that mean?

The utterance “Yeah, they come out of like CSU, ASU” involves an infelicitous referential expressions. The defendant attributes so many information to the judge, saying “CSU and ASU” without specifying the meaning of these expressions. This guides the judge to ask for clarification concerning the meaning of them. Apparently, the speaker underestimates the ambiguity and overestimate the informativeness of his utterance. “This goes in line with cognitive psychologists claim that cooperation, relevance, and reliance on possible mutual knowledge come into play only after speaker's egocentrism is satisfied”.

4.1.4 Contribution No. (4)

The setting for contributions number four, five, and six: Judge Caprio is impressed with a college student who came to court for no other reason than to support his mom. The man has three traffic

tickets, later, it appears that only one of them is his, the other two tickets belong to his mom and the man is attending the court on behalf of her (see appendix 2).

Judge: Are you here on behalf of your mother?

Defendant: Unfortunately, yes.

Judge: What do you mean unfortunately!

Defendant: Nah unfortunately but ...

The defendant's individual salience affects the production of his utterance subconsciously. Apparently, his utterance does not fit the actual situational context. Although the speaker does not intend that (unfortunately he is supporting his mom) rather (unfortunately she did the traffic violation), nevertheless, the judge does not get that intention.

If the situation is examined carefully it can clearly be seen that actual situational context plays no role there. It seems that the heavy impact of prior context (prior experience) overrides the effect of actual situational context. Lexical units which reoccur in same contexts (frequent use) might conventionalize with the conceptual load attached to them.

In other words, the coresense of the utterance (unfortunately) was too powerful to be concealed by its consense. The utterance creates its own context. This goes in line with Jackendoff's claim (2002) that the process of transforming preverbal thought into linguistic expressions varies among different speakers because they have several options to explicate their intentions.

4.1.5 Contribution No. (5)

Judge: You you thought? When did you think you stopped? [when got the summons]?

Defendant: When I saw the red light, I thought that I stopped for like at least three seconds and then made the turn.

Judge: Oh you stopped! He stopped for three seconds ((telling the inspector)).

Defendant: Or at least a quick Rhode Island two seconds stop.

Judge: Lisa, let's look at 288, look up here we have a video, we're going to show you the video ((the audience laughing)).

The state law requires the motorists to stop for three seconds when they see a red light before they make a right-hand turn. In contribution (5) the judge asks the defendant if he follows the state law. The defendant uses a relatively neutral formulaic expression "I stopped for like at least three seconds". However, he wants to call the judge's attention that in fact, they were not actual three seconds. He does that with adding the conversational cultural specific conceptual properties "a quick *Rhode Island* two seconds stop" to the utterance, to manipulate the hearer's salience and leave the meaning conversationally open for interpretation. In this case, the speaker aims to promote his own agenda. This results in an entirely different communicative effect because "I stopped for like at least three seconds" is a formulaic expression. But if something else is added to it, the formulaicity is lost. The judge understands this alert as his response demonstrates it "*Lisa, let's look at 288, look up here we have a video*".

4.1.6 Contribution No. (6)

Judge: Okay. (2.0) you have a red light (1.0) guess where you have your red light violation, guess where?

Defendant: Same spot.

Judge: Westminster and Mitten. So this is where you will stop for three seconds, right?

Defendant: I would say (2.0) qui.. quick three seconds.

Judge: Quick three seconds?

Defendant: Like very fast three sounds.

Judge: Lisa that's 776 let's take a look at it (playing the video) (6.0).

Defendant: Yeah (smiling).

The judge tries to construct a common ground by seeking information that potentially facilitates communication as mutual knowledge. Before the judge makes the seeking effort, the piece of information is not salient in the defendant's mind as background underlying the upcoming conversation. Because the piece of information may or may not be accessible to the defendant, the judge pronounces it explicitly so that this information becomes salient and joins in the conversation as a relevant part.

In other words, the judge attempts to talk about past experience ((the stop for three second)) which is already shared with the defendant earlier. However, in order to involve the information as salient, the judge states it explicitly in the conversation. The judge seeks their mutual perception of law breaking because his seeing of the defendant passing by without stopping, does not necessarily guarantee a mutual perception, and/or that he aims at building up the same salient knowledge in the defendant so as to start a relevant conversation.

4.1.7 Contribution No. (7)

The setting for contributions number seven, eight, nine, ten, and eleven: Judge Caprio recognizes a retired attorney who had been an officer at Camp Varnum and the two of them share fond memories of that camp. The defendant has a violation ticket which eventually dismissed with regard to his service (see appendix 3).

Judge: Attorney Thomas Gidley.

Defendant: Good morning you're honor.

*Judge: **Good morning Counselor** (2.0) Counselor, are you uh are you representing yourself this morning?*

“Good morning” is a formulaic expression which requires less attentional resources and appears more automatic. However, when the judge catches sight of attorney *Gidley*, who is known for the judge from previous experience, the judge wants to draw the attorney’s attention to this fact, so he does that by adding Mr. *Gidley*’s job title (counselor) to the formulaic expression. This results in an entirely different communicative effect as it appears in the defendant’s reply. The formula-specific pragmatic property which is added to the SBU (good morning) has successfully manipulate the hearer’s salience hence necessitates a different and private functional response.

4.1.7 Contribution No. (8)

*Judge: **I remember you. counselor Gidley** and I'm gonna tell you something about yourself that you're going to say to yourself 'how in God's will does he know this about me', okay. Mr. Gidley I remember when you were an attorney with Hinkley Allen in the industrial bank building.*

Defendant: Yes that's correct.

Judge: Right? 2200 industrial bank building.

Defendant: You've got. you've got a wonderful memory.

This is a clear indication that salience is tied to prior experience, the sight of the defendant brings some memories to the judge's mind that would not come to his mind in different situation. In addition, a careful look at this contribution can reveal a deeper insight. The sight of the defendant activates some memories in the judge's mind which then he egocentrically chooses to give some attention and speaks out about those memories.

On the other hand, the narration indicates that the judge and the defendant have met previously nevertheless the sight of the judge does not evoke any memory to the defendant's mind. And even if it does, the defendant egocentrically chooses not to give it any attention even after the judge reminds him, the defendant's reply contains no clue about the judge. The interlocutors' knowledge directs their attention to awareness of different features or parts of the same presence. Also as a consequence of this, different intentions may be formed, and the effect of interplay is also affected by the accessibility of the knowledge. This is why it looks like the judge is telling his own part of the story.

4.1.9 Contribution No. (9)

*Judge: But I have a better memory of you(2.0) I'm gonna ask you a question 'does **Camp Varnum mean anything to you?***

Defendant: oh:: yes I have fond memories of Camp Varnum.

Judge: I was at Camp Varnum at the same time YOU were at Camp Varnum.

Defendant: Well that's a long time ago sir. I remember that very well.

Judge: ((soft laughter)) I think it was 1956 or 57.

As Kecseks (2008, 2010) argues that although both the speaker and the hearer work with lexical units from the same meaning prompting system (language) their meaning construction system may give different interpretations to the same items. The word ‘Camp Varnum’ by itself carries no context and means nothing except the place that it refers to, and if the judge’s question “does Camp Varnum mean anything to you” was directed to a different person who has no memories with that place it could have meant nothing and considered irrelevant. However, for the defendant who was an officer in that camp the word ‘Camp Varnum’ brings with it, its own context which contains all the defendant’s memories in that camp.

The common ground of ‘Camp Varnum’ is the shared part from their experience and activated in this utterance. The judge seeks their mutual perception of the same memories because seeing the defendant which remind him of Camp Varnum doesn’t necessarily guarantee a mutual perception, and/or that he aims at building up the same salient knowledge in the defendant’s mind so as to start a relevant conversation. This is a deep point in case to guarantee that interlocutors are complete individuals who can add or subtract extra meaning according to their prior experiences.

4.1.10 Contribution No. (10)

Judge ((speaking to inspector Quinn)): You know uh Camp Varnum is located in Narragansett inspect Quinn (1.0) and I was a young national guardsman at that time and I was working in a restaurant washing dishes (2.0) I was in college and (3.0) ‘they said does anyone here know how to paint’ (3.0) they said because we're going to open Camp Varnum it had been closed for a number of years since the second world war, and (I feel whatever the) I think I was making 60 cents an hour and they

were paying a dollar an hour for painters so of course I raised my hands I said I know how to paint.

Inspector Quinn: Oh you were Michael Angelo the day they told you that ((laughter)).

The emergent common ground created by ‘the judge’ (speaking of his experience in painting the walls of camp Varnum) makes the inspector’s utterance relevant, otherwise, it would not be so. Not only that but also ‘Michel Angelo’ would have not come to the inspector’s mind at that moment unless the judge mentions something about ‘painting’. Salient reaction is obvious, ‘Michel Angelo’ becomes the inspector’s private choice among all the other alternatives. In addition, the name Michel Angelo is clearly used in its consense (metaphoric reference) rather than its coresense. And what makes it relevant and salient in the first place is the situational context created by the judge’s words.

4.1.11 Contribution No. (11)

Judge: So I went down and that’s how we opened Camp Varnum actually >anyway< but I remember CAPTAIN Giddly very well back then ((laughter)).

Defendant: That's a long time ago you've got a wonderful memory.

Inspector Quinn: My only concern judge, is he keeps alluding back saying “that was a long time ago a long time ago” COUNSELOR wasn't that long ago, I was born in 1960 so it's just like yesterday, just like yesterday sir ((laughter)).

Defendant: You are a mere child ((long laughter)).

The process of privatization is obvious here, the inspector individualizes what is collective. He extracts a consense from the

coresense of the defendant's phrase "That's a long time ago", because he has a point in mind (his age). This reveals how salience works not only in production but also in comprehension. The inspector adds his own interpretation which was not part of the defendant's proposition. This was not the defendant's intention but the flow of conversation led to this point, which appears to be a kind of emergent intention as opposite to preplanned intention. That, in turn, proves the fact that interlocutors are complete individuals with different predispositions.

4.1.12 Contribution No. (12)

The setting for contribution number 12: Judge Caprio meets the oldest motorist ever to appear before him. The one hundred years old man has a red light ticket which has been dismissed in honor of his service in the US army during World War Two (see appendix 4).

Judge: Alright let's take a look at the video.

Judge: Well (0.3) I don't know it looked close to me, how did that look to you? ((Speaking to the inspector))

Inspector Carrigan: oh judge, I wasn't even paying attention to the red light for what he did for our country he could Go through a few more, i'd be fine with that your honor. ((clapping))

The attentional resources available at the given situation also affect how knowledge is processed. Usually, processing is effective as long as the needed attentional resources are satisfied in that situation. This is why the inspector could not answer the question. In addition, without watching the video, the judge's intention of seeking the inspector's opinion would not come into being, such consciousness of a certain state necessitates a functional response. In other words, when intention is interpreted

by the hearer, the amount of attentional resources is similarly proportional to when intention is formulated.

The person being greeted can easily comprehend the speaker's intention and responds to it in an effortless way. However, for the inspector in contribution (12) who was absent minded, it may not be easy, but instead he needs strenuous efforts to read the intention and make relevant reaction. This is why he does not catch up with the judge's query. Interlocutors are both cooperative (in terms of intention) and egocentric (in terms of attention) in the process of communication. The part of knowledge that is relevant to intention, salient to the attention, and available in the socio-cultural background will contribute to successful communication.

4.2 Analysis of Female Native Speakers Contributions

This section contains a total number of 12 contributions which are embodied in eight trials that are all chosen with regard to gender and nativeness. Trials number five, six, eight, and nine each consists of two contributions. Meanwhile, Trials number seven, ten, eleven, and twelve each contains one contribution. All of the contributions in question are analyzed qualitatively using natural language.

4.2.1 Contribution No. (13)

The setting for contributions 13 and 14: Judge Caprio acts as advisor and attorney for a motorist who is clearly innocent despite not knowing it. The judge helps the defendant to plead not guilty. And shows her that the city could not prove its case clearly. (see appendix 5)

Judge: Miranda (Cleos).

Defendant: Good morning.

Judge: What are you so happy about?

Defendant: Uh (0.1)happy to be here, no I'm just kiddin-.

The judge's reply is an example of Salience-charged intention which means, as Kecskes (2017) claims, that interlocutors act under the influence of the most salient information that comes to their mind in the given actual situational context. When the girl enters the courtroom she has a wide smile on her face. Her lovely smile drives the judge's attention and brings new salient information to his mind, not only that but also brings new intention. This is why he does not focus on greeting her back rather he asks her about that smile.

This shows the effect of the actual situation on someone's intention. The defendant's reply, on the other hand, has not been designed to fit the actual situational context. The words selection is slightly wrong, due to salience effect, it is formulated abruptly, rather carelessly without specific planning. So that she adjusts her utterance immediately.

4.2.2 Contribution No. (14)

Judge: So if you look at the video, right, the light doesn't change it's the same color so...

Defendant: I honestly wasn't even paying attention to the lights I was just paying attention to my car, (0.1) in the video. () [oh] when you had said like my evidence for like what's the evidence I was just looking at the car I didn't even notice the lights.

Judge: Oh so you're trying to tell that you do have the brain of a skilled attorney? ((laughter))

Defendant: Maybe. I watch a lot of criminal justice shows so.

The communicative process requires the commitment of attention in order for successful communication to occur. Because of their different knowledge bases and the attendant attentional

resources available to them for processing the salient items, the judge and the defendant have different levels of salience; as a result, they conduct the attentional processing of communication in an egocentric manner. The judge focuses on the color of the light which has not changed and looks like the same color. He presents that as a proof that could help the girl to defense herself.

Meanwhile, the defendant's attention is completely driven towards her car. She does not even take the light in consideration. Not only that, when the defendant says "***I honestly wasn't even paying attention to the lights***", this expression manipulates the judge's salience and the defendant notices that the judge misunderstands her. The judge's reaction indicates that he thought she is speaking about the violation itself (that she past the light because she was not paying attention to the light in reality) but in fact she is speaking about the video. This is why she adjusts her expression by adding "***in the video***". To tell the judge that, in the video, she was not paying attention to the light because she was looking at her car.

4.2.3 Contribution No. (15)

The setting for contributions number 15 and 16: Judge Caprio is baffled by an artist whose area of expertise involves cutting edge technology. Because of her healthy attitude she is charged for only three tickets out of a number of over parking tickets. (see appendix 6)

Judge: Anne Caroline.

Defendant: Hello your honor.

Judge: Good afternoon.

*Defendant: **How are you.***

*Judge: I'm doing fine thank you for asking [of course]
something wrong with me(.), you told me, you told me I looked*

paled this morning, right, see I told you I would pale she asked me how I feel. ((laughter))

“Hello” and “How are you” are SBU which can likely be used to open up the same frame (starting a conversation). However, the latter appears to create a different contextual frame which is not appropriate in this situation. The culture-specific conceptual property that is attached to (How are you) makes the use of the SBU appropriate between people of a different relationship, but not necessarily between a judge and a defendant of a traffic violation. So while the two situation-bound utterances have the same coresenses, their formula-specific pragmatic properties and culture-specific conceptual properties are different. The difference of formula-specific pragmatic properties allows the use of (1) but not (2); in this particular situation. And this is clearly reflected in the judge’s next line.

4.2.4 Contribution No. (16)

Judge: Like what kind of work do you do?

Defendant: I work with augmented reality and virtual reality so I'm kind of like working a little bit with the metaverse right now.

Judge: Explain what that means, some people won't know what that means.

Defendant: Yeah. It's it's basically a new platform for (0.2)social media or any media in general where um the person can either view media through like a camera on their phone and they can move their camera through the space and see information or they can wear a headset like an (Oculus quest) and virtually like see (0.2)a whole world so it's very fun it's new technology but it's very exciting to get my hands on.

Normally linguistic representation (sound/shape) activates the same conceptual features in the mind of the listener, but if the listener lacks the corresponding core concepts, this usually leads to incomprehension or misunderstanding. Contribution (16) contains an infelicitous referring expression. Upon the judge's question, the defendant seems to attribute too much knowledge to her utterance, referring to the (metaverse) without further identifying information.

This prompts the judge to seek clarification about what is meant. This is an obvious evidence for the speaker's egocentrism, it shows that cooperation comes to play only after the speaker's ego is satisfied. It also indicates that mutual knowledge is a must for complete understanding since the judge does not understand the term even after the explanation.

4.2.5 Contribution No. (17)

The setting for contribution number 17: A recently widowed motorist speaks fondly of her deceased husband. She had a parking ticket when she was visiting her husband at the hospital back then. The judge dismisses that ticket in honor of her late husband. (see appendix 7)

Judge: So you must be a grandmother?

Defendant: Not yet.

Judge: Not yet?

Defendant: NO.

Judge: You're working on it?

Defendant: No I'm NOT no. ((Laughter))

Judge: Well, what I meant was....

Defendant: I know what you meant ((continued laughter))

“You're working on it?” is a SBU that has a strong connotation with pregnancy, in the given situation. When the judge utters the

expression, it triggers the history of the use of that particular label by the defendant, and not by the judge, in a hierarchical order. Given the fact that the expression encapsulates the history of its prior use, those usages get priority in the meaning hierarchy that represent the most familiar and frequent encounters. As a consequence, what is salient for the judge may not be equally salient for the defendant. This is the reason behind the defendant misunderstanding of the judge.

In addition, the expression “You're working on it?”, whose meaning is collectively salient, is very powerful, it creates its own context. Actual situational context cannot override the socio-cultural load attached to that expression. This what drives the defendant’s attention when heard that expression. She creates her own ‘false’ interpretation without even noticing that having her working on being pregnant would not make her a grandmother rather she would only have a sibling to her son.

4.2.6 Contribution No. (18)

The setting for contributions number 18 and 19: A tarot card reader makes a return visit to the courtroom. She asks the judge about his horoscope sign but his answer was very strategic. The girl has a parking ticket that costs her 30 dollars. (see appendix 8)

Judge: The last time you were here; you were talking about astrology.

Defendant: What is your sign for your birthday?

Judge: No parking. ((Laughter))

Defendant: That's good. I like you. [Frank]

Judge: I'm a Sagittarian.

Although the judge’s answer is clearly strategic and carefully planned, however, it is affected by the linguistic salience imposed by the lexical item (sign) and the situational salience led by the

theme of the discussion (parking ticket). It is a clear indication of 'privatization'. The judge individualizes what is collective, his reply reflects his first point of view.

Further, it cannot be said that the judge misunderstands the girl rather he relies on the semantic load of the word (sign) to deliver his point. In other words, the judge makes use of the word's sense while the girl uses the word in its core sense. Another point can be raised here is that salience can affect not only automatic utterances but also strategic ones especially if the answer involves a lexical item (or related meaning) that is recently retrieved and still active in the inter-label hierarchy.

4.2.7 Contribution No. (19)

*Defendant: Um but I had three parking tickets. I paid two of them off and then I have this last one that I was just **struggling financially** with and also would have to prove that....*

*Judge: You're the manager an- you're **struggling financially**?*

Defendant: I know you want to talk to my boss.

Judge: Sen- -im at here I'll talk to him. ((laughter))

*Defendant: And it's kind of **struggle** for servers and just anyone that works at Fleming's [why's that] because um sometimes we 'll park and then we're like stuck inside and we can't go out to like either move our car or...*

*Judge: Oh, it is a problem I mean as far as parking is concerned **not about working conditions**.*

What the defendant meant differs from what the judge infers from the same utterance. The difference is the result of the concept's different privatization, based on prior experience. Situational salience refers to the salience of situational constraints that can derive from factors such as obviousness, recency, and

others. In the first attempt, the defendant uses the lexical item (struggle) in connection with financial matters; this meaning was the first to hit in the judge's intra-label hierarchy following the least effort principle.

Therefore, when the defendant uses the same term in different sense, this causes a confusion to the judge. For a moment the judge thinks the girl is still speaking about the financial struggle, only after explanation the judge figures it out that the girl speaks about a different kind of 'struggle' this time (the struggle of the servers to park their cars). This is the case when situational salience is overridden by individual salience.

4.2.8 Contribution No. (20)

Setting for contributions number 20 and 21: Judge Caprio meets a very honest lady who pays no attention to the judge's story about winning the Soap Box Derby, because she was concerned about her own story. She got a speed violation ticket in a school zone, but the judge dismissed the case depending on the doubt of calibration. (see appendix 9)

Judge: So you were on Whipple Street [and took a right on Douglas] you were up the hill then you took a right on Douglas.

Defendant: That's correct.

Judge: I'm going to tell you something that almost no one in the world knows, right. It's not a big secret, but when I was a kid, just a young kid, I think I was twelve. I won the Soap Box Derby on Whipple Street (0.3) and I made my own Soap Box Derby too. I mean, they said you had to make your own and I believe them and I did, I made my own, you know, two by four in a box and the wheels from old carriages from the neighborhood, grease them all up. And my dad took me there with his milk truck

and my brother pushed me to get it started and I won. So every time I hear Whipple Street....

According to SCA, no linguistic sign or expression can be independent of context because they carry their own context (prior context), they encode the history of their prior use (prior context) within a given speech community. Given the fact that the lexical unit encapsulates the history of its prior use, those usages will get priority in the meaning hierarchy that represent the most familiar usage of that particular lexical unit.

The intention of telling that story comes to the judge's mind only after he hears "Whipple Street". The judge states that vividly, whenever he hears the name of that street he remembers that story and this proves the claim that words carry with them their own context. This is also a reason behind having an emergent intention as opposite to preplanned intention.

4.2.9 Contribution No. (21)

Judge: I won a case of Coca-Cola, something else they gave me a whole bunch of stuff you know.

Defendant: Anyway. I didn't think my car could accelerate that fast [you're supposed to say something about congratulations] well congratulations ((laughter))

Judge: I told you that big story.

Defendant: I'm here for my story, right? ((laughter))

Such a behavior is called "egocentric" because it is rooted in the speakers' or hearers' own knowledge instead of in mutual knowledge. Evidently, the defendant is not paying attention to the judge's 'big' story. Although she hears all the story, her only concern is her own case. Her reply cancels every ideal claim about relevance and recipient design utterances. It seems that the judge's story evokes relatively fewer attentional resources on the part of

the defendant and more automatic (or egocentric) actions take place.

4.2.10 Contribution No. (22)

The setting for contribution number 22: Judge Caprio has been trying for 25 years to get someone to name a baby ‘Francesco’ after his own name. But he has not been successful yet. However, it seems that Judge Caprio's dream comes true. A motorist agrees to name her unborn baby Francesco (see appendix 10).

Judge: Are you having a boy or a girl?

Defendant: A boy.

Judge: Oh, have you decided on a name yet?

Defendant: Yes:

Judge: Oh, (0.1) what is the name?

*Defendant: **Francesco Junior.** ((laughter))*

Inspector Quinn: (Now you're gonna work on a zeggy)

There are cases where the speaker tries to manipulate what s/he thinks will be highly salient to the hearer. This assumption is usually based on collective salience. In contribution (22) above, the defendant tries to alter the judge’s attention to what she means. Depending on a prior shared knowledge, that the judge has been trying for years to have someone named a baby after his name, she knows that the judge needs no more explanation to understand her intention.

This is a clear indication that actual situational context mirrors prior context, and vice versa, prior context is viewed through actual situational context when communication occurs. The term she uses “Francesco” is quietly sufficient to activate the required common ground that can facilitate the intended meaning. It is obvious that the defendant’s intention is preplanned, strategic, and quite relevant to the situational context.

4.2.11 Contribution No. (23)

The setting for contribution number 23: The ex-wife of Providence's most famous mayor comes to court who is also a familiar face to the judge because he performed her wedding to the mayor. She has six parking tickets which are dismissed by the judge (see appendix 11).

*Judge: So Ms. Bentley [yeah] you haven't had good luck with **the marriages**.*

Defendant: No I haven't, this is the third.

Judge: This is the third?

Defendant: Yes.

*Judge: **But who was your second marriage to?***

Defendant: I forgot.((laughter))

*Judge: Inspector Quinn, I'm not sure if you have drove Mayor Cianci **but her second marriage was to Mayor Cianci.***

Interlocutors sometimes need to construct a common ground by seeking information which could potentially facilitate communication as mutual knowledge. This is obviously what the judge does by mentioning the defendant's previous marriages. The judge wants to speak about the defendant's second marriage to the mayor, which the judge himself performed it. But since the defendant comes before the judge on behalf of her third marriage and not the second, her second marriage (the mayor) might not be accessible in the defendant's memory. Thus, the judge mentions that explicitly to prompt the information becomes salient and joins in the conversation as a relevant part. In other words, the name of the mayor could be irrelevant in the situational context unless there is a particular occasion that rendering his name. As a rational speaker the judge knows that, and this what makes him paving the way before mentioning the mayor's name.

4.2.12 Contribution No. (24)

The setting for contribution number 24: A motorist, that is taking care of her mother, a feisty 93 years old, convicts herself going through a red light violation. But the judge dismissed the case since the lady is taking care of her old mother. The judge tells her that she represents the best of America (see appendix 12).

Judge: How's she doing?

*Defendant: She's home, she was at rehab for four weeks (0.1) and uh she's getting better (0.2) but **she's a feisty old 93 year old.** ((Laughter)) **Mom I didn't mean that.***

Judge: She obviously did a great job as a mother for you to have such dedication to your mother [yes] speaks volumes about her (0.1) an- it speaks volumes about you as well.

Defendant: Thank you.

The reason why the conversation between the mother and daughter does not hurt either of them is due to the context (mock impoliteness). However, a closer look at the contribution above reveals that actual situational context does hardly play any role here. What occurs here is the strong effect of prior context, prior experience that overrides actual situational context.

This is exactly what happens here. Obviously, context represents two sides of world knowledge: one that is in our mind (prior context) and the other (actual situational context) that is out there in the world. These two sides are interwoven and inseparable. In other words, the consense of the lexical unit (feisty) overrides its coresense, blatantly, and this done here with the help of actual situational context.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that although interlocutors have the willingness to cooperate, however, they are subconsciously led by their egocentrism. They, most of the time, depend more on their own private knowledge than on mutual knowledge. For them, cooperation can be considered as a tradeoff between individual attention and social intention. In other words, it can be said that egocentrism is as a part of human rationality as cooperation. Moreover, the study shows that differences between male and female native speakers' cognitive base and prior experiences have a major impact on common ground co-construction and this, in turn, affects their understanding of each other to a certain degree, a problem which they often solve through negotiation.

In addition, it has been noticed that the proposition delivers by the speaker cannot be typically equal to that which might be understood by the addressee. Speakers and hearers initiate and understand language equally while depending on their most salient and accessible knowledge. Interlocutors are independent participants with different mindsets, with distinct obligations, and with diverse interests and agendas. In other words, they are individuals with different attentional resources, different sociocultural backgrounds, and different experiences with the use of the same words and expressions.

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APPENDICES

Trial No. 1

<https://youtu.be/NU1rBnqLro4> Accessed on 20\11\2022 8:23 A.M.

Trial No. 2

<https://youtu.be/AAHqjhTLre8> https://youtu.be/lxs_sn_ggiw?si=-jVK0_Bdh0Giy-oI Accessed on 27\11\2022 10:23 A.M.

Trial No. 3

https://youtu.be/lxs_sn_ggiw?si=1OVLnenBsV5jW647 Accessed on 12\12\2022 1:30 P.M.

Trial No. 4

<https://youtu.be/4HnhjRrEXeA?si=h8eS69mWqQWCJARM> Accessed on 28\12\2022 9:43 A.M.

Trial No. 5

<https://youtu.be/8Hf56sUXhUg?si=IRIIPBqc5DD0K5r4> Accessed on 13\1\2023 3:21 P.M.

Trial No. 6

<https://youtu.be/CfhhBnGH7PM?si=bT6LnpirmW7zcxJV> Accessed on 29\1\2023 10:20 P.M.

Trial No. 7

https://youtu.be/_k3JsZxefXM?si=hI9viqgGpPLO0I2r Accessed on 12\2\2023 8:00 A.M.

Trial No. 8

<https://youtu.be/60ErsqoG9xU?si=xHGiauqfKy8fLgiB> Accessed on 2\3\2023 11:04 A.M.

Trial No. 9

https://youtu.be/4TrHAL_YX5I?si=j9ZmfTSIIQpEwJQF Accessed on 20\3\2023 4:13 P.M.

Trial No. 10

<https://youtu.be/Kg9EqQcE-FU?si=v42-NmX8fkEFgAzh> Accessed on 11\4\2023 5:30 P.M.

Trial No. 11

https://youtu.be/wAEex6nW4gI?si=Hg_6yITAkDBOA3hj Accessed on 25\4\2023 9:00 A.M.

Trial No. 12

<https://youtu.be/CaAyjpkxaVI?si=N3qffK6wtCXWUJki> Accessed on 7\5\2023 6:28 P.M.