A lexical pragmatic approach to Ohangla music: a case of metaphors

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Abstract

This study presents the results of a linguistic study on the use of metaphors in selected Ohangla lyrics. The study seeks to find out the intention of Ohangla singers in their use of the different metaphors. The main stylistic use of Ohangla music is figurative language- especially the use of metaphors. The study uses the lexical pragmatic approach rounded in the Relevance Theory in the analysis of the various metaphors used in the selected Ohangla lyrics, that is, using the lexical pragmatic approach, the study attempts to determine the intention of the singer (speaker) in using the various metaphors. For the hearer to understand the meaning of the metaphors used in Ohangla lyrics, he/she must know the context in which they are used. Context plays a major role in determining the intention of the singer. The study sought to find out whether ad hoc concepts of broadening bring out the intention of the singer in Ohangla lyrics. The ad hoc concepts are considered the essence of lexical pragmatics. They can only be accessed in a given context through the process of pragmatic inference. The study found out that singers in Ohangla lyrics use animal metaphors, war-like metaphors, instruments / machines and football images. Each of this is used depending on the context and intention of the singer. The singers use animal metaphors to either praise or ridicule individuals or a group of people. They reveal the singers’ attitude towards the individuals or group of people. Football images are used to emphasis on the unity of a group or to show the political skill, experience and prowess of a leader.

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