

The Interplay between Social Contexts of Power and Aggravation Strategies: Identity-specific Perspectives in Fictional Discourse

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Abstract

This paper attempts a pragmatic analysis of the interplay between social contexts of power and sociolinguistic device of aggravation strategies concerning dialogic discourses in Vikram Seth's novel *A Suitable Boy (ASB)* (1993). The paper attempts to validate that aggravation strategies have been an integral part of human discourse. It demonstrates how people use aggravation strategies to exercise power over others in different communicative contexts. It also exemplifies how power is vested in specific identities, and their role relationships in different power structures existing in the society based on their caste, age, sex, social standing, political or official identity, and how the power is exerted in the context of their social identities. The paper defines various aspects of aggravation, explains the dominant participatory identities, namely master identities, situated identities, and discourse identities and analyses how these social identities exercise power through aggravation strategies in the dialogic discourses in *ASB*.

Keywords: aggravation strategies, discourse identities, impoliteness, master identities, situated identities, social contexts of power

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