

Final individual Report

Language and Society

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Team - 2

**Social Hierarchy in Real/Virtual World
Settings**

Aim

Human Beings are social animals and every person have a certain position in society, these positions create a hierarchy in society. Our aim is to understand the language used in real/virtual social hierarchical settings.

We have tried to identify various ways through which we can extract instances, where it is reflected. So, our project gets subdivided further into 4 parts, namely:

- Through survey (in real world settings), by crafting a series of interesting choice questions, as to what those individuals would do in certain situations involving social hierarchy of some kind.
- Through advertisements, by trying to analyze various ads where the social hierarchy comes into play.
- Through print media, by analyzing speeches and obtaining critical thinking of individuals in accordance with the given topic.
- Through cinema and web series, this being a diverse subpart requires 3 team members. Here is where my role comes into play.

I analyzed 2 movies which were 1. Rang de basanti and 2. I am Kalam

Methods

To understand the language used in real/virtual social hierarchical settings I define an ideal scenario which would be like: -

The interaction is taking place casually in an emotionless state and without getting any personal feelings involved We can compare the interaction when the same person talks to different people (preferably of same age) in a different way, depending on their social value.

To observe the social hierarchy, I considered all the variables which were environment, emotions and personality/character in the movies.

Analysis

- ❖ In “rang de basanti” during the flash backs/ Bhagat Singh’s arena the Britishers were referred to as sir/ sahib, which was not the case with freedom fighters, all the freedom fighters took pride and treated the Britishers, even Jailor James McKinley talked with the Bhagat Singh in “Hindi” and not English even though Bhagat Singh knew English
- ❖ The sellers or the Hawkers in front of Airport refers passengers by sir/mam while trying to sell their items
- ❖ Karan calls his dad as “aap” while his dad call him “tum”, another character of same age, DJ call his father as “aap” but his mother as “tu”
- ❖ In “I am kalam”, Kunwar’s worker uses “sa” after his name which is a sign for respect, in the same scene he calls kalam by referring as “e chhora” which is quite disrespectful in Rajasthani
- ❖ Kalam uses “tu” for Kunwar while Kunwar only uses “aap” and “hum”
- ❖ Both Kalam and Kunwar are of same age and in same place, but are of different social class

Observations

Factors affecting the language and pronouns used: -

1. Social Hierarchy
2. Relation/ Intimateness
3. Environment - Type of interaction taking place and where
4. Emotions
5. Character

The Environment settings and the type of interaction can change the way people talk

Social hierarchy is not fixed in all the situations, people have different positions in society in different environment settings.

Challenges

- Finding an ideal scenario for observing social hierarchy is different
- The way of talking depended greatly on the personality of the character in the film
- Most of the scenarios were found of the interactions by the characters which were not protagonists and about whom less information was available as they followed normal social norms