

Decoding verbal bullying through speech acts in the song “Half breed”

Research
Article

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Abstract

In the research below, we investigate the connection between Linguistics and Psychology. The theories of speech acts and of cooperative principles are cooperating with the Rosenthal effect and the phenomenon of Verbal Abuse/Bullying. We examine those aspects in the song “Half Breed” by the American singer Cher. Speech acts and the cooperative principle explain the importance of the positivity or negativity that an utterance carries and examine the impact that they have over their recipient’s behavior through a linguistic perspective. The song we investigate has plenty of examples of verbal racist abuse, a phenomenon not rare in the society of today. The way in which those two scientific fields are cooperating, reveals many important relations between the two points of theoretical view. In that way, it is shown that the Speech Acts and the field of Linguistic Pragmatics in general, can be a useful tool in a framework of solving problems not only in the language but also outside of it. The need for cooperation between the social sciences appears strong because each of them can examine crucial problems, such as the detecting of racist verbal bullying in a text, in a different and complementary way.

Keywords

pragmatics; speech acts; cooperative principle; verbal abuse; Rosenthal effect

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INTRODUCTION

John Austin's (1962) theory of linguistic pragmatic speech acts was one of the most radical in the field of linguistics and philosophy of language in general, laying the groundwork for the subsequent founding of the branch of Realism. Until the 1960s, Oxford philosophers such as G. E. Moore and B. Russell, in their quest to trace the relationship between philosophy and language, encountered many linguistic elements that acted as flaws to their perception (Thomas 1995, 28-29; Bourdieu 1999). This is because, through the view of rational positivism, which prevailed until the 1960s, only the statements that are able to be verified or to be refuted are considered truthfully meaningful (Kanakas 2007).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The human speech and its function as action

Pragmatics focuses on the collaborative use and operation of language, without denying a philosophical influence, as Kant's "intuitus imaginarius", where speech brings to life what he utters (Bourdieu 1999, 160-169). Anyone who can name something has power over it (Wallwork 1978, 15; Habermas 1991). Human speech, because of our rational thinking does not simply convey truths. Speech can also act or force or prepare someone to act (Austin 1962; Boggs 2013). Words describe and pronounce, of course, but they also impose, prescribe, and denounce, they can fight and pause a fight (Bourdieu 1999, 185). Performative utterances are communication sections that in certain circumstances perform, execute functions, such as promises, requests, commands, thanks, apologies, confessions (Wallwork 1978; Goutsos 2012, 52-54).

The conditions of success of the utterances, mainly of the ones that are a part of a formal ceremony, and that are constructed around a declarative axis, have, in short, to meet several criteria. Some of those criteria regard the people, the condition of utterance, and the proper sequence of the particles of the performative speech. First, the people that are given the time and space to utter the speech, must be properly and formally charged, authorised, to speak. They should be in a sober biological, mental, and emotional state so that they can fulfill their obligation, to articulate speech in each case with a specific formality, sequence, clarity, and order, without deviations. The circumstances must be correct with the right ones present in certain roles each, in the right place, and with the right reference objects (Lyons 1981, 171; Bourdieu 1999; Yule 2006, 60-61; Georgakopoulou and Goutsos 2011; Boggs 2013). These terms or else, these criteria, are called Success Conditions and are the rules under which the utterance of the performative speech can be represented and function in a social or communicational event. They are separated from the Truth Conditions, which refer to the truth of one statement, and they regard the constative utterances and the assertive speech acts mostly, beside some other elements that are often implied through the very utterance of other speech acts (Fromkin et al. 2010, 265).

John Austin focused his work on performative utterances that consisted of speech acts with a ritual character, giving the most of the importance in the social dimension of the linguistic significance. He considered that those utterances are socially conventional and their power is immediately recognizable by the listener. The compatibility of the illocutionary force is related to the linguistic form of the sentence. Usually, affirmative and negative grammatical sentences have, on most of the occasions, the effect of a statement. Question sentences have the illocutionary force of searching for information and imperative sentences are mostly connected with the illocutionary force of a command. Verbal expressions may well be used indirectly to formulate a question (Lyons 1981, 166).

Austin's theory was modified by his student, Searle (1969), who was also influenced by Wittgenstein's "Linguistic Games" (1977). After this reconstruction, the assertive utterances, which were considered simple statements, began to be a unique new category. They were now one of the five kinds of performative speech acts (Pavlidou 1981; Kanakes 2007, 125-135; Georgakopoulou and Goutsos 2011, 93; Goutsos 2012, 69). The simple confirmation of a fact was also considered to be a performative speech act. For some of the performative utterances, we can question the sincerity or/and the intention of their speaker, for some other utterances we can question their validity only and some other utterances do not leave points of contention. Performative speech acts link the speech to some specific types of pragmatic speech actions (Georgakopoulou and Goutsos 2011). In the third part of the paper, we explain more the different kinds and types of Speech Acts, as we will proceed with them as our research method.

From an anthropological point of view, people tend to think that speech is something magical. People and societies tend to fight with forces that saw or implied that they existed and which they feared and wanted to appease. In cultures that social anthropology conventionally calls primitives, magic and manganese are widespread and their effects can affect the victim to death. So if such an issue arises, when the perpetrator is identified, it is enough to ask him to revoke the magic act he carried out verbally or otherwise (Evans-Pritchard 1991, 130). From a factual point of view, a speech brings about changes, not only in the visible world but also in the invisible.

Words, then, have a stake in social construction. One valid name of a person or a situation/condition can express a perception of the structure of the world and is forming it, it has symbolic effectiveness (Bourdieu 2011). These social and folklore ceremonies, we would say, separate those who take part in them and those who are going to take part in them, from those who will never participate in them. In this light, the students' oaths, for example, are such installation ceremonies, and obtaining a degree, completing the military service and be honored for doing so by the army, a discharge from the maternity ward, all are actions—events in the time and space having their verbal magic, oral or written on a paper or digitally. Those who go through such ceremonies are invited to have a corresponding attitude and behavior that honors their role, temporary or permanent. The status acquired or confirmed is a task that also legitimises the power of the act of establishment as an act of communication that decisively communicates to the participants their role (Bourdieu 1999, 174 and 181-186). It was previously stated that the power of pronunciation does not always correspond to a specific form. We will be concerned here with the linguistic acts that correspond to verbal and racist intimidation, and which have as a selective act the ethnic devaluation and as an apocalyptic act some kind of impact on their recipient, especially its final isolation.

Verbal bullying and its linguistic representation

Bullying is physical, psychological, moral, even political and bureaucratic abuse, underestimation and coercion of weaker individuals or groups, met in various contexts. It was described as deliberate aggressive behavior repeated towards a victim who cannot easily defend himself that causes an imbalance of power, also depicted in language (Olweus 1978; Besag 1989). Prevalent is the offender's intention to harm somebody and to be imposed against him or her and the realization of this intention, accompanied by pride and satisfaction from the victim's discomfort or damage. It is repetitive and continuous behavior that causes general problems in the victim's life, not isolated incidents of expression of hatred intimidation or small scale conflicts (Rigby 1996, Suckling and Temple 2001). Its categories are: physical/direct, social/indirect, racist, sexual, digital and verbal (Sharp and Smith 1994; Suckling and Temple 2001; Espelage and Swearer 2003; Konstantinou and Psalti 2007). The latter consists of offensive language, verbal harassment, negative comments about

the victim's national identity, abusive expressions, expression of lack of love and compassion, verbal attacks, insults, derogatory nicknames, threats and irony.

Verbal violence can internally shape the victims' patterns of behavior, which could be explained by the theory of cooperative principle, as it describes linguistically unwritten communicative rules. A speech act can be carried out directly or indirectly, so the study of illocutionary and perlocutionary acts can help better our research. These are what is implied by their transmitter, and what the receiver is expected to do, influenced by the image implied. According to the rules of communication (Grice 1975), something that is not true or relevant cannot be openly said and repeated. On the other hand, according to the same model, transmitter and receiver cooperate and the receiver of a message must understand and take into account the speaker's intention and engage in the corresponding act or behavior. He or she is affected on a different scale. And why is he or she affected? This is explained by the psychological theory of Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968). The researchers had conducted an experiment on how teachers' positive expectations can in-house influence students' performance. Expectations emerge from language and extra-verbal attitude. In this experiment of 1965, randomly selected students performed better because of their teachers' higher expectations for them. The controversial research demonstrated the gravity of prejudice and discrimination on the academic course, with applications in wider society.

The effect of the authority figure's expectations is easily considered part of the more general concept of "Self-fulfilling Prophecy". In this sense, a person's expectations, conveyed through verbal and non-verbal signals, are capable of yielding an effect on himself/herself or another person (Snyder 1974), reminding the action of placebos in medicine (Feldman 2011). Those signals are the social and emotional context in a visible framework, the provision of spiritual stimuli or opportunities, the enhancement of interpersonal contacts and positive or negative feedback (Rosenthal 2002). It is easier for the recipient to adopt negative characteristics if they are repeated, than believing a simple utterance of positive feedback, theory known as the illusory truth effect (Hasher, Goldstein and Topino 1977).

Social groups that want to project masculinity or determination on the greater level, more often use coarsely cut language and profanity, indirect performative speech acts of threat, insult and attack, known as "words grunts" in Theory of Communication (Bourdieu 1999; De Vito 2004). The impact of the swear word, however, is serious, as it gives the receiver one or more qualities, they bound him or her into a specific behavior. The social dimension of insult and swearing emphasizes a negative, real or not, quality of the recipient, and he adopts it, displaying the corresponding behavior. In other words, it passes to another level, the self-determination of the individual based on the negative comments he receives. We'll see what the mechanism is in the song that follows, after we state some more useful facts, as the necessary context of our project.

Verbal violence, has a long presence in the media and pop culture of every era, as early as 1900, long before the emergence of social networks, blogs and videos on popular platforms—means that many like to target (Daniels 2008). In these kinds of speech, linguistic rudeness (impoliteness) appears an annoying, threatening behavior towards the recipient or its recipients, which is a violation of the communication norm and is found in gradations, from a para-verbal or extra-verbal element (elevated tone or wild gaze), to the use of intensely aggressive words (Beebe 1995, 38; Culpepper 2011; Nunberg 2018). Insults, taboo words and offensive words with their own pronunciation violate the general social convention of avoiding or alternative expression of the use of such words. Their pronunciation does not imply in any environment the attack on an individual or target group, and the decoding of their meaning is related to factors such as social transmitter and receiver distance (Panzeri 2016). Specifically, people from one group observe people from another group (out-groups). In case a negative feature, habit or something else appears, they use it to target them and separate their position, to emerge as the best ones, and thus create generalizations that lead to stereotypes (Rodella 2017, 14).

Slurs (ancient Greek: *hyvris*) have a function that is culture-sensitive. They will underline a different feature of their recipients, depending on whether they are members of the group of the illocutor or not (in-groups or out-groups) (Nunberg 2018). These groups are created overtly or through unwritten rules, always obeying certain rules. Their audience is the voluntary, conscious participation of members, the process of entry, the organization around a common axis and the joint creation of the linguistic and extra-lingual context (statute, private anecdote, artist and public communication, group student/professional work, military slang, etc.). Here we need to break down the obstacles and rally everyone around the common cause (work, entertainment, cohabitation, etc.), and for this any linguistic strategy of threatening the negative person and promoting the positive is mandatory (Politis 2015; Nunberg 2018, 24-25). In the example of the song we quote as the occasion for this debate, the question arises whether the recipient of insults and verbal bullying in general was initially an in-group or out-group of the announcers of the language acts and secondly whether he has somehow given his consent to join these groups. The factual analysis and the title of the work would indeed be different if we were talking about people from the same conceptual group.

Finally, an insult is considered closer to the declaration language act, as it confers a property, baptizes a person in a way, but can also appear in the form of a declarative or expressive act (Rodella 2017). The context and relationship and distance of the interlocutors should always be considered, as the very meanings that are useful keys to decoding the meaning are different on a case-by-case basis (Potts 2011; Williams 2009). In any case, insults and aggressive words (slurs, fighting words), depending on their level of aggression and context, are under the law, as they constitute insults and in some cases criminal events targeting specific individuals or groups (OSCE/ODIHR 2009, 37-46).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Pragmatic speech acts can be explicit or implicit. In the first category, a linguistic expression refers directly to the speech act that is performed: "I promise to come." The second category lacks a clear reference to a specific speech act. The utterances are not accompanied by a verb that is regarded performative, and therefore we have a form of that kind: "I will come." As we understand it, the two utterances do not carry the same communicative weight. The second example may be considered an affirmative statement describing a future state of affairs, rather than a linguistic act with the illocutionary force of a promise. Sometimes, a speech act is an important and functional part of our daily communication, while other times they meet in various kinds of ceremonial occasions. Speech acts, and especially the illocutionary force of the very utterance of speech, are therefore seen as having the ability to explain many seemingly irrational cultural habits or choices of speakers.

With each speech act, three types of different but cooperating actions are performed (Filippaki-Warburton 1992; Yule 2006; Kanakes 2007; Georgakopoulou and Goutsos 2011, 42). The locutionary act of the speech act, the illocutionary act that carries the illocutionary force of the utterance, which may be implicit or explicit, and the perlocutionary act, which is the achievement of a result or reaction in the receiver. The illocutionary act can be straight or oblique. This evolution of the theory of speech acts focuses on the transmitter's intention to perform a particular function through one specific speech act (Searle 1969), rather than on the social and linguistic contract and conversion of the usual performance of the speech. It focuses on intentionality, taking a distance from what is being said and approaching what is meant (Grice 1975). According to Grice's theory of communication, there is a specific principle governing communication, and that is the Principle of Cooperation. It consists of four axioms: mode, quantity, quality and relevance. It is usually clear, organized, without ambiguity or chatter, as informative as it needs to be and no more, true and documented and so on.

In order to perform some perlocutionary acts, it is necessary for the listener to adopt them selectively. The listener, also, must obey the unwritten rules to understand the perlocutionary act and to cooperate with the speaker of the utterance. The participation in the communication has specific rules, whether it regards only members of one social group, the in-groups, or members of different or even opposing out-groups, and whether it is happening involuntarily or voluntarily by some or all members of the speech event. The interlocutor, under these conditions, during the communication process, wants or is forced to accept to proceed with the act of perlocutionary act, and has to consider the realization of the desire that the transmitter communicates. We will be occupied with this very point here. In contexts of simple controversy, let alone a deeper and more aggressive argumentation, hidden problems between the interlocutors arise and are to be solved (Walton 2007). However, if there is no such cooperative mood, as the two interlocutors will not belong to the same group, in short, the one will be an out-group for each other, the linguistic acts of the attacker will mechanically incite their recipient to the illocutionary act implied by their announcer. Even the utterance of a simple expressive or a declarative act will be perceived as directive one (Bloommaert 2005), fact that is revealing, once again, that the opacity of the characterization of each speech act is ascertained (Searle 1969).

The viability of this case will be examined through the example of the song “Half breed”, which was not chosen at random, as it is an excellent example of verbal racist violence and the cooperation of the psychological part of the phenomenon with the theory of the pragmatic speech acts of devaluation. This is why linguistic practice often presupposes a specific standard, the authorization of action on the part of the speech act performer and the existence of other factors, which are the basis of success conditions. It is not always easy to discern which act of choice is performed each time, without resorting to the subject, or the circumstances of communication, since what is communicated may differ dramatically from what is meant, and a clear linguistic message is required. Accentuation, the type of sentence and the presence or absence of the performative verbs make one sentence have many different meanings as an utterance (Goutsos 2010, 52-54). Performative utterances are categories of perlocutionary textual indicators, which means that they have a function of providing the specific kind of the speech act in which they appear, while they perform other functions, for example they serve also as text organizers (Georgakopoulou and Goutsos 2011). The most typical category of indicators are the performative phrases “condolences” and “congratulations”. The performative verbs, mentioned previously, belong to that category and are identified with the performance of the act, when they are pronounced in the first person of the present tense in the main sentence. This element is emphasized, because if they are used in another person, another time or in a subordinate clause, they will be merely declarative verbs: “I order you to bring him alive to me!” and “He ordered him to be brought alive.” The satisfactory performance of a linguistic act is examined by inter-linguistic factors, such as its grammatical correctness but also by non-linguistic factors, such as the intentions and abilities of the speakers and the communication conditions.

Verbal acts, in turn, are divided into direct or indirect linguistic acts and indirect or lateral linguistic acts (Yule 2006, 68-69). In direct speech acts there is a direct relationship between structure and function of the sentence, while in oblique speech acts this relationship is indirect. Those oblique speech acts are produced with the help of other speech acts. By this statement, we mean that the transmitter implies something more or something different from what he says and expresses with the structure of a sentence connected traditionally in grammar with another speech act. He indirectly performs a perlocutionary act of one kind, through the direct and apparent performance of another speech act. Non-conventional indirect verbal acts express a higher degree of kindness than conventional indirect verbal acts. Let’s look at the difference: “I have a terrible headache!” and “Can you give me some aspirin?” It is characteristic that the assertive pronunciations still have the potential to bring some kind of illocutionary force.

Speech acts can be divided into five categories (Searle 1969; Kanakes 2007; Goutsos 2012, 54). Those categories are the following: the assertives or representatives, the directives, the commissives, the expressives and the declarations. These categories reveal different ways of using language and its connections to extralinguistic reality (Yule 2006, 66-67). It is in the first category, the assertives or representatives, in which the transmitter of the utterance asserts the recipients and/or hearers of the message about something, and takes the responsibility of the speech act and of its veracity. That category of utterances describe situations and statements and they consist of speech acts that regard assertions, conclusions and claims. In the directive speech acts, the transmitter directs, persuades, pushes the receiver to (not) do something, to follow one or another course of action. Such verbal acts are requests, orders, invitations, indicative suggestions on a subject. In commissive speech acts the transmitter emphasizes their responsibility to start and complete an action under some conditions, to do everything that is needed for the completion of a social or communicative conversion. This is either a promise, a threat, an offer or something else that bounds the interlocutors. In the expressive, the transmitter expresses their feelings, their attitude to a situation or an event or towards a person, or their thoughts. It can be congratulations, condolences, a compliment, an apology or a complaint. Finally, declarations bring about a change in the order of things in the world environment or in an individual or a group of individuals. Such acts are appointments, baptisms, convictions, dismissals, marriages. At this point it is possible to mention that some central linguistic act may be absent, but that a linguistic event may take place through a generalized extensive interplay of a kind of linguistic act consisting of many pronunciations (Yule 2006, 70). It is as if the extensive interaction (the sequence of utterances that create a speech event) had the illocutionary force of the specific linguistic speech act that it replaces. Language is ultimately effective, despite the lack of accurate matching between a linguistic form and a meaning that philosophers had pointed out before the theory of John Austin (Levinson 1983; Marmaridou 2000; Veloudis 2005).

Research on performative utterances cannot be completed only in the field of linguistics. Attention also needs to be paid to the circumstances, participants and the results of speech acts. According to Bourdieu (1999, 151-153) this ritual speech includes utterances of order, commandments, threats, wishes, blessings, curses, swear words. These are manifestations of solemn and collective naming acts that have collective capital, enforcement. They have a magical potency that can work in the right social conditions, conform and harmonize participants in a discussion or process, the scene, the conditions or even bring about changes in other factors. The effectiveness of speech acts is often interwoven with the existence of one social or communicative institution, formal or informal, which determines the conditions to be paid to ensure the effectiveness of words. The conditions of success are the legal and social conditions of its commission and in official environments, we are talking about the recognized power and legal capacity of the act. Verbal acts are acts of naming, which are a social process, as their impact is social, and are carried out through simple or complex, improvised or institutionalized establishment ceremonies or procedures reminiscent of such transitional ceremonies, such as naming, granting diplomas and others (Bourdieu 1999, 169). The reason one has the ability to do something has an absolute, "magical", as P. Bourdieu would say, effectiveness, a direct influence on the world. In these circumstances, the operative reason is considered to have enormous power, possibly depending on the speaker against the success of the individual's installation in the final target state. Speech is considered something magical. We call it something, so that we can manage it, understand it, classify it somewhere and archive it (Sapir 1961, 14-15; Britton 1972, 15-20). Language enables man to symbolize reality, to manage it, just as it is with the management of the stations of life through the Rites of Passage. And the magic is that each language and every person does this in a special way, depending on their perspective and expectations (Kelly 1963, 8-9).

The song “Half breed” was released in America in 1973 by the American singer Cher. The lyrics of the song are listed in full below.

My father married a pure Cherokee
My mother’s people were ashamed of me
The Indians said I was white by law
The white men always called me “Indian Squaw”
Half-breed, that’s all I ever heard
Half-breed, how I learned to hate the word!
Half-breed, “She’ no good” they warned
Both sides were against me since the day I was born (refrain)
We never settled, went from town to town
When you’re not welcome you don’t hang around
The other children always laughed at me
“Give her a feather, she’s a Cherokee”
(refrain)
We weren’t accepted and I felt ashamed
Nineteen I left them
Tell me, who’s to blame?
My life since then has been from man to man
But I can’t run away from what I am
(refrain * 2 times)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We should start by referring to the elements which determine that the heroine is the victim of bullying on different levels. Bullying, verbal and racist as we have here must be a set of repeated acts of disrespect, use of offensive names and the practice of relevant (speech) actions. In the song we see words and phrases that, indeed, show the duration and the repetitiveness of the offence. Those, in the sequence of appearance, are: “always”, “that’s all I ever heard”, “since the day I was born”, “when you’re not welcome, you don’t hang around”, “we never settled”, “weren’t accepted”, “I can’t run away from what I am”. The adverb “always” shows time exists in two places and shows that 1) the white men used a derogatory nickname for her, highlighting her social identity at the expense of every other trait of her, and 2) the bullying in the form of laughter, was present during a significant part of her childhood.

Then we meet phrases that indicate that something happens at the majority of times. Those phrases are “that’s all I ever heard” and “since the day I was born”. They refer directly to the use of the offensive language by the relatives of the heroine and the marginalization occurred due to that use.

Now, we will refer to the phrases that indicate that an action never happened. Those are: “when you’re not welcome, you don’t hang around”, “we never settled”, “weren’t accepted”, “I can’t run away from what I am”. We see that they form the greater part of the “time and duration” phrases and they refer to the lack of acceptance of the family by the other people, for whom the family was an out-group and finally the lack of acceptance by the heroine of herself. We can say that a more sociolinguistically approachable phenomenon occurred. The heroine was for a long time the recipient of comments and behavior that were indicating the failure of her integration within the one group or the other.

So, at the end, it can be seen that she did not adopt the specific opinion of a specific person, besides, the senders of the offence were numerous and from all the out-groups of her special group. She adopted the mentality behind each and every opinion that she heard. She does not express her feelings and her point of view, she did not try to highlight some other trait, ability or quality of hers and

she behaves as the listener, the observer of all the verbal bullying. The linguistic reason will be explained in the next paragraphs. Given that point, we assume that her role in the communicative dynamic is weak, and, without her responding or contribution in manner, quantity or quality, she enhances the position, and hence the authority, of the senders of the verbal bullying, because she is not cooperating with them (Grice 1975). That is the linguistic view of the creation of an imbalanced power conversational dynamic, the enforcement of the verbal bullying in this context and the establishment of the domination of the speech of the person with the more social or communicational power.

In the song there is a number of linguistic elements concerning the identification of the heroine. These, in the first paragraph (first strophe), are: "I was white by law" and "called me 'Indian Squaw'". In the refrain we have: "Half-breed" (noticed three times at the start of each sentence), "how I learned to hate the word" and "'She's no good' they warned". In the third paragraph (second strophe) we meet: "The other children always laughed at me" and "Give her a feather, she's a Cherokee". Finally, in the third paragraph (third strophe) "I felt ashamed" and "I can't run away from what I am".

These elements correspond to one of the above-mentioned speech acts and are specifically characterized as assertive, directive, expressive, commissive and declarative speech acts. In particular, the assertive speech acts are: "I was white by law", "She's a Cherokee". Directive speech act is the utterance: "Give her a feather", while commissive speech act is the utterance: "'She's no good' they warned". Declarations are the utterances: "'Indian Squaw'" and "Half-breed". Finally, we meet expressive speech acts in the following utterances: "how I learned to hate the word", "I felt ashamed" and "I can't run away from what I am".

In most speech acts there are illocutionary indicators, which are the verbs that characterize the speech act, giving them the emotional and cognitive content that is needed by the utterance and, therefore, they make the speech act to be explicit. These are: *called me, to hate, laughed at me, they warned, she is* and *give her*. All the other utterances we meet can be considered a part of the general speech event that is categorized as a specific speech act. We meet mainly the references of facts that take place in the life of the heroine, who is the recipient mainly of the declarations and the assertive acts, is the sender of the expressive acts and is the subject of reference of the commissive and the directive speech acts, in which the sender and the recipient are other people. This, for us, underlines the position of the heroine in the overall communication as an object, an observer that has no or little real action on the plot.

The speech acts belong more to people other than the heroine and revolve around the depiction of the reality of the world around her. They hold the authority in their hands, more than her, so their speech has a greater value of the magical effectiveness, is stronger as a magic formula (Bourdieu 1999; Marmaridou 2000). As the narration proceeds, we gradually see the world of the speaker herself, and the impact that was generated by speech acts. It is in the chorus and in the last strophe where we notice the most expressive speech acts to be gathered. But that is where the actions taken by the speaker concentrate, which are the result of the racist violence communicated through speech, as throughout the song we never see her respond to the linguistic challenges of others. On the other hand, the speech acts performed by all others are comparatively more than the language acts of the heroine, which are only the expressive ones.

These conclusions are important, but they shed light on the first stage of the connection between the theory of speech acts and the phenomenon of racist-verbal bullying. We will try to deepen our research in this connection through the exploration into the perlocutionary acts carried out as a third part to a speech act. In general, the speech acts of the assertive type concern the depiction of truths and the dynamic description of certain situations, with the desire of the transmitter for the recipient of the speech act to experience strong, mainly negative, emotions and either their acceptance and perhaps its isolation, or its change and compliance. The perlocutionary acts of the directive speech acts relate to the intention of the speaker to take a specific action, without necessarily replying verbally,

which means that they have to focus on the action itself. The perlocutionary acts of expressive speech acts are related to the exposing of personal feelings, so that they can be a material that the recipient of the act can understand them better. They also regard the desire of the speaker to reduce social or other distances, the expression of compassion and consolation by the recipients and similar feelings or actions. The perlocutionary acts of the declarative language acts are intended to bring the subordinates of the social act into compliance with the change and the adoption of the qualities they entail as their new role. Finally, the perlocutionary acts of the commissive language acts are the assurance of the announcers that what they are announcing will be carried out, whether it is good or not, and that the addressees must be confident and abide by the conditions laid down each time.

In these examples, we see exactly the power and the social imposing of all the speech acts in the context of the communication between out-groups, as the heroine forms a category by herself. It should be noted that the addressee of these acts is absent not only from the same conceptual and social group as the announcers of the speech acts of verbal intimidation, but is also targeted for this exact fact. At no point do we see the heroine to actually manage to join the group of the others, of the white people or of the Native American people, although she would like to join at least one “team”, to be a part of one of the groups. The declarative speech acts addressed to her, as an indirect and long-term consequence, had as an aim the adoption of a consigned identity on the part of their addressee, the heroine. That adoption becomes more effective with the assistance of the assertive speech acts, which underlined her mixed origin more than any other element. It is necessary to note at this point that “Indian squaw” and “Half breed” are not just two adjectives. The first is a derogatory adjective referring to Indian women, maybe implying other qualities for that kind of women, process that would be examined better by a cross-linguistic research that would involve a socio-linguistic perspective. The second declaration does not simply mean a man or a woman that is of mixed origin. Both adjectives-declarations are insults, consisting a direct obvious sample of impoliteness in speech.

The directive speech act uttered by the Native American group functions as a speech act of warning from her relatives, that helped create a climate of removal of the heroine from them, since the aim was to marginalize her outside what was considered a special framing place for both ethnic groups. The directional act uttered by one child of inciting another child to give the heroine a feather is followed by an assertive speech act (*She's a Cherokee*). There, considering the extra-linguistic context, it is not taken for granted that they have a feather at that time to give to her. In fact, for the success of the speech act, this is a requirement that is not met. Therefore, the speech act cannot be considered valid, so this assumption makes us understand that the purpose of the speech act was simply to support the assertive speech act that follows it, and thus to highlight the heroin's difference from the others, so that she could be easily marginalized. At the end or at the key points of the song, such as the chorus, that has the character of the conclusion of the story, the expressive language acts are listed abundantly.

Throughout the song, as mentioned, any response of the heroine to the insults is absent. We only notice her expressions of feelings, and these are her own reaction, not an original action. In fact, her own expressive acts, together with the behavior she followed in later life, constitute the impact of the speech addressed to her. Her feelings and actions are a form of the perlocutionary acts of the other speech acts that she heard throughout her life. That is the way that under our approach, pragmatic linguistics can explain the dynamic and the effectiveness of the repeated negative racist behavior towards a person. The person may choose the one or the other way in their life, but the direction that is being given through the negativity of verbal bullying can change the mentality of a person. That also explains Rosenthal effect and makes obvious the connection between repetition, illocutionary force of the speech acts and social factors for the construction of a social event, behavior or a life path.

CONCLUSION

In the song “Half breed” that we examined, we saw the different types of speech acts and an attempt was made to explore in detail their illocutionary and perlocutionary parts of construction. Linguistic theories have been linked to the corresponding theories of psychology, in order for us to explain why the phenomenon of verbal bullying has such great dynamic and therefore is, unfortunately, effective. On the one hand, human communication and our coexistence with others in a social groups of all types or size, requires cooperation. On the other hand, this coexistence may imply that there are tendencies to isolate the other person, the foreigner, the person that is different from the others, the out-group.

These tendencies are linguistically realized through the pragmatic examination of speech acts and linguistic politeness, in collaboration with the psychological factors that govern the communicative model itself. Those elements of communication are not separate from the philosophy of language, as reflected in factual theories and they depict the norms governing the social dynamics of relationships for a long time, maybe from the actual rise of human kind. Linguistic pragmatics explain a lot about the function of our speech in the various contexts, so they are suitable for such explorations and it can be considered, indeed, a vast field for research of language under this prism. Impoliteness, hate speech and theoretical views linked to those subjects are already been examined from a linguistic point. Additional to those fields of research could be the psychological correlation through theories of Rosenthal effect, that might shed a light on those sensitive topics in a more determined way.

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