Applying Communication Accommodation Theory to *Mughal-E-Azam:*

An Investigation of the Effects of Convergence, Divergence and Interpersonal Control in Shaping Relationship Dynamics Among the Major Characters in the Movie

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Courtesy: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mughal-e-Azam

Abstract

Using Communication Accommodation Theory as framework, this research paper sets out to investigate the verbal interactions of major characters such as Akbar, Salim and Anarkali in the movie *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960) in order to understand the extent to which accommodation not only gave rise to attraction or repulsion in relationships but also generated tension. A qualitative methodology was adopted which involved viewing the movie several times and selecting key moments which related to divergence, convergence and interpersonal control. The findings of this study revealed that in terms of divergence, Anarkali, a dancer in the Mughal durbar defies Emperor

Akbar's patriarchal authority as she is in love with Crown Prince, Salim. She does so specifically in the song *Jab Pyaar Kiya Toh Darna Kya* which is considered as an anthem of rebellion (Walia, 2013). In terms of convergence, Salim uses words of reassurance, care and warmth to win Anarkali's love and to decrease the social distance between them. By using such a strategy, Salim shows his appreciation of Anarakali. In the case of interpersonal control, it was found that Akbar is torn between his roles as a father and as a King. Consequently, this affects his relationship with Salim. The findings were discussed in light of Rational Choice Theory to show that language is a social practice (Kramsch, 1994) for social benefits to be earned.

Keywords: *Mughal-e-Azam,* Communication Accommodation Theory, Rational Choice Theory.

1: Introduction

Linguistic style plays a fundamental role in the writing of dramas – whether for the stage or for the screen. Désoulières (2004) points out that making precise linguistic and stylistic choices is essential to convey the appropriate mood of the drama. Interestingly, when filmmaking was still at its infancy stage in India, sound and speech were not part of films. This era was known as the silent era whereby filmmakers made use of motion pictures as a means of expression to narrate their stories (Kausar and Pandey, 2016). Dadasaheb Phalke's film, *Raja Harishchandr* (1913) is one such example. Gradually, with the advent of technology it became possible to include soundtracks in films and the first Indian talkie to be made was *Alam Ara,* produced by Ardeshir Irani in 1931. The characters in the film not only spoke but it was studded with more than half a dozen songs – all of which conveyed the desired mood of the film. These were found to be very appealing by the audience because the soundtrack, most importantly the dialogue created a sense of proximity with human existence. This was a major factor contributing to the tremendous success of the film (Gokulsing and Dissanayake, 2004).

Drawing from the above, it is noteworthy that though we might think of film as an essentially visual experience, the importance of soundtrack, especially dialogue which comprises one of the essential ingredients in the entire soundtrack of a movie cannot be underestimated or ignored. Cinematic dialogue shapes the viewers' understanding of the director's motives as it manipulates our emotions, revealing character and plot without our immediate knowledge. Therefore, this paper seeks to examine variation in speech through the theoretical lens of Communication Accommodation Theory in the movie Mughal-e-Azam (1960). The film displays a rich tapestry of verbal exchanges marked by romance, defiance, authority, puns among others. The impressive dialogue of Mughal-e-Azam was written by Urdu writers namely: Amanullah Khan, Ehsan Razvi, Kamal Amrohi and Wajahat Mirza. The objectives of this research is to understand the roles of the three main characters namely that of Akbar as an Emperor and as a father, the role of Salim as the successor to the throne and as a son and the role of Anarkali as a court dancer and as the love interest of Salim through their verbal interactions.

In order to achieve the research objectives, four research questions are formulated:

1. What is the communicative accommodative strategy used by Akbar in his interactions with his son Salim?
2. What is the communicative accommodative strategy used by Salim in his interactions with Anarkali?
3. What is the communicative accommodative strategy used by Anarkali in his interactions with Akbar?
4. What effects do these communicative accommodative strategies have on their respective relationships?

1.2 Scope of the Study

With reference to the above, the second chapter will present an overview of the theoretical framework of Communication Accommodation Theory. In the third chapter, the methodological approach adopted for the study will be outlined. The fourth chapter will provide an analysis of the data focusing mainly on three accommodative strategies namely interpretability, convergence and divergence. The chapter will also discuss the findings of the study. Finally, the concluding chapter will sum up the findings of this research paper.

2: Literature Review

The ensuing sections in this chapter aim to provide an overview of the theoretical framework of Communication Accommodation Theory as well as discuss the different ways and contexts in which people change or modify their linguistic style so as to be the same as or differ from their conversational partners. Light will also be shed on the different accommodative strategies adopted by interactants in their communicative exchange.

2.1 Introduction to Communicative Accommodative Theory

Initially referred to as Speech Accommodation Theory (SAT), Communication Accommodation Theory (henceforth CAT) was first developed by Giles, Taylor and Bourhis in 1973. Their research was based on style-shifting by examining accent variation. In fact, they reinterpreted Labov's influential research on the social stratification of /r/ which is a prestige variant in New York. Labov (1966 cited in Coupland et al, 2007) investigated two factors influencing style-shifting: the level of self-conscious attention that speakers pay to their speech and the formal or informal context in which the latter is called upon to interact. To achieve his objectives, Labov (1966) interviewed salespersons in three departmental stores in New York and discovered that the salespersons spoke the "careful" speech when the context was formal and when the context was informal, they adopted the "casual and relaxed" speech style (1966 cited in Coupland, 2007: 36). In other words, he found that the pronunciation of the prestige variant (r) was highly marked when the "careful" style was adopted while the pronunciation of the (r) was less salient when the speech style was "casual" (Coupland et al, 2007). Moreover, Labov (1966) highlighted that the more attention a speaker pays to his/her speech, the more formal is the speech and the less attention that the speaker pays to his/her speech, the less standard is the speech.

Interestingly, although Labov's study was well founded, Giles et al were able to provide an alternative explanation to his findings (Guzzo, 2014: 26). They point out that adopting a prestigious or non prestigious speech style does not depend either on the formality of the context or the degree of attention that people pay to their speech (Coupland, 2007: 36). In fact, according to Giles and his colleagues (1991), style shifting is the result of speakers' own willingness to modify their speech style towards each other. In other words, SAT focuses more on interpersonal accommodation processes. Consequently, referring to Labov's (1966) New York study, Giles et al (1991) postulate that the "casual" or "careful" speeches produced by the interviewees were possibly because the interviewer himself had changed his speech style from formal to informal when the interview was over or when he dealt with casual subject issues. As a result, the interviewees shifted their speech to that of the interviewer.

Relevant to this study are three essential stages in interpersonal interactions as listed by Bell (1984) that motivate speakers to modify their speech style either to accommodate towards or diverge from target audience. Firstly, speakers assess the personal characteristics of their addressees and consequently adapt their speech style accordingly. Secondly, speakers take into account their own as well as their addressees' linguistic repertoire whether monolingual or multilingual and suit their style according to it. Thirdly, speakers take into account how frequently particular linguistic variable occurs in their addressees' speech and adapt correspondingly. In light of these stages, it is noteworthy that language use in interactions may have a few significant socio-psychological implications. For instance, Hamilton et al (2016) point out that the use of particular linguistic variables can affect a listener's perceptions of a speaker. Similarly, research has shown that speakers are more likely to converge towards linguistic variables that are considered prestigious so as to win social approval.

SAT was revised and renamed Communication Accommodation Theory (CAT) in 1987 by Giles. CAT includes paralinguistic elements such pauses, phonological variants as well as non-verbal elements such as smile, gaze or even body posture that all contribute to analysing speech accommodation (Mirzaiyan et al, 2010: 1). Therefore, it can be propounded that linguistic, paralinguistic and non-verbal strategies used in interactions may bring about particular effects, outcomes and consequences. The ensuing subsection will explore the different strategies of accommodation adopted by speakers to accommodate their interlocutors.

2.2 Strategies of Accommodation

In its early stage of development, SAT's primary focus was on communicative strategies such as divergence, convergence and maintenance which Coupland et al (1991) have labelled as 'approximation' strategies. Interactants may adopt different communicative strategies for two purposes: to either increase or decrease social distance. According to Byrne's (1971) theory of Similarity-Attraction, people view those who want to be similar to them more favourably.

When applied to communication, Byrne's theory indicates that if one's communicative behaviour matches that of one's interlocutor, this results in one being better appreciated, respected

thereby earning more social rewards. Such a strategy is referred to as convergence which involves speakers and addressees reducing interpersonal differences by adjusting their verbal and nonverbal behaviour in order to be the same as one another. In contrast, when speakers adopt the strategy of divergence, they maintain or increase social distance between them and their conversational partners which results in the speakers being negatively evaluated (Coupland et al, 2007).

In line with the above, Giles, Taylor and Bourhis (1973) analysed speech accommodation in the bilingual setting of Montréal. Their study revealed that the more English-speaking Canadians converged towards French-speaking Canadians by using more French, the more positively they were evaluated. The listeners responded positively to their addresses. Similar findings were obtained when French-speaking Canadians converged towards English-speaking Canadians. Although this study is not directly related to this paper since it examines speech accommodation between two ethno-linguistic groups, it nevertheless provides emphatic support to the fact the more interlocutors' communicative style is similar, the more positively they are evaluated.

As CAT expanded, strategies such as interpretability, interpersonal control and discourse management were included (Gallois et al, 2005). These strategies have been labelled as 'attuning' strategies. Interpretability deals with the way speakers shift their speech behaviour from a complex to a simpler one. In fact, they convey their information in a more understandable way by altering their tone, utterance length or they may even repeat particular words or utterances to increase comprehensibility. Interpersonal control is concerned with the role that speakers perform while interacting. Some may use language to exert power, dominance and control in a conversation. As far as discourse management is concerned, it aims at managing the conversational needs of interlocutors. Discourse management is divided into three categories namely field (selection of topic and its content), tenor (strategies used by interactants to maintain face while communicating) and mode (how conversations are shared and structured in terms of turn-taking).

2.3 Communication Accommodation Theory and Mixed Gender Dyads

In sociolinguistics, gender is a crucial factor when considering speech or discourse production. Fitzpatrick et al (1995) claim that men and women do not belong to the same speech communities as they not only have different reasons for engaging in talk but their interpretation of it also differ. Wardhaugh (1986) provides three models to shape our understanding of language differences between men and women. These are the deficit, dominance and difference models.

According to the deficit model, as compared to men, women are viewed as less confident and even as inferior participants in any interaction as they use more question tags to seek reassurance. Also, they display a tendency of hedging their statements in order to avoid being assertive. Interestingly, Wardhaugh (1986) highlights that in academic settings, no such differences have been observed. On the other hand, the dominance model stresses that women keep the conversation going by making use of techniques such as backchanneling and they even respond through body language in order to send a message of understanding (Wardhaugh, 1986). Finally, according to the difference model, men and women express themselves differently and, on many occasions, their speech may

have different meanings even if they are saying the same things. In addition, as compared to men, the use of rising intonations is a distinct feature of women's speech (Wardhaugh, 1986).

Based on the above, it can be gathered that both men and women may experience difficulty in communicating to each other. Nevertheless, Stupka (2011: 1) observes that although there are differences in their speech patterns, men and women are able to communicate to each other effectively. This is made possible through accommodative strategies. It is noteworthy that in a study carried out by Fitzpatrick, Mulac and Dindia (1995) whereby they analysed conversations concerning relationship matters between men and women, found out that during mixed dyadic conversations both men and women adapted their linguistic style in favour of their conversational partners. However, it was also found that women converged twice as much as men did. Along the same line, Stupka's (2011) study on conversational accommodation yielded similar findings – in nine out of the thirteen couples studied, female partners converged towards their male interlocutors.

However, in other studies, different results were obtained. For example, Fitzpatrick et al (1995) noted that when men addressed women - whether they were acquainted with them or not, diverged from their conversational partners. The ideology at play is that men who strongly believe in gender roles are hesitant to switch to the linguistic style of the other gender (female). It should be pointed that the degree of accommodation that both men and women make towards each other is determined by the nature of the relationship that they share rather than the gender of the speaker or the speaker (Fitzpatrick et al, 1995). For instance, Stupka (2011) notes that couples who are in a serious relationship are more likely to converge rather than those who are merely friends.

3: Methodology
3.1 Sample

Considered as a 'saga of epic proportions' (Walia, 2013) *Mughal-e-Azam* is the most expensive film of its time. Directed by K. Asif and produced by Shahpoorji Pallonji, Mughal-e-Azam was released on 5th August 1960 and it hit different cinema halls across India. *Mughal-e-Azam* deals with the doomed love story of Salim and Anarkali and the tense relationship between father and son – Emperor Akbar and Prince Salim as a result of the latter's love for Anarkali.

Table 1 below shows the names of the five most important characters in the movie and the names of the actors who played them. These are the characters that will be mostly referred to in this research paper.

Characters	Played by
Akbar	Prithviraj Kapoor
Salim	Dilip Kumar
Anarkali	Madhubala
Jodhabai	Durga Khote
Bahar	Nigar Sultana

Table 1: Cast of *Mughal-e-Azam*

Mughal-e-Azam was chosen to be analysed under the lens of CAT as it has been labelled as the Kohinoor diamond of Indian Cinema by Nasreen Munni Kabir, the author of the *Immortal Dialogue of K. Asif's Mughal-e-Azam* (Sinha, 2010). Not only this, according to Box Office India (2003), upon its release in India, *Mughal-e-Azam* collected approximately a net revenue of US$ 11,530,000 thereby making the film a major commercial success. The record of the film was unbeatable for 15 years and it was eventually broken by *Sholay* in 1976. Furthermore, even today *Mughal-e-Azam* (1960) stands as a colossal pillar at the domestic Box Office as it attracted more than 100 million footfalls, higher than Baahubali (2017) (Box Office India, 2017).

In addition, the film has been critically acclaimed and has won numerous accolades in 1961, notably one National Film Award and three Filmfare Awards in the categories for Best Film, Best Cinematography and Best Dialogue. It is noteworthy that the film was also nominated for the Filmfare Award for various categories such as Best Actress (Madhubala as Anarkali), Best Director (K. Asif), Best Playback Singer (Mangeshkar) and Best Music (Naushad). Interestingly, the film was re-released in colour version in 2004 and it coincided with three major releases at that time: *Veer Zara, Aitraaz,* and *Nach* (Box Office India, 2004). *Mughal-e-Azam* was ranked the 19th highest grossing Bollywood film of 2004 behind *Aitraaz* and *Veer Zara,* the latter being the top grosser, but was ahead of *Naach.*

In light of the above, the film offers a rich tapestry worth exploring. Since the film won the award for Best Dialogue at the Filmfare Award, the focus of this research paper will be on the verbal interactions of the main characters mentioned above. For the purpose of this study, the colour version of the film was viewed which is 3 hours 3 minutes and 51 seconds long. Also, only those significant instances were retained during which the major characters interacted and where CAT could be subsequently applied.

3.2 Method

In this study, a qualitative research methodology was adopted. Qualitative method aims to answer the *how* and *why* instead of the *what* and *how many* of the phenomenon under study (Mason, 2002). It can be argued that data collected through qualitative methods is textual in nature and can be interpreted by the researcher in his/her own ways to suit his/her purpose.

Several stages were involved in this qualitative research. These are listed as follows:

1. Formulating research questions: How does accommodation or non accommodation affect relationships?
2. Designing the study: Locating significant moments of accommodation strategies.
3. Collecting data: Watch *Mughal-e-Azam* and locate pertinent extracts pertaining to convergence, divergence and interpersonal control.
4. Analysing data: Applying the theoretical framework of CAT to the corpus.

It is noteworthy that the predicament and purpose of the research alongside the sample chosen depends on the theoretical framework adopted. Excerpts of the verbal interactions of the characters were required for the application of CAT in order to answer the research questions as pointed out in section 1.

4: Analysis

4.1 Divergence between Akbar and Anarkali

Divergence is a strategy used by speakers to differentiate themselves from others in the communication acts to create, maintain or increase distance (Coupland, 2007). Generally, divergence is a speech strategy which is consciously applied (Street, 1984). With regard to *Mughal-e-Azam,* at the very outset of the movie, Akbar is very impressed by Nadira's dance and he ends up rewarding her by giving her the title 'Anarkali'. In fact, this is how Anarkali acquired her name. However, as the storyline progresses, the relationship between Akbar and Anarkali becomes sour as the court dancer falls in love with Salim – Akbar's son and the future Emperor of Hindustan.

One of the most remarkable moments in the movie which deals with divergence between Akbar and Anarkali is the inimitable and iconic song 'Pyar kiya to darna kya' (literally translated as 'Why fear when you fell in love'). The song is one of defiance performed by Anarkali in front of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. In fact, upon learning about Anarkali's transgression, Akbar orders her to be thrown in prison and in order not lose his son and thereby endangering the future of Hindustan, Akbar asks Anarkali to perform a dance in the royal court in which she has to declare that she has only played with the feelings of Salim and her only motive was to become the Empress. Akbar's unbending paralinguistic style becomes clear as he uses a harsh and firm tone while talking to Anarkali. He tells her: 'I am sure the darkness of the dungeons has dashed your splendid dreams?' to which she replies: 'The light that I carry in my heart was enough to dispel the darkness of the dungeon". Anarkali's statement is a clear indication of how she diverges from her usual reverential and timid linguistic style to one which is bold and dauntless.

Contrary to Akbar's expectations, Anarkali further diverges by openly declaring her love for Salim in the song. As she sings:

> When we have loved, why should we fear?
> We have loved, not committed a theft
> Why should we be afraid?
> Nothing is hidden from God
> So, why should we hide from **human beings** (emphasis is mine)?

It is to be noted that everyone in Akbar's durbar equates the latter with God by referring to him as 'Zil-e-Illahi' which means shadow of God. However, Anarkali diverges and does not place Akbar on a pedestal as she considers him as merely a human being. This certainly invites Akbar's wrath and he orders Anarkali to be thrown in prison once again. In fact, according to Akbar, a slave

girl or a court dancer is not fit to become the Empress of Hindustan which is why he does not accept Salim and Anarkali's relationship. For Akbar, his duty as an Emperor and the fate of his Empire cannot be compromised. Following the lyrics of Anarkali's defiance song, it becomes clear that there is heightened tension between Akbar and Anarkali as she blatantly challenges his patriarchal authority and other social stratifications.

4.2 Convergence between Salim and Anarkali

At the outset of the film, when Anarkali learns through her sister Soorayya that the Crown Prince, Salim has fallen head over heels for her, she is very apprehensive of the consequences of this 'forbidden love'. This is because a romantic relationship between a court dancer and a prince implies transgressing social barriers. However, with regard to convergence, when Salim meets Anarkali he finds that she feels uneasy and anxious about their budding relationship. Therefore, he accommodates to Anakali as a result of her emotional and relational needs. Salim converges towards her by using words of reassurance, care and warmth. For example, when Anarkali tells him: 'I have nothing but the fearful emotions of a slave girl', Salim replies: 'Then forget that you are slave' or even '[You] will sit beside Salim as the Empress of Hindustan'.

In addition, on learning that Akbar is coming to meet Salim, Anarkali tries to run away from there but Salim prevents her from going. Although, Anarkali falls unconscious on seeing Akbar, it sends a strong message to her that Salim is not afraid to swim against the tides. He rebels against not only Akbar but even Jodhabai for the sake of Anarkali. He declares: 'It is not Salim's Anarkali who will die in a despot's dungeon!' Salim's linguistic choice of comparing Akbar to a despot is an indication of how he affiliates himself to Anarkali. If on one hand, Salim views Akbar as a despot, on the other, he sees in Anarkali 'the pride of Mughals' – an indigestible fact for Akbar! It is noteworthy that Salim's linguistic style is that the more he converges towards Anarkali the more he diverges from Akbar. This interplay of convergence and divergence, with Salim standing in the eye of the storm generates tension in the film.

4.3 Interpersonal control between Akbar and Salim

Watson and Gallois (2002) point out that interpersonal control focuses on role relations, and results in the use of interruptions, honorifics, endearing terms and the like, in order to keep the other person in role or to allow freedom to change roles. Throughout the film, Akbar plays the role of a torn father and a just king. Akbar's dream is to see Salim as a valiant warrior and an exemplary king. He feels let down when Salim falls in love with Anarkali. When Akbar asks Salim to stop his affair with Anarkali, Salim powerfully replies:

> Taqdeeren badal jaati hai, zamaana badal jaata hai,
> Mulkon ki tareekh badal jaati hain, shahenshaah badal jaate hai
> Magar iss badalti hui duniya mein mohabbat jis insaan ka daaman thaam leti hai
> Woh insaan nahin badalta

Literal translation as follows:
> Destinies change, Times change. The history of nations changes.

> Emperors change but in this ever-changing world, a person whose hand has been held by love – that person never changes.

Akbar interrupts Salim and uses a resigned tone to tell him: 'Magar tumhe badalna hoga, Salim. Tumhein badalna hoga' (Literal translation: 'But you will have to change, Salim. You will have to change'). This is a clear indication of how powerless he feels as Salim refuses to take heed of his words. In other words, Akbar's powerlessness reflects how he is incapable of keeping Salim in role that is as a conscientious prince whose primary goal is to live up to the expectations of his subjects.

Furthermore, throughout the film, Akbar is depicted more as a king than a father. Even at the outset of the film when Salim returns back to his kingdom after emerging victorious in the war, Akbar says: 'Not my son. I go to greet a great soldier of Hindustan'. However, as the storyline progresses and as Akbar staunchly opposes Salim's relationship with Anarkali, Salim tells Akbar: 'Embrace me as a father would to his son, not as the Crown Prince of Hindustan, think of me as your son and tell me, is Anarkali unfit for me?' Salim's tone certainly indicates that he wants to appeal to Akbar's emotions in order to awaken the fatherly love in him. According to Salim, if Akbar thinks from a father's heart and not from an Emperor's, it will be easier for him to accept their relationship. In light of the above, it can be noted that Salim allows Akbar the freedom to change his role – from a strict Emperor to a loving father. Unfortunately, Akbar remains adamant and the situation degenerates to such an extent that Salim wages war against his own father for Anarkali's sake. At this point, Akbar's dream crumbles.

Before fighting the war, Akbar goes to meet Salim and he attests: 'This unfortunate father whom the world calls Emperor, has come to talk to his son, to ask for his love'. Not only this, he uses the endearment term 'Chekhu' when he addresses Salim. Akbar, for once adopting the role of a father again convinces Salim to drop his obstinacy. Nevertheless, this attempt of his is met with failure as Salim says: 'You destroy your son's love, and yet you seek his love? Now the Emperor has changed his guise!' This strategy of interpersonal control that both Akbar and Salim use is translated into a battle of egos between both of them.

5: Discussion
5.1 Rational Choice and Communication Accommodation Theory

Rational Choice Theory has been defined as a framework to understand all human behaviour (Becker, 1976). Hutchison (2007) claims that Rational Choice Theory deals with the desire to maximise benefits and minimise costs. Put differently, a person is motivated to undertake an action after calculating the costs that he will have to bear and the benefits he will reap after indulging himself in that particular action. Consequently, from the various options available to him, he chooses that which will provide him with more satisfaction. Applied to verbal interactions, Rational Choice Theory is also called Exchange Theory.

It is widely believed that social relationships occur in a social marketplace, where one has to give in order to get (Hutchison, 2007). As far as romantic relationships are concerned, if a person is attracted to someone, he will want to indulge in it or will want to continue the relationship based on the advantages he might receive. This gives rise to the idea of social attraction which simply means that if a person is attracted to someone else, he/she will do his level best to appear attractive to his/her partner. It is noteworthy that in a study conducted by Jones (1964, cited in Rosenberg and Turner, 2004, p.242), it was found that one of the ways to make others appreciate oneself is by conforming to their "opinion, judgement and behaviour".

Interestingly, in light of *Mughal-e-Azam*, it can be noted that the above finding does not only apply to the romantic relationship between Salim and Anarkali but also to the parent/child relationship between Akbar and Salim. This has empirically been proved in Chapter 4 of this paper. The characters of *Mughal-e-Azam,* namely Salim and Anarkali tried to accommodate to each other based on the benefits their alliance might bring to each other. In line with CAT, some of the possible reasons why they attempted to converge to each other's conversational needs are for more effective communication which is considered to be the foundation of successful romantic relationships, for establishing a close relationship based on mutual compatibility and to create a more positive image of themselves (Giles et al, 2007).

Blau (2009) puts forth that when a person carries out an action in favour of someone, the latter feels that he is under the obligation to reciprocate towards the person. If they fail to do so, this leads to them no longer receiving the rewards or benefits that the association brings to them. For example, in Akbar's eyes, Salim is not merely his son but a valiant soldier and the successor to the throne. However, as Akbar disapproves of the romantic relationship between Salim and Anarkali because of the difference in status, he orders the latter to be imprisoned but on seeing the rebellious side of Salim, Akbar is forced to order her to be released – a strategy that Akbar uses so as Salim does not grow away from him and by extension become oblivious of his duties as Crown Prince. This strategy is highly successful as Salim affirms: 'It's proof that at heart, the Emperor is humane'. Therefore, it can be observed that by accommodating to Salim's will, Akbar wins the latter's admiration as he evaluates him favourably.

6: Conclusion

In this paper, the verbal interactions of the major characters such as Akbar, Salim and Anarkali were examined through the lens of CAT. After analysing the data which comprised of selected key moments in the film, it was found that since Akbar is an opponent of Salim and Anarkali's love, both of them diverge from him as they defy his patriarchal authority. Contrary to the belief that men have an upper hand on women in conversations, this paper has revealed that even women can exert power in interactions. This has been exemplified by Anarkali herself when she rebels against Akbar. This study also demonstrated how because of the problematic role that Akbar plays – that of a torn father and a dutiful Emperor which is reflected through his dialogues, sours his relationship with Salim. As far as the romantic relationship between Salim and Anarkali is concerned, they both converge towards each other so as to decrease the social distance between

them. To understand the goals and motivations underlying accommodative strategies, the findings were discussed through the lens of Rational Choice Theory which stipulates that people measure the costs and rewards before undertaking an action. In light of the above, it can therefore be said that language in the form of verbal encounters is an essential tool in character construction and development.

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