



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***CONTEXTUAL DIMENSIONS OF CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE***

**KHALIL WALKER**

**FBMK 2007 16**

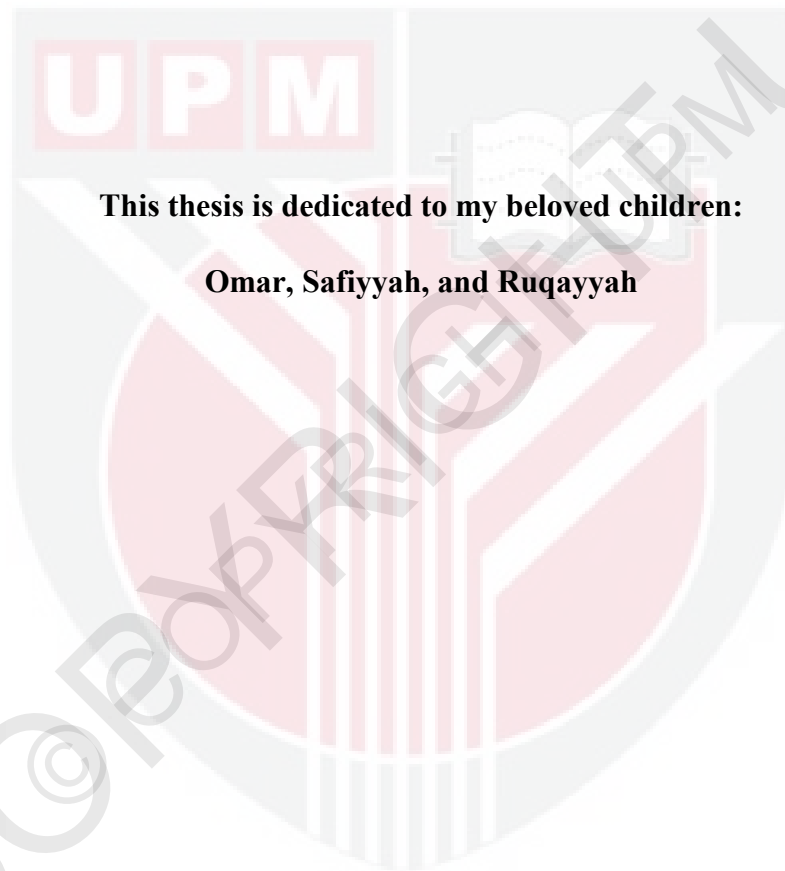
**CONTEXTUAL DIMENSIONS OF CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE**

By

**KHALIL WALKER**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**February 2007**



**This thesis is dedicated to my beloved children:**

**Omar, Safiyah, and Ruqayyah**

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment  
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

## **CONTEXTUAL DIMENSIONS OF CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE**

By

**KHALIL WALKER**

**February 2007**

**Chairman: Associate Professor Shameem Mohd Rafik Khan, PhD**

**Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication**

This research adapts a methodology for the analysis of context for pragmatics research and explores the dimensions of contextual variation of texts associated through previous research with conversational implicature production. The study adapts the activity types analytical framework for the categorization and interpretation of linguistic contextual markers as part of the adaptation of the corpus-based multidimensional approach to register analysis to the study of aspects of pragmatic context. The methodology was used in this study to determine the pragmatic contextual characteristics of registers classified according to their expected adherence to Grice's cooperative principle (CP) and maxims of conversation.

These registers were represented by sample texts of a grammatically annotated corpus of approximately 21 million words, 1094 texts, prepared for the study. Frequency counts for 37 linguistic markers of context were obtained through the use

of a parser written in the Perl computer programming language, developed as part of the study. These frequency counts were then converted to normalized frequencies based on 1000 words of text. Factor analysis was done on the frequency counts following multidimensional analysis procedures.

The factor analysis resulted in an eight-factor solution. These factors were interpreted as contextual dimensions which were defined through the analysis of the salient linguistic features (markers) loading on each factor. Functional interpretation was based on the activity types functions. All of the 37 features were found to be salient. Results describe the contextual characteristics of sample groups of text representing seven registers. Relations between the registers were used to verify the dimensional interpretations, as well as to examine their contextual relationships on the dimensional scales. Internal coherence of the registers and the power of the dimensions to determine register distinctions were measured. Results largely supported the accuracy of the method in determining pragmatic characteristics of the sample texts.

Non-parametric statistical comparison was made on two groups of text based on their association with conversational implicature production—one corpus representing registers in which Gricean maxims may be observed, and one in which they may be violated. Results of the statistical comparisons suggest that the two groups show significant differences on several contextual dimensions determined through the study. Thus, the study identified functionality associated with constraints on

utterance production associated with non-observance of Gricean maxims through empirical quantitative analysis.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

## **CONTEXTUAL DIMENSIONS OF CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE**

Oleh

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**Februari 2007**

**Pengerusi: Profesor Madya Shameem Mohd Rafik Khan, PhD**

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Kajian ini mengadaptasi kaedah analisis konteks untuk kajian pragmatik dan meneliti dimensi-dimensi variasi konteks untuk teks-teks yang berkait dengan kajian lalu dengan produksi implikatur perbualan. Kajian ini mengadaptasi rangka analisis berbentuk Jenis Aktiviti untuk mengkategorikan dan menginterpretasi petanda konteks linguistik. Ini merupakan sebahagian dari adaptasi kaedah berdasarkan korpus pelbagai dimensi untuk mendaftarkan analisis kajian dari aspek sudut pragmatik. Kaedah ini digunakan untuk menentukan ciri-ciri pragmatik daftar konteks kajian ini berdasarkan kepada jangkauan keakuran mereka pada prinsip kooperatif Grice dan maksim perbincangan.

Daftar tersebut diwakili oleh sampel-sampel teks dari korpus kira-kira 21 juta perkataan dan 1094 teks yang disediakan untuk kajian ini. Kiraan frekuensi untuk 37 petanda linguistik konteks didapati menggunakan sejenis *parser* yang ditulis menggunakan bahasa program komputer Perl yang dibangunkan sebagai sebahagian

dari kajian. Kiraan frekuensi ini kemudian ditukar kepada frekuensi norma berdasarkan kepada 1000 perkataan dari teks. Analisis faktor telah dijalankan pada kiraan frekuensi mengikut cara analisis multidimensi.

Analisis faktor menjuruskan lapan faktor penyelesaian. Faktor-faktor ini diinterpretasikan sebagai dimensi kontekstual yang didefinisikan melalui analisis tanda linguistik yang penting untuk setiap faktor. Interpretasi berfungsi adalah bergantung pada fungsi analisis Jenis Aktiviti. Dapatan menerangkan ciri-ciri kumpulan sampel-sampel yang mewakili tujuh daftar. Perhubungan di antara daftar-daftar digunakan untuk interpretasi dimensi dan juga untuk menilai hubungan kontekstual pada skala dimensi. Koheren dalaman daftar-daftar dan kuasa pada dimensi-dimensi pada perbezaan daftar telah dinilai. Dapatan rata-rata menyokong ketepatan kaedah penentuan ciri-ciri pragmatik teks-teks sampel.

Perbandingan statistik bukan parametrik dijalankan pada dua kumpulan teks berdasarkan kepada perkaitan mereka dengan produksi implikatur perbualan—sebuah korpus mewakili daftar-daftar di mana maksim Grice boleh dinilai dan di mana mereka boleh diabaikan. Dapatan perbandingan statistik menyarankan bahawa kedua-dua kumpulan menunjukkan perbezaan ketara di dalam beberapa dimensi konteks yang ditentukan melalui kajian ini. Oleh itu, kajian ini dapat mengenal pasti kefungsi yang berkaitan dengan kekangan produksi kata-kata berkaitan yang tidak berdasarkan maksim Grice menggunakan analisis kuantitatif empirikal.



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I certify that an Examination Committee has met on 2 February, 2007 to conduct the final examination of Khalil Walker on his PhD thesis entitled “The Contextual Dimensions of Conversational Implicature” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The Committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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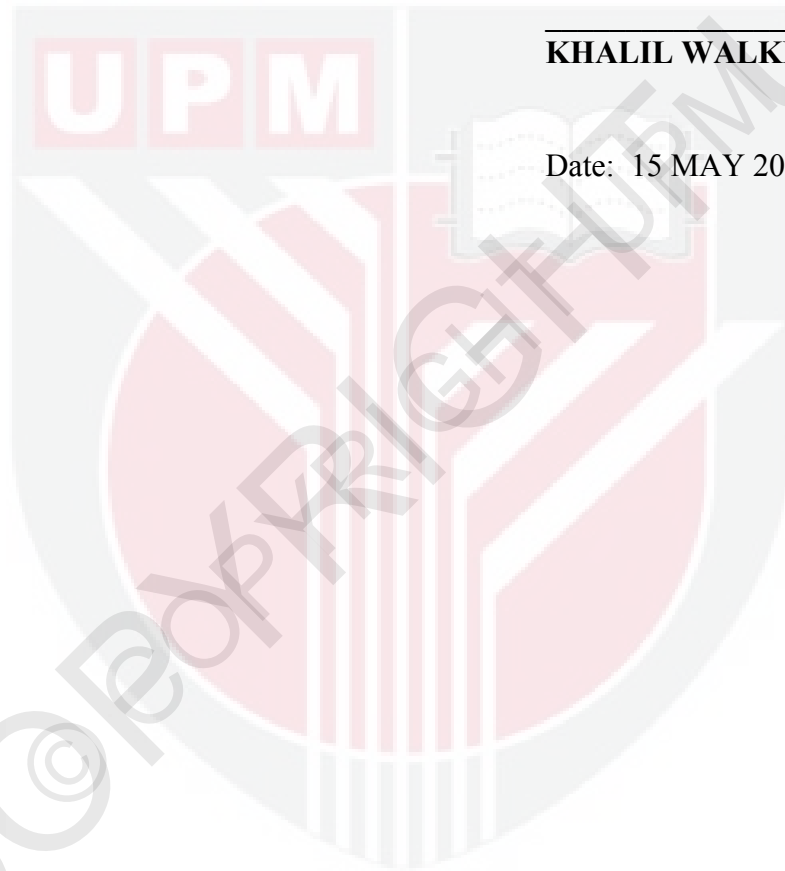
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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.



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