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## Pragmatic Adaptation of Doctors' Talks in the Medical TV Show "The Doctors"

### A B S T R A C T

language is a tool that allows people to communicate with each other. The speakers can change their language to adapt to what the audience demands. This study attempts to clarify the pragmatic adaptation of doctors' talks in the medical TV show "The Doctors." Pragmatic adaptation is the process of switching from one set of pragmatic principles to another to properly perceive the text or speech. The present study endeavours to examine adaptation to audience demands in this TV show. Hence, the following research questions are posted to be discussed, and they include the following: What are the pragmatic strategies used by the speakers in the medical TV show "The Doctors" to meet the audience's demands? What are the pragmatic strategies that score higher frequency to achieve the audience adaptation process? What is the aim of using pragmatic strategies to potentially achieve the audience's demands? The current study adopts an analytical framework which is based on adopting Searle's classification of Speech Acts (1975) and Grice's concept of implicature (1989) that will be the basic apparatus for analyzing the data. As for the selected data, two selected episodes from the medical TV show "The Doctors" have been chosen for analysis. It was found that the pragmatic strategies of speech acts and implicature are employed to convey adaptation in this TV show. Moreover, the speech acts are more frequently used than the implicature in these two episodes.

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## التكيف التداولي لمحادثات الأطباء في برنامج العرض التلفازي الطبي المعنون "الأطباء"

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### المستخلص:

اللغة هي أداة تسمح للناس بالتواصل مع بعضهم البعض. يمكن للمتحدثين تغيير لغتهم للتكيف مع ما يطلبه الجمهور. تحاول هذه الدراسة توضيح التكيف التداولي لمحادثات الأطباء في برنامج العرض التلفازي الطبي المعنون "الأطباء". التكيف التداولي هو عملية التحول من مجموعة من المبادئ التداولية إلى أخرى لغرض فهم وإدراك النص أو الكلام بشكل صحيح من قبل المستمعين. تسعى الدراسة الحالية إلى فحص التكيف مع متطلبات الجمهور في هذا العرض التلفازي. ومن هنا تم طرح الأسئلة البحثية التالية للمناقشة، وتشمل ما يلي: ما هي الاستراتيجيات التداولية التي يستخدمها المتحدثون في البرنامج التلفازي الطبي "الأطباء" لتلبية مطالب الجمهور؟ ما هي الاستراتيجيات التداولية التي تسجل وتيرة أعلى لتحقيق عملية تكيف الجمهور؟ ما هو الهدف الرئيسي من استخدام استراتيجيات التداولية لتحقيق مطالب الجمهور المحتملة؟ اعتمدت الدراسة الحالية إطارًا نظريًا تحليليًا ليكون القاعدة الأساسية لتحليل البيانات من خلال تبني تصنيف سيرل لأفعال الكلام (1975) واستراتيجية غرايس للتضمنين (1989). بالنسبة لبيانات الدراسة الحالية فقد تم اختيار حلقتين محددتين من البرنامج التلفازي الطبي "الأطباء" لتحليلها. وجدت الدراسة بأنه يتم استخدام الاستراتيجيات افعال الكلام والتضمنين التداولية لنقل التكيف في هذا العرض التلفازي. بالإضافة الى انه يتم استخدام أفعال الكلام بشكل متكرر أكثر من التضمنين في هذه الدراسة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التكيف التداولي ، مطالب الجمهور ، فعل الكلام ، التضمنين.

### 1. Introduction

People's use of language has an impact on others. They want to sway their audience to accomplish their objectives (Nashmi & Mehdi, 2022, p.17). Audience analysis is the process of determining who will be listening to one's speech and then tailoring one's message to suit that audience's interests, knowledge, and values. Audience adaptation depends on a strong use of imagination since identifying the audience via comprehensive study is challenging. As with many important techniques, audience analysis may be overused. Giving an audience whatever they want does not mean adopting a speech to their needs (Redmon, 2015, p. 255).

The term "audience analysis" does not imply "grandstanding" or "kowtowing" in front of an audience. Rather, a speaker's choice of style and substance is influenced by the process of adaptation. Understanding the main components of Audience adaptation will help you better recognize the narrow line between over-adapting and under-adapting (Son, J. & Jae Wal, J. 2016, p. 89).

There is evidence in the adaptation of health communication to various phases of behavioral change, cultural specificities, and individual health literacy. This conceptual work

focuses on adapting health communication to people's health literacy (Al-Hindawi & Jubair, 2021, p. 242).

In this study, the researchers will look at the pragmatic methods utilized by the speakers, i.e., The Doctors, to meet audience expectations. It also aims at investigating the more practical methods that have a higher success rate in achieving audience adaptation. The researchers will discuss the basic reason for using these methods that a speaker may use to get the audience to adapt to their speeches. In addition, we'll attempt to figure out what "pragmatic" tactics "The Doctors" program uses to adapt to its audience (Sheresheva & Yakovleva, 2019, p. 74).

## 2. Pragmatic Adaptation

The study of pragmatics focuses on discovering how the utterances have an underlying meaning (Ibrahim & Hussein, 2021, p.44). For Al-Husseini and Hassan (2020, p.614), the field of pragmatics is concerned with the study of actual utterances rather than meaning. "Pragmatic adaptation" is the process by which a reader of a (translated) book must switch from one set of pragmatic principles to another to properly perceive the text. Pragmatic adaptation has been defined as "changing those original text features... which, translated as such, would not operate well in the target language" to satisfy the demands of the new linguistic and cultural context (my translation) (Karanevych & Kutsa, 2018, p. 9).

Although pragmatic adaptations may be necessary even in the absence of a new cultural or language context, the difficulty with this description is that it relates translation to pragmatic adaptation and assumes a new cultural or language context (Romadina, 2015, p. 152). Pragmatic adaptability, according to Ivanova (2021, p. 10), may also relate to changes in the informational meaning of a specific target text component as a result of situational variables (Lorenz & Algner, 2021, p. 256).

### 2.1 Pragmatic Adaptation and Speech Act Theory

Many linguists study and analyse meaning in terms of the link between language norms, the environment in which an interaction occurs, and the speaker's purpose. People can accomplish things with words. It has been claimed that utterances may be used to execute acts such as apologizing, criticizing, promising, complementing, asking, and so on (Bäckström, 2020, p. 11). In 1975, Searle classified speech acts into five categories. During a **representatives** SA, the speaker ensures the statement is true by asserting, or stating. In **directives**, something is requested, questioned, or ordered. **Commissives** SA is utterances that promise or threatens some future action. The use of **expressives** SA expresses a psychological state. Finally, a **declaration** SA is a word or statement that causes an immediate change in the institutional state of affairs by relying predominantly on extra-linguistic institutions.

### 2.2 Pragmatic Adaptation and Implicature

According to Grice (1989, p.31), an implicature is not an element of the expression's interpretation; rather, it is based on the past understanding of that meaning. Using many pertinent bits of knowledge, one can infer implicature (i.e., that which is implied). This information covers things like common definitions and ways to use expressions, the idea of the

cooperative principle, as well as context and background information. There are many reasons why an implicature is not conveyed by what is said, but by the act of speaking it. That is why it is impossible to know all the different meanings of a single word or phrase. Implicature is the process by which listeners deduce the whole sense of what speakers suggest (Locke, 2015, p. 632). However, we must understand how the implicature works. As Yule points out, implicature is "an extra transmitted meaning" (Yule, 1996, p. 34), but it must be founded on the truth and non-truth conditions of expressions in order to be considered valid (Yule, 1996).

There are four types of implicature; conventional implicature, conversational implicature, generalized conversational implicature and particularized conversational implicature. Each type has characteristics such as cancellable, calculable, detachable, conventionally, and determinate (Grice, 1975).

### **2.3 Adaptation to Audience Demands**

Since political conduct is often explained as the result of psychological or demographic factors, research on this audience demand has focused on the correlations between news exposures at the individual level. Study after study shows that people's socioeconomic level and educational attainment have a significant impact on their interest in and exposure to politics (Gillam et al., 1990, p. 346).

Due to a lack of attention to context, studies of individual-level news exposure tend to ignore contextual aspects that can influence individual news consumption decisions. Research on how the layout of local information environments affects individual judgments regarding news intake has been extensively investigated by a large number of researchers (Horton & Gerrig, 2005, p. 129).

It has long been noted that the structure of information marketplaces influences individual news consumption decisions by media economists as well as mass media experts. Traditional news goods like network broadcasts and newspapers have long been attributable to the rise of "new media" rivals that bundled functionally equivalent sorts of information in improved forms (Son, J. & Jae Wal, J. 2016, p. 95).

### **2.4 Adaptation Studies in Communication Theory**

Audience perceptions are frequently impacted by unfavorable opinions of the media in general. It has varied from mere prejudice and elitism to complex media analysis. That which equates big media audiences with "lowest common denominator" taste is the first type that believes "mass culture" and "poor taste" are synonyms (Huang, 2019, p. 262). This kind of thinking is called "mass culture ideology," which instantly condemns television shows as inferior and people who like them as lacking in taste and judgment. A more nuanced criticism of popular culture emerged from the left. Especially from the 1940s and 1950s Marxist "Frankfurt School" standpoint (Bonito & Wolski, 2002, p. 256).

Media capitalists portrayed the mass audience as hapless victims of false consciousness. As a result, class identification and cohesion are lost. The oppressed working classes were powerless against propaganda due to their lack of knowledge (Pitts, 2016, p. 432).

### 3. Methodology

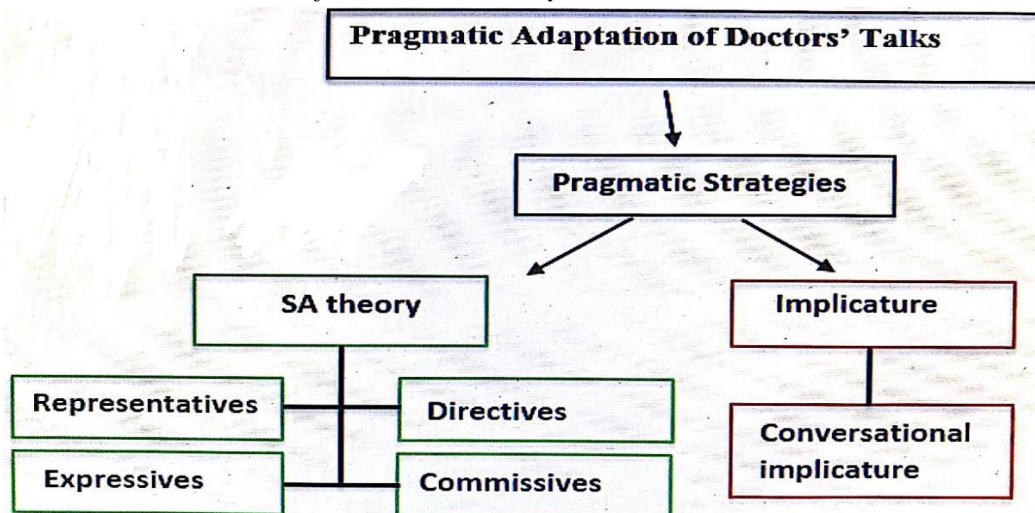
The purpose of this study is to investigate quantitatively and qualitatively the concept of Adaptation to Audience Demands in the medical show "The Doctors" by using pragmatic strategies, particularly the SAs and implicature. The data of this study is selected from the medical show "The Doctors". This show is presented by a team of medical professionals who discuss the scientific achievements in the field of medicine and answer various health-related questions from the audience. The researchers select two episodes to be analyzed and the title of these episodes are: "Are Teens Starving for Perfection on TikTok?" and "The Anti-Aging Skincare Routine for Any Age!".

The data of this study is selected from the medical show "The Doctors". The researchers select two episodes to be analyzed and the title of these episodes are: "Are Teens Starving for Perfection on TikTok?" and "The Anti-Aging Skincare Routine for Any Age!". The data of the present study is selected as a transcript of conversations between the speakers in the episodes of the TV show "The Doctors."

The selected episodes are spoken, and the researchers took the transcript of the conversation between the speakers in these episodes to be analyzed in this study. This model of this study is adapted from Searle's classification of SAs (1975) and Grice's theory of implicature (1989). These two theories are used to analyze the selected transcript conversation between the speakers in the episodes of the medical TV show "The Doctors". Figure (1) below summarizes the mechanism of this model:

**Figure 1:**

*The Theoretical Framework of the Current Study*



*Note.* Figure 1 shows the pragmatic strategies used in theoretical framework to make adaptation of doctors' talks and these strategies are SA theory and Implicature.

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

The current study introduces instances of the selected transcript conversation between the speakers in the TV show "The Doctors" that will be examined and analyzed. The analysis

is based on the utterances that were used in the conversation through the use of the SA theory by Searle (1975) and implicature theory by Grice (1989).

The procedures that are used in analyzing the selected data are to follow the following steps:

1. Extracting the speeches that have pragmatic strategies of SAs,
2. Analyzing the kinds of SAs and their functions qualitatively and quantitatively.
3. Extracting the speeches that have pragmatic strategies of implicature,
4. Analyzing the kinds of implicature and its function qualitatively and quantitatively.
5. Discuss the findings obtained from the qualitative and quantitative analysis of SAs and implicature.

#### **4.1 Analysis of Episode One “Are Teens Starving for Perfection on TikTok?”**

As for the analysis of SAs, the researchers have extracted the following extracts to be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively.

1. If you have teenagers, they probably spend a considerable amount of time on TikTok.
2. Investigative producer Leslie Marcus went undercover on TikTok and joins us with her troubling findings.
3. Hello, troubling indeed.
4. Again, this is so interesting, so shocking and so important, as we alluded to, for those, especially those who have teenagers of their own.
5. A quarter of users are 10 to 16 years old.
6. That's the youngest demo of any social media app out there.
7. But what I consistently see on there, blows my mind.

This episode of the Doctors is talking about the effects of TikTok on teenagers. TikTok is video-focused social networking created by a Chinese company. It presents a variety of short videos about jokes, dance, pranks, tricks, and entertainment. The duration of each video is from 15 seconds to ten minutes. TikTok was launched in 2017 and became available worldwide on 2, 2018. This episode contains a lot of SAs, especially Representative SA as there are a lot of facts being stated. The first fact is delivered by Dr. Drew Ordon; he states that the majority of teenagers spend a lot of time on TikTok and that has great effects, not on their personality only but also on their health. Investigative producer Leslie Marcus states that the majority of TikTok users are between "10 to 16 years old", therefore TikTok has "the youngest demo of any social media app out there". All these facts in (1, 5 and 6) include representative SAs as both speakers use facts to show the seriousness of the situation. Dr. Drew Ordon and Leslie Marcus use expressive SAs to represent the emotions of shock (troubling findings), "troubling indeed.", "This is so interesting, so shocking and so important", and "blows my mind.", as seen in (2, 3, 4, and 7) to attract the audience's attention to the importance of the episode's subject. You have to understand that TikTok is unique because of the algorithm.

8. The algorithm lets you watch one type of video and it spits out similar videos for you, an endless stream of videos.
9. Now, I originally wanted to go on and find this underground community of eating disorders.
10. They are spelling starving, S-T-A-R-V with an eight N-G instead of an I.

11. This isn't something that you would naturally think about as a parent, but you have to dig.

Marcus uses Representative SAs to express facts about how TikTok's algorithm works as in (8 and 9). Watching a video about a certain subject will show other similar videos "endless stream of videos". She also highlights her experience on TikTok as making a fake thirteen years old girl profile to see an "underground community of eating disorders", which Commissive SA is trying to make a future commitment to understanding teenagers' health issues. The hashtags she searches for are "spelling starving, S-T-A-R-V with an eight N-G instead of an I". These hashtags are certainly not a thing that any parents may think about, thus, Marcus asks any parents who have a child with an eating disorder habit to "you have to dig" which is a Directive SAs via giving orders.

12. I see this idealized image of beauty and we're not just talking about perfection.

13. We're talking about women that look like they're starving ...

14. So I see one girl that's pretty, I will have girl after girl, after girl on my feed that doesn't look like normal women.

15. This isn't somebody that you see walking down the street.

During her research, Marcus finds videos of beautiful girls yet they do not look normal "*idealized image of beauty*", "*look like they're starving*", "*don't look like normal women*", and "*this isn't somebody that you see walking down the street*" and "*that's where this unrealistic standard of beauty*" as seen in (13, 14, 15, and 16) which is a Representative SAs of real facts.

16. And when I went deeper down the rabbit hole that's when I found some of the most disturbing things.

17. I always say that the real story is in the comments because one person will comment and then I call it the comment train.

18. And there'll be hundreds of others asking for advice on how to starve.

19. One person was saying to drink water with zero-calorie sweetener instead of chewing gum because gum has calories.

20. And one user said to make your plate intentionally dirty with food and leave it in the sink so your parents don't know that you didn't eat. Directives

21. And another one says that you know, tell your friends that you eat at school and vice versa when you're home.

22. Take your meals to your room, feed them to your dog, you know, and then some really sad comments on there.

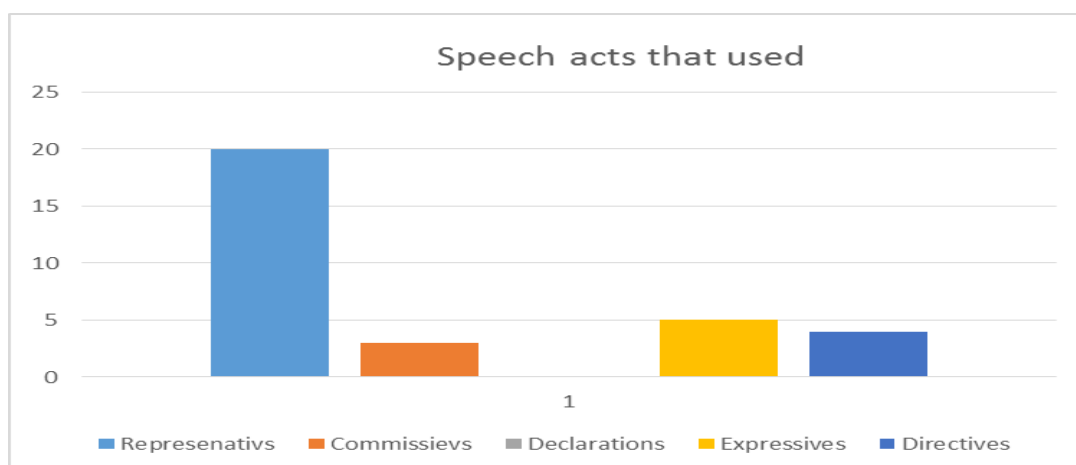
The videos contain "the most disturbing things" which are Expressive SAs of feeling. The real story lies in the comments "one person will comment and then I call it the comment train" as other teens will comment using Representative SA to talk about their starving experiences. While others will use the comments to ask for advice on how to starve as seen in the Commissive SA in (19). One of the commenters uses a Representative SAs in stating that his starving method is to "*drink water with zero calorie sweetener instead of chewing gum because gum has calories*". Other commenters' advice as following "*make your plate intentionally dirty with food and leave it*", "*tell your friends that you eat at school*", "*Take your meals to your room*", and "*feed them to your dog*", all these orders in (21, 22, and 23) above are a Directives SAs.

23. I just see those pretty girls. And every time I eat, I feel guilty about it.
24. The stuff really kind of like pulls at your heart because you are like, wow, they're seeing these videos on TikTok and now they're starving themselves and they're complaining about feeling dizzy, about their hair falling out, about how they don't feel well, how they're always cold and everybody else around them is hot.
25. Like they have physical health issues because they're trying to starve to fit this fake image

In (24 and 25), Marcus highlights feelings of sadness, guilt, and complaining about those pretty girls " *I feel guilty about it.*", "*The stuff really kind of like pulls at your heart because you are like, wow*", and "*they're complaining about feeling dizzy, about their hair falling out, about how they don't feel well, how they're always cold and everybody else around them is hot.*" All these feelings are Expressive SAs. All this suffering and starvation that those girls go through is to fit the "fake image of perfection" that TikTok's videos show and this is a Representative SA as this image is not realistic. Finally, this episode uses mainly representative SA as seeing the Figure below.

### Figure (2)

*The use of SAs in "Are Teens Starving for Perfection on TikTok?"*



*Note.* This figure shows the use of SAs in "Are Teens Starving for Perfection on TikTok?" representative SA is used twenty times, the expressive SA is used five times, and the directives SA is found four times, and Commissives is found three times. Declarations of SAs have never been found.

As for the strategy of implicature, the following extracts are used to be analyzed.

Extract: 1.

A. So Leslie, tell us, why did you want to investigate TikTok?

B. Well, let's start with TikTok. A quarter of users are 10 to 16 years old. That's the youngest demo of any social media app out there... Now I love fashion, I love beauty but what I consistently see there, blows my mind. I see this idealized image of beauty and we're not just talking about perfection.

Dr Orden opens the talk show by asking Leslie Marcus "*why did you want to investigate TikTok?*" She answers that a lot of TikTok users are so young and some of them are between 10 to 13 years old. However, this does not answer Dr Orden's question. She also adds that she likes beauty and fashion which is still not an answer. She supposes to say that she is looking at how TikTok affects teens eating habits and their view of beauty. Nevertheless, the audience can conduct this answer indirectly as she refers to the age of participants on TikTok and their "*idealized image of beauty*". Thus, one can observe how intended meaning goes beyond what is said.

#### 4.1.1 Discussion of the First Episode

In the "*Are Teens Starving for Perfection on TikTok?*" episode, the study has found that SAs have been used more than any other pragmatic strategies. Accordingly, the representative SA is used twenty times, the expressive SA is used five times, the directives SA is found four times, and commissives are found three times. SA of declarations has never been found. In this episode, there is only one implicature in which there is a question and an answer that shows how intended meaning goes beyond what is said.

#### 4.2 Analysis of Episode Two "The Anti-Aging Skincare Routine for Any Age!"

The following extracts are selected from episode two to be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The SAs are performed in these extracts while there is no use of implicature.

##### Extracts

1. When it comes to our skincare regime, what worked back in our twenties won't save face as we move through our thirties, forties, and fifties, and for some of us, even beyond that.
2. So here with the secrets to a flawless face at any age, and what you can do to stay ahead of the curve,
3. Thank you so much for having me back.
4. All right. You know, I'm gonna be taking notes here. I'm sure there'll be something to learn.

Aging is a natural course for all human beings that can affect the skin each year. Thus, each person's skincare should change as one grows older as seen in (1). This opening information stated by Dr. Orden is a Representative SA as it is true that ageing affects the production of collagen and elastin. After stating these facts, Dr. Orden promises that this episode is going to reveal "So here with the secrets to a flawless face at any age". Making such a commitment is a Commissives SA. However, Dr. Orden introduces the episode guest; who is going to reveal the secrets for anti-ageing skin; board-certified dermatologist, Dr. Sonia Batra. Dr. Batra uses Expressive SA to express her thanks as seen in (3). Again Dr. Orden uses Commissives SA to emphasize the importance of this episode "*I'm sure there'll be something to learn*" and "*I'm gonna be taking notes*".

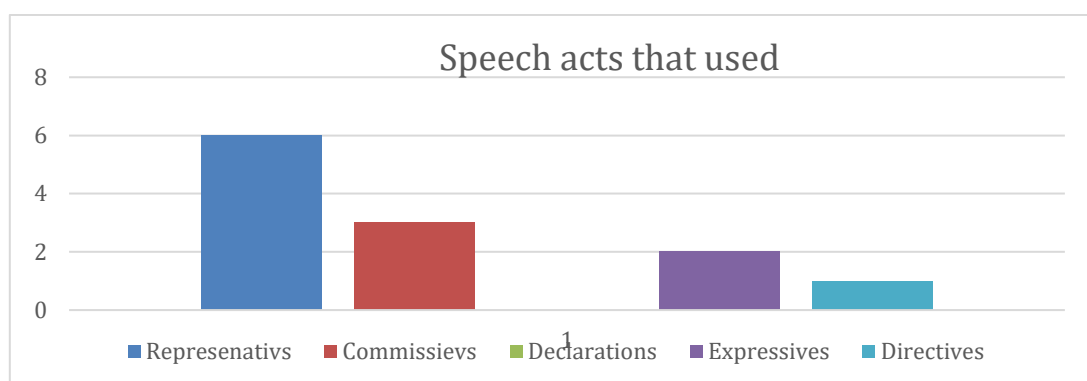
5. So tell us about the ABCs of skin care for all ages.
6. The A stands for antioxidant, which is vitamin C, vitamin E, and ferulic acid.

7. The B stands for the block. So we're talking about sunscreen...Mineral, zinc, or titanium SPF 30 sunscreens are essential.
8. And then the C stands for cell turnover or it can stand for collagen stimulation.
9. In our twenties, we produce 1% less collagen and then elastin per year. So the ageing process starts then...
10. I gotta tell ya, a little bit scary.
11. Because everyone's skin dries out in our forties,
12. And for many of us in our forties, because we keep using our muscles over and over, we start to get little furrows from the muscle action, so that's where Botox comes in.

According to Searle's SAs theory, command, request and order as in (5) are considered as SA of directives. Dr. Batra tries to explain the "ABCs" in (6, 7, and 8) by using representative SA. In this abbreviation, A stands for antioxidant, B stands for block (sunscreen), and C stands for cell turnover and collagen. Another fact being mentioned by Dr. Batra is that "we produce 1% less collagen and then elastin per year" which is a representative SA. This SA is used to inform the audience about the scientific information on collagen. However, the fact that the skin is so much affected by aging makes the host feels "a little bit scary", which is an Expressive SA. Accordingly, Dr. Batra tends to explain what is happening to humans' skin in the forties. The skin is going to be dry and it starts to be easily affected by the out world. These facts are also a Representative SA. To minimize aging marks that result from using "our muscles over and over", Dr. Batra advises using Botox. This is a Representative SA as well.

### Figure (3)

Use of SAs in "The Anti-Aging Skincare Routine for Any Age!"



*Note.* The above figure shows the use of SAs in the second episode, representative SA has been used six times, Commissives SA has been used three times, expressive is found only twice and directives SA is found only once. The entire episode contains no implicature.

#### 4.2.1 Discussion of the Second Episode

"The Anti-Aging Skincare Routine for Any Age!" is a really interesting episode about skincare and anti-aging products in which the Representative SA has been used six times, Commissives SA has been used three times, Expressive is found only twice, and Directives SA is found only once. Lastly, there is no use for implicature.

The second episode is shorter than the first one because the latter lasted for 5 minutes while the former lasted for 4 minutes only. The first episode seems more interesting as it deals with eating disorders and how social media affects teens eating habits which is a very serious topic. While the second episode is talking about a secondary topic of beauty and anti-ageing. Accordingly, even though there are only 24 hours between posting the first and the second episode, the first episode hits 2564 views while the second episode reaches 787 views only to the time of analyzing the two episodes. Thus, the first episode is longer, more serious and interesting, and continues a lot of deep discussions.

### 4.3 Findings and Discussion of findings

The following findings can be drawn from the data analysis:

1. There are two pragmatic strategies employed to make adaptation to the audience demands.
2. In terms of the first strategy, there are four types of Searle's classification that are included in selected transcripts of conversations between the speakers in these two episodes of the TV show "The Doctors."
3. The Representative SA is employed 26 times, the Expressive SA is 7 times, and is followed by Commissives, which is 6 times, while Directives are 5 times, i. e. 11.36%.
4. The most frequent one in these two episodes is the Representative SA, which is 59.09%. It can be concluded that Representative SA is the one in the conversation between the speakers to adapt to the audience.
5. The results are listed in table 1 below:

**Table 1.**

*Types of Searle's classification*

NO	Searle's classification of SA	Number (F)	%
1	Representative	26	59.09%
2	Expressive	7	15.90%
3	Commissives	6	13.63%
4	Directives	5	11.36%
5	Declaration	0	zero
	Total	44	99.99%

*Note.* The above table shows Searle's classification of SA, frequencies, and percentages which appear in the selected episodes.

In the statistical analysis of the findings, it was found that representatives are more suitable for making adaptations than other kinds of SAs. Thus, in the two selected episodes, the highest percentage is dedicated to the representatives' SAs that occupy 59.09%. Expressives SAs occupy 15.90% of the utterances, whereas Commissives SAs constitute 13.63% of the illocutionary forces involved in the utterances. In addition, directives SA account for 11.36% of all utterances. According to the study, speakers do not use declarative SAs in their utterances.

6. The second pragmatic strategy is implicature which is used only one time in these two episodes.

## 5. Conclusion

The findings of the current study show that the adaptation of doctors' talks in the medical TV show "The Doctors" can be represented by using pragmatic strategies. The most frequent pragmatic strategies are SAs which are performed by doctors to convey their ideas and achieve their goals. The doctors through their conversation in these two selected episodes focus on the SAs especially the representatives acts. Subsequently, they use a strategy to assert and clarify the medical scientific facts or have objective reality and then adapt to audience demands.

It has been found that the speakers mentioned only one implicature in their talks. Therefore, doctors' talks are accompanied by scientific facts that are expressed straightforwardly and unambiguously. In other words, implicature has no role in scientific reports and the researchers can declare that this fact may be generalized for other researchers.

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## Appendix

### First Episode

00:00 If you have teenagers, 00:01 they probably spend a considerable amount of time on TikTok. 00:06 And well, we brought you horror stories about this app 00:09 before we wanted to dig deeper. 00:13 Investigative producer Leslie Marcus went undercover 00:17 on TikTok and joins us with her troubling findings. 00:21 Hi there, Leslie. 00:22 Hello, troubling indeed. 00:24 Well, you never disappoint. 00:26 Again, this is so interesting, so shocking 00:30 and so important as we alluded to 00:34 for those, especially those that have teenagers of their own. 00:38 So Leslie, tell us, why did you want to investigate TikTok? 00:43 Well, let's start with TikTok. 00:44 A quarter of users are 10 to 16 years old. 00:47 That's the youngest demo of any social media app out there. 00:51 And I'm not a teenager and on my regular profile on TikTok. 00:55 Now I love fashion, I love beauty 00:57 but what I consistently see on there, it blows my mind. 01:01 I see this idealized image of beauty 01:04 and we're not just talking about perfection. 01:06 We're talking about women that look like they're starving 01:08 and these videos are consistently spat out 01:11 to be this provocative nature. 01:13 For example, there's a whole page right now 01:16 thousands of videos where girls are lip syncing 01:18 to this song called "I'm a Slut." 01:20 I saw that and I mean, you're right 01:23 we're talking about exaggerated, unnatural, 01:27 unhealthy appearing bodies and women. 01:31 And this is sending such a powerful message to teenagers. 01:37 You have to understand that TikTok is unique 01:39 because of the algorithm. 01:41 The algorithm, you watch one type of video 01:43 and it spits out similar videos to you, 01:46 endless stream of videos. 01:48 So I see one girl that's pretty, 01:50 I will have girl after girl, after girl 01:53 on my feed that doesn't look like normal women. 01:55 This isn't somebody that you see walking down the street. 01:58 And if I'm a teen and I'm looking at women like this 02:01 I'm wondering to myself why I don't look like that (18). 02:03 And that's where this unrealistic standard of beauty 02:06 I think is morphine from is TikTok 02:10 not from these other apps where, you know, 02:13 there's a filtered image or a face tuned image. 02:16 The stakes are higher here. 02:17 So Leslie, tell us 02:19 how did you conduct your TikTok experiment? 02:22 Well, I created a fake profile 02:23 basically as a 13-year-old girl. 02:26 And I started just looking at some regular videos 02:28 of other women on TikTok. 02:29 And then the algorithm started to spit out 02:32 these other videos of me. 02:33 Now, I originally wanted to go on 02:35 and find this underground community of eating disorders. 02:39 When I went on TikTok 02:40 and started looking up generic hashtags, like diet, 02:43 exercise, weight loss, skinny, not a lot came up, 02:47 but then when I started misspelling some of these hashtags, 02:51 and I'm not just talking about 02:53 like spelling by a little word, 02:54 like you have to look for the misspelling. 02:57 They are spelling starving, S-T-A-R-V 02:59 with an eight N-G instead of an I. 03:02 This isn't something that you would naturally think about 03:04 as a parent, but you have to dig. 03:06 And when I went deeper down the rabbit hole 03:08 that's when I found some of the most disturbing things. 03:10 What kind of disturbing content did you find, Leslie? 03:14 Well, you have to understand how TikTok works. 03:16 It's not just like a picture 03:18 with a hashtag that makes it popular. 03:20 It's a trend. 03:21 It's a challenge. 03:22 It's something where they are using a trending sound 03:28 and then millions of videos will pop up. 03:30 So one, let's

say I looked up starving with the eight. 03:33 I found one video 03:34 where somebody was teaching other users 03:38 how is water and gum for a diet. 03:41 And then you gotta read the comments. 03:42 I always say this 03:43 that the real story is in the comments 03:45 because one person will comment 03:47 and then I call it the comment train. 03:48

## **Second Episode**

00:00 When it comes to our skincare regime, 00:02 what worked back in our twenties 00:05 won't save face as we move through our thirties, 00:09 forties, and fifties, 00:11 and for some of us, even beyond that. 00:13 So here with the secrets to a flawless face at any age, 00:19 and what you can do stay ahead of the curve, 00:22 is our good friend, 00:23 board-certified dermatologist, Dr. Sonia Batra. 00:27 Great to see you as always, Dr. Batra. 00:31 Dr. Batra. Great to see you, too. 00:32 Thank you so much for having me back. 00:34 All right. 00:35 You know, I'm gonna be taking notes here. 00:37 I'm sure there'll be something to learn. 00:40 So let's get started. 00:41 So tell us about the ABCs of skin care for all ages. 00:47 The A stands for antioxidant, 00:49 which is vitamin C, vitamin E, ferulic acid. 00:53 Those are all molecules 00:54 that are meant to mop up ongoing ultraviolet damage. 00:57 The B stands for block. 00:59 So we're talking about sunscreen and you know I'm a fanatic, 01:02 I've talked about this many times, 01:03 Mineral, zinc, or titanium SPF 30 sunscreens are essential, 01:08 every day, no matter what climate you live in. 01:10 And then the C stands for cell turnover 01:13 or it can stand for collagen stimulation. 01:15 And that's just products you're gonna use, 01:17 typically as a night cream. 01:18 They're gonna help promote that cell turnover. 01:20 Things like alpha hydroxy acids, peptides, retinoids. 01:24 Those are the cornerstones at any age 01:26 of a really good anti-aging skin regimen. 01:28 In our twenties, we produce 1% less collagen 01:32 and then elastin per year. 01:35 So the aging process starts then, 01:37 and collagen and elastin are those protein fibers 01:40 that give our skin elasticity, they give it that firmness. 01:43 So it is really important to know the ABCs 01:46 to protect and to maintain your skin, starting early. 01:49 Already in our thirties, our skin will start to dry out. 01:53 The collagen's turnover is going to start to slow down, 01:56 so it's time to up the ante a little bit. 01:59 You may start to look for things 02:00 that are a little bit more hydrating. 02:02 Adding into those ABCs, looking for a product 02:04 that's gonna address specific concerns, like brown spots, 02:08 is certainly reasonable, 02:09 and because the cell turnover is slowing down, 02:11 it's always helpful to think about procedures 02:13 that help slough that dry, dull outer layer of skin. 02:17 So really gentle things like a chemical peel 02:19 that's gonna slough off the outer layer, 02:21 or microneedling to jump start collagen production. 02:23 reasonable to start thinking about small tweaks 02:26 just to maintain and enhance. 02:28 You know, Dr. Batra, that 1% less collagen 02:31 from our twenties was new information to me 02:34 and I gotta tell ya, a little bit scary. (laughs) 02:36 (all laughing) 02:37 For those of us in our forties, 02:39 tell us what people should do to add to their skin routine. 02:43 What should we add? 02:44 Because everyone's skin dries out in our forties, 02:46 we start to see the barrier function 02:49 become a little less intact. 02:50 So remember, your skin 02:51 is meant to keep the outside world out. 02:53 So as that barrier becomes more porous, 02:56 you're gonna have a harder time retaining moisture. 02:59 But the good news is, it's not all downhill. 03:01 There are things you can do. 03:03 So in terms of things you might wanna add in at that point, 03:06 one would be a prescription retinoid. 03:08 Those are vitamin A product, 03:10 I mentioned them at the

very beginning, 03:11 but stronger strengths are available from a doctor 03:14 and that would help with stimulating collagen. 03:17 It would help promote cell turnover. 03:19 As we get into our forties, 03:20 you have more options too, in terms of procedures. 03:23 So we have lasers that are directed at different colors, 03:26 like addressing brown spots, addressing blood vessels, 03:29 certainly resurfacing lasers, that might be fractional, 03:31 to help stimulate more collagen as well. 03:34 And for many of us in our forties, 03:36 because we keep using our muscles over and over, 03:38 we start to get little furrows from the muscle action, 03:40 so that's where Botox comes in. 03:42 We've heard about it. 03:43 That's where we started addressing fine lines 03:45 and creases that come from muscle action.