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Course paper

”Pragmatics: rules of conversation”

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**Scheme**

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# Introduction

Language is the main device of communication. As a means to build a social relation, language has various functions. Malinowski in Halliday classifies language functions into two big groups. The first is pragmatic, in which this function is the further divided into narrative and active. In this case, the main function of language is as a means of communication. The second is magical, in which language is used in ceremonial or religious activities in the culture.

A mutual understanding is inevitably needed by a speaker and a hearer in order to construct a good communication. There are times when people say (or write) exactly what they mean, but generally they are not totally explicit. They manage to convey far more than their words mean, or even something quite different from the meaning of their words. Understanding an utterance syntactically and semantically is not sufficient since the meaning of utterance is not only stated but it is also implied. In order to comprehend the implied meaning of an utterance, implicature becomes unavoidably essential. Implicature is a proposition that is implied by the utterance in a context even though that proposition is not a part of nor an entailment of what is actually said. Cooperative principles proposed by Grice mentions that a speaker makes his conversational contribution such as is required at the stage in which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which he is engaged. [13] He, then, further divides the cooperative principles into four maxims: maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relevance, and maxim of manner.

To grasp the notion of communication, context happens to be completely important since speaker and hearer have to know the context in which the conversation takes place. Therefore, understanding context can be a helpful way to know the speaker and hearer’s intention.

Aim of the course paper is to define and describe the rules of conversation according to Paul Grice’s philosophy and their practical application.

Object of the course paper is the Cooperative principle and Maxims of conversation.

Subject of the course paper is the conversational analysis according to Cooperative principle and Maxims of Conversation.

Part I. Theoretical Aspects of Conversational Principles

##

## 1.1 Philosophical background

Before starting to discus the rules of conversation, it is important, in our opinion, to mention some philosophical aspects of Grice’s work on language. The aim here is to show the recurring themes in Grice’s work, by close reference to his papers and also to commentaries on them.

The first point to make is that there are two broad aspects to the Gricean program. There is the work on implicatures, with which we are largely concerned here, but there is also the earlier work on sentence-meaning and speaker-meaning. Our position is that although there are distinct foci to the two aspects of the Gricean program, they are also closely interrelated: to understand the motivation behind implicatures, a basic understanding of Grice’s account of speaker-meaning, sentence- meaning and speaker-intention is also necessary.[6]

Paul Grice is best known for his contributions to the theory of meaning and communication. This work (collected in Grice 1989) has had lasting importance for philosophy and linguistics, with implications for cognitive science generally. His three most influential contributions concern the nature of communication, the distinction betwen speaker's meaning and linguistic meaning, and the phenomenon of conversational implicature.

Grice's concept of speaker's meaning was an ingenious refinement of the crude idea that communication is a matter of intentionally affecting another person's psychological states. He discovered that there is a distinctive, rational means by which the effect is achieved: by way of getting one's audience to recognize one's intention to achieve it. The intention includes, as part of its content, that the audience recognize this very intention by taking into account the fact that they are intended to recognize it. A communicative intention is thus a self-referential, or reflexive, intention. It does not involve a series of nested intentions--the speaker does not have an intention to convey something and a further intention that the first be recognized, for then this further intention would require a still further intention that it be recognized, and so on ad infinitum. Confusing reflexive with iterated intentions, to which even Grice himself was prone, led to an extensive literature replete with counterexamples to ever more elaborate characterizations of the intentions required for genuine communication (Strawson, Schiffer), and to the spurious objection that it involves an infinite regress (Sperber and Wilson, whose own "relevance" theory neglects the reflexivity of communicative intentions). Although the idea of reflexive intentions raises subtle issues (the exchange between Recanati and Bach), it clearly accounts for the essentially overt character of communicative intentions, namely, that their fulfillment consists their recognition (by the intended audience). This idea forms the core of a Gricean approach to the theory of speech acts, including nonliteral and indirect speech acts (Bach and Harnish). Different types of speech acts (statements, requests, apologies, etc.) may be distinguished by the type of propositional attitude (belief, desire, regret etc.) being expressed by the speaker.[3]

Grice's distinction between speaker's and linguistic meaning reflects the fact that what a speaker means in uttering a sentence freque diverges from what the sentence itself means. A speaker can mean something other than what the sentence means, as in "Nature abhors a vacuum," or something more, as in "Is there a doctor in the house?" Grice invoked this distinction for two reasons. First, he thought linguistic meaning could be reduced to (standardized) speaker's meaning. This reductive view has not gained wide acceptance, because of its extreme complexity and because it requires the controversial assumption that language is essentially a vehicle for communicating thoughts and not a medium of thought itself. Still, many philosophers would at least concede that mental content is a more fundamental notion than linguistic meaning, and perhaps even that semantics reduces to propositioal attitude psychology.

Grice's other reason for invoking the distinction between speaker's and linguistic meaning was to combat extravagant claims, made by so-called "ordinary language" philosophers, about various important philosophical terms, such as 'believes' or 'looks.' For example, it was sometimes suggested that believing implies not knowing, because to say, e.g., "I believe that alcohol is dangerous" is to imply that one does not know this, or to say "The sky looks blue" is to imply that the sky might not actually be blue. However, as Grice pointed out, what carries such implications is not what one is saying but that one is saying it (as opposed to the stronger 'I know that alcohol is dangerous" or "The sky is blue). Grice also objected to certain ambiguity claims, e.g., that 'or' has an exclusive as well as inclusive sense, as in "I would like an apple or an orange," by pointing out that the use of 'or,' not the word itself, that carries the implication of exclusivity. Grice's Modified Occam's Razor ("Senses are not to be multiplied beyond necessity") cut back on a growing conflation of (linguistic) meaning with use, and has since helped linguists appreciate the importance of separating, so far as possible, the domains of semantics and pragmatics. [3]

Grice has been associated with the Oxford group known (mainly by their opponents) as ‘Ordinary Language Philosophers’, who thought “important features of natural language were not revealed, but hidden” by the traditional logical approach of such ‘Ideal Language Philosophers’ as Frege and Russell.[7] However, it is very clear that the concept, and use of, logic is considered a basic philosophical tool by Grice. The relationship between conversation and logic is the starting point of Grice [9], it is considered important enough to be in the titles of his two main implicature papers (Grice), yet the concept of logic is rarely mentioned in the same breath as the CP.

Grice [7] starts with the long-accepted fact that formal devices representing the logical functions of and and or, and so forth, diverge in meaning from their natural language counterparts. He then sets out briefly the extremes of the two opposing positions in relation to this. The formalists take the position that the additional meanings which can be found in natural language are imperfections of that system, and: “The proper course is to conceive and begin to construct an ideal language, incorporating the formal devices, the sentences of which will be clear, determinate in truth value, and certifiably free from metaphysical implications; the foundations of science will now be philosophically secure, since the statements of the scientist will be expressible within this ideal language.” [9]

Whereas the non-formalist holds that as speakers can understand the words which don’t have logical equivalence, then this shouldn’t be considered a deficiency in the system: language has other functions rather than serving science.

Grice’s position is that the formalists are failing to account for the logic of conversation – there are systems there, it is a question of identifying them: “Moreover, while it is no doubt true that the formal devices are especially amenable to systematic treatment by the logician, it remains the case that there are very many inferences and arguments, expressed in natural language and not in terms of these devices, that are nevertheless recognizably valid. I have, moreover, no intention of entering the fray on behalf of either contestant. I wish, rather, to maintain that the common assumption of the contestants that the divergences do in fact exist is (broadly speaking) a common mistake, and that the mistake arises from an inadequate attention to the nature and importance of the conditions governing conversation.” Grice. [7]

Therefore, the aim of Grice [7] is to demonstrate the existence of a logic to the operation of conversations. It is not about conversations being cooperative – that might be an outcome of the logical structure, but it is certainly not its raison d’etre (Although it is very unclear that cooperation is such a feature of conversation.). The use of implicatures as an investigative tool in Grice [8] was not only to demonstrate the philosophical utility of implicatures, but also to demonstrate that structures which had evaded the grasp of formal logic could be accounted for in a systematic way. Thus the formalists’ argument for the imperfections of natural language is undermined: if meanings can be predicted reliably from forms, then their philosophical worries are unfounded. Of course, it is arguable that this aim has yet to be achieved, if, indeed, it is possible. However, the point to be made here is that Grice has chosen his title discussion of this carefully, to reflect his wider interests. Grice [7] are about logic, not cooperation. This is why the importance of logic recurs throughout his work on the philosophy of language, whereas cooperation per se is not mentioned elsewhere.

## 1.2 Cooperative principle by H.P. Grice

Paul Grice emphasized the distinction Voltaire makes between what words mean, what the speaker literally says when using them, and what the speaker means or intends to communicate by using those words, which often goes considerably beyond what is said. A asks B to lunch and B replies, "I have a one o'clock class I'm not prepared for." B has conveyed to A that B will not be coming to lunch, although B hasn't literally said so. B intends for A to figure out that by indicating a reason for not coming to lunch (the need to prepare his class) B intend to convey that B is not coming to lunch for that reason. The study of such conversational implicatures is the core of Grice's influential theory. [8]

Grice's so-called theory of conversation starts with a sharp distinction between what someone says and what someone ‘implicates’ by uttering a sentence. What someone says is determined by the conventional meaning of the sentence uttered and contextual processes of disambiguation and reference fixing; what she implicates is associated with the existence to some rational principles and maxims governing conversation (setting aside "conventional implicatures" which we discuss below). What is said has been widely identified with the literal content of the utterance; what is implicated, the implicature, with the non-literal, what it is (intentionally) communicated, but not said, by the speaker. Consider his initial example:

A and B are talking about a mutual friend, C, who is now working in a bank. A asks B how C is getting on in his job, and B replies: Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet.[7]

What did B say by uttering "he hasn't been to prison yet"? Roughly, all he literally said of C was that he hasn't been to prison up to the time of utterance. This is what the conventional sentence meaning plus contextual processes of disambiguation, precisification of vague expressions and reference fixing provide.

But, normally, B would have implicated more than this: that C is the sort of person likely to yield to the temptation provided by his occupation. According to Grice, the ‘calculation’ of conversational implicatures is grounded on common knowledge of what the speaker has said (or better, the fact that he has said it), the linguistic and extra linguistic context of the utterance, general background information, and the consideration of what Grice dubs the ‘Cooperative Principle (CP)’: Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.[7]

In other words, we as speakers try to contribute meaningful, productive utterances to further the conversation. It then follows that, as listeners, we assume that our conversational partners are doing the same.

You can think of reasons why someone might be uncooperative in conversation (maybe they’re being interrogated for information they don’t want to give up; maybe they hate the person they’re talking to; maybe they’re just crazy) but in the vast majority of conversations, it’s safe to assume that both participants are trying to be cooperative.

This assumption (that the cooperative principle holds, and the people we’re speaking to are trying to cooperate) explains two things:

(1) why speech errors are often ignored (or even go unnoticed) in conversation. As long as the meaning the speaker is trying to get across is clear, the listener usually gives them the benefit of the doubt and focuses on the meaning.

(2) why we can find meaning in statements which, on the surface, seem ridiculous, untrue or unrelated (i.e. metaphors, sarcasm, overstatement, understatement, etc.) Rather than assuming that our conversational partner is lying, crazy, or speaking at random, we assume they’re trying to get across some meaning, and we can figure out what that meaning is. [6]

The cooperative principle can be divided into four maxims, called the Gricean maxims, describing specific rational principles observed by people who obey the cooperative principle; these principles enable effective communication.

**1.2.1 Maxims of conversation**

The philosopher Paul Grice proposed four conversational maxims that arise from the pragmatics of natural language. The Gricean Maxims are a way to explain the link between utterances and what is understood from them. The Maxims are based on his cooperative principle, which states, ‘Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged,’ and is so called because listeners and speakers must speak cooperatively and mutually accept one another to be understood in a particular way. The principle describes how effective communication in conversation is achieved in common social situations and is further broken down into the four Maxims of Quality, Quantity, Relevance and Manner.

The category of Quantity relates to the quantity of information to be provided, and under it fall the following maxims:

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

(The second maxim is disputable; it might be said that to be over-informative is not a transgression of the CP but merely a waste of time. However, it might be answered that such overinformativeness may be confusing in that it is liable to raise side issues; and there may also be an indirect effect, in that the hearers may be misled as a result of thinking that there is some particular point in the provision of the excess of information. However this may be, there is perhaps a different reason for doubt about the admission of this second maxim, namely, that its will be secured by a later maxim, which concerns relevance [7]).

Under the category of Quality fall a supermaxim – “Try to make your contribution one that is true” – and two more specific maxims:

1. Do not say what you believe to be false.
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Under the category of Relation Grice places a single maxim, namely, ‘Be relevant.’ Though the maxim itself it terse, its formulation conceals a number of problems like questions about what different kinds and focuses of relevance there may be, how these shift in the course of a talk exchange, how to allow for the fact that subjects of conversation are legitimately changed, and so on.

Finally, under the category of Manner, which Grice understands as relating not (like the previous categories) to what is said but, rather, to HOW what is said is to be said, is included the supermaxim – ‘Be perspicuous’ – and various maxims such as:

1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

It is obvious that the observance of some of these maxims is a matter of less urgency than is the observance of others; a man has expressed himself with undue prolixity would, in general, be open to milder comment than would a man who has said something he believes to be false. Indeed, it might be felt that the importance of at least the first maxim of Quality is such that it should not be included in a scheme of the kind Grice was constructing; other maxims come into operation only on the assumption that this maxim of Quality is satisfied. While this may be correct, so far as generation of implicatures is concerned it seems to play a role not totally different from the other maxims, and it will be convenient, for the present at least, to treat it as a member of the list of maxims.

There are all sorts of other maxims (aesthetic, social, or moral in character), such as ‘Be polite’, that are also generate nonconventional implicatures. The conversational maxims, however, and the conversational implicatures connected with them, are specially connected with the particular purpose that talk (and so, talk exchange) is adapted to serve and is primarily employed to serve. When Grice stated his maxims, the main purpose were a maximally effective exchange of information; this specification is too narrow, and the scheme needs to be generalized to allow for such general purpose as influencing or directing the actions of others.

These maxims may be better understood as describing the assumptions listeners normally make about the way speakers will talk, rather than prescriptions for how one ought to talk. Philosopher Kent Bach writes:‘...We need first to get clear on the character of Grice’s maxims. They are not sociological generalizations about speech, nor they are moral prescriptions or proscriptions on what to say or communicate. Although Grice presented them in the form of guidelines for how to communicate successfully, I think they are better construed as presumptions about utterances, presumptions that we as listeners rely on and as speakers exploit.’[1]

Gricean Maxims generate implicatures. If the overt, surface meaning of a sentence does not seem to be consistent with the Gricean maxims, and yet the circumstances lead us to think that the speaker is nonetheless obeying the cooperative principle, we tend to look for other meanings that could be implicated by the sentence.

Grice did not, however, assume that all people should constantly follow these maxims. Instead, he found it interesting when these were not respected, namely either "flouted" (with the listener being expected to be able to understand the message) or "violated" (with the listener being expected to not note this). Flouting would imply some other, hidden meaning. The importance was in what was not said. For example: Answering It's raining to someone who has suggested a game of tennis only disrepects the maxim of relation on the surface, the reasoning behind this 'fragment' sentence is normally clear to the interlocutor (the maxim is just "flouted").

Grice’s theory is often disputed with the argument that cooperative conversation, as with most social behavior, is culturally determined. Therefore, the Gricean Maxims and the Cooperative Principle cannot be universally applied due to intercultural differences. The Malagasy, for example, follow a completely opposite Cooperative Principle in order to achieve conversational cooperation. In their culture, speakers are reluctant to share information and flout the Maxim of Quantity by evading direct questions and replying on incomplete answers because of the risk of losing face by committing oneself to the truth of the information, as well as the fact that having information is a form of prestige.

Another criticism is that the Gricean Maxims can easily be misinterpreted to be a guideline for etiquette, instructing speakers on how to be moral, polite conversationalists. However, the Gricean Maxims, despite their wording, are only meant to describe the commonly accepted traits of successful cooperative communication. Geoffrey Leech created the Politeness maxims: tact, generosity, approbation, modesty, agreement, and sympathy.

## 1.2.2 Conversation implicatures

An implicature is something meant, implied, or suggested distinct from what is said. Implicatures can be part of sentence meaning or dependent on conversational context, and can be conventional or unconventional. Conversational implicatures have become one of the principal subjects of pragmatics. Figures of speech provide familiar examples. An important conceptual and methodological issue in semantics is how to distinguish senses and entailments from conventional implicatures. Implicature has been invoked for a variety of purposes, from defending controversial semantic claims in philosophy to explaining lexical gaps in linguistics. H. P. Grice, who coined the term “implicature,” and classified the phenomenon, developed an influential theory to explain and predict conversational implicatures, and describe how they are understood. The “Cooperative Principle” and associated “Maxims” play a central role. Other authors have focused on principles of politeness and communicative efficiency. Questions have been raised as to how well these principle-based theories account for the intentionality of speaker implicature and conventionality of sentence implicature. Critics observe that speakers often have goals other than the cooperative and efficient exchange of information, and that conventions are always arbitrary to some extent.[4]

Grice characterizes the notion of conversational implicature in such a way: A man who, by (in, when) saying (or making as if to say) that p has implicated q, may be said to have conversationally implicated that q, provided that (1) he is to presumed to be observing the conversational maxims, or at least the cooperative principle; (2) the supposition that he is aware that, or thinks that, q is required in order to make his saying or making as if to say p (or doing so in those terms) consistent with the presumption; and (3) the speaker thinks (and would expect the hearer th think that the speaker thinks) that it is within the competence of the hearer to work out, or grasp intuitively, that the supposition mentioned in 2 is required.

The presence of a conversational implicature must be capable of being worked out; for even it can in fact be intuitively grasped, unless the intuition is replaceable by any argument, the implicature (if present at all) will not count as a conversational implicature; it will be a conventional implicature. To work out a particular conversational implicature is present, the hearer will replay on the following data: (1) the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references that may be involved; (2) the CP and its maxims; (3) the context, linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance; (4) other items of background knowledge; and (5) the fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants know or assume this to be the case. [7]

So H.P. Grice coined the term implicature for communicated non-truth-conditional meaning:

• a conventional implicature is non-truth-conditional meaning associated with a particular linguistic expression — E.g.: Even John couldn’t eat the quince and locust fritters.

• a conversational implicature is not intrinsically associated with any expression; it is inferred from the use of some utterance in context

(1) John’s been making a lot of trips to Paphos lately.

What is said: ‘John’s been making a lot of trips to Paphos lately’

What is implicated: ‘The speaker believes that John may have a girlfriend in Paphos’

According to Grice [], another form of conversational implicature is also known as a scalar implicature. This concerns the conventional uses of words like "all" or "some" in conversation. E.g. I ate some of the pie.

This sentence implies "I did not eat all of the pie." While the statement "I ate some pie" is still true if the entire pie was eaten, the conventional meaning of the word "some" and the implicature generated by the statement is "not all".

The implicatures are:

a) Context-dependent:

(2) A: Has John got a girlfriend? / Has John started his Christmas shopping yet?

B: He’s been making a lot of trips to Paphos lately.

(3) A: I’ve run out of petrol. / Damn; it’s midnight already and I’m starving.

B: There’s a garage just round the corner.

b) Cancelable (or defeasible):

(4) A: Has John got a girlfriend?

B: He’s been making a lot of trips to Paphos lately.

That usually means he’s on the pull, so I don’t suppose he has a girlfriend.

(5) I’ve read some of those books.

In fact, unlike you, I’ve read them all.

(6) A: I’ve run out of petrol.

B: There’s a garage just round the corner.

They’ve run out of petrol, but might be able to call someone who could help.

c) Non-detachable (usually), i.e. you don’t lose the implicature by substituting synonyms:

(7) A: Has John got a girlfriend?

B: He’s been a regular visitor to the east of the Akamas peninsula recently.

(8) I’ve completed a number of those tomes.

(9) A: I’ve run out of petrol.

B: You’ll find a filling station just beyond that bend.

• but some certain implicatures are detachable (because they depend on the manner inwhich the utterance is phrased) — these will also be addressed under flouting below:

(10) She produced a series of sounds that roughly corresponded to the score of I am alive.

(11) She sang I am alive.

d) Non-conventional (as different from cancelability or non-detachability):

(12) John’s a machine.

e) Calculable:

Conversational implicatures should be calculable from the meaning of what is said plus identifiable aspects of the context

There are three ways to generate conversational implicatures:

1. Observing the maxims

(13) A: I’ve run out of petrol.

B: There’s a garage just round the corner.

If B’s answer is relevant and informative, but not too informative (i.e. with useless,misleading information), it must connect to A’s statement. 4

2. Violating a maxim

(14) A: Where does Gerard live?

B: Somewhere in the South of France.

B violates Quantity (less information than ‘required’). So how is this co-operative?

Answer:This way B adheres to Quality (don’t say what you know to be false/lack evidence for).So the implicature is: B doesn’t know exactly where Gerard lives.

3. Flouting maxims (exploitation)

Violating a maxim is enforced (usually by clashing maxims).

Flouting is deliberate:

(15) A: What if the USA blocks EU-accession of Cyprus?

B: Oh come on, Europe has all the power! (flouting Quality)

(16) John is John. (flouting Quantity)

(17) A: I do think Mrs Jenkins is an old windbag, don’t you?

B: Huh, lovely weather for March, isn’t it? (flouting Relevance)

(18) Johnny: Hey Sally, let’s play marbles.

Mother: How is your homework getting along, Johnny? (flouting Relevance)

(19) She produced a series of sounds that roughly corresponded to the score of I am alive.(flouting Manner)

• flouting is effectively an invitation to find a new meaning, beyond ‘what is said’ — one that makes the utterance co-operative after all

• flouting is generally associated with particular rhetorical effects

Opting out

A speaker may ‘opt out’ of the Co-operative Principle, i.e. being openly uncooperative:

(20) My lips are sealed; I can say no more.[12]

# Part II. Applied Aspects of Conversational Analysis

##

## 2.1 Following the cooperative principle

Conversation makes sense to us because they follow certain principles. this is also true with written texts. Grice has outlined the principles in his Cooperative Principles (CP), that means to have conversation as ‘cooperative venture’. Cooperative venture is to get an effective, efficient conversation. So the CP is a mean to make conversation as is effective and efficient one. There are four maxims in the Cooperative Princples.

1. Be relevant (Maxims of relevance)

Make your contribution relevant to the interaction.

Indicate any way that it is not

Examples:

1. Pass the salt.

Implicate: Pass the salt now.

(b): A: How are you doing in school?

B: Not too well, actually. I'm failing two of my classes.

vs. B: What fine weather we're having lately!

2. Be informative (Maxim of quantity)

Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange.

Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Examples: (a) A: Where is the post office?

B: Down the road, about 50 metres past the second left.

vs. B: Not far.

(b) A: How did Harry face in court the other day?

B: Oh, he got fine.

B’s contribution is what required from A’s utterance. However, still B will be condemned asa being a wrong informer, if then, for example, Harry gets life sentence.

3. Be truthful (Maxim of quality).

Or say things believed to be true and don’t say ones believed to be false.

Examples: (a) John has two PhDs.

Implicates: that I know that John has, and have adequate evidence that he has.

A: Should I buy my son this new sports car?

B: I don't know if that's such a good idea. He's totaled two cars since he got his license last year.

vs. B: No, he seems like he'd be a bad driver.

4. Be clear (Maxim of manner)

Avoid unnecessary prolixity

Avoid ambiguity.

Be brief.

Be orderly.

Examples: A: Where was Alfred yesterday?

B: He went to the store and bought some whiskey.

B is being perspicuous to A. He gives clear response to A.

A: What did you think of that movie?

B: I liked the creative storyline. The ending was really a surprise!

vs. B: It was interestingly done, sir.

Paul Grice admitted that the CP and Maxims of conversation could be applied not only in talk exchange, but also in sphere of transaction.[] He discovered that many people act according to these principles because they were taught to act in such a way and they did not lost this habit.

He tried to find a basis for such behavior and found out that ‘standard type of conversational practice not merely as something that all or most do in fact follow but as something that it is reasonable for us to follow, that we should not abandon.’[8]

Talk exchanges have certain features that jointly distinguish cooperative transactions:

1. The participants have some common immediate aim, even though their ultimate aims may be independent and even in conflict. In characteristic talk exchange, there is a common aim even if , as in an over-the-wall chat, it is a second –order one, namely ,that each partly should, for the time being, identify himself with the transitory conversational interests of the other.

2. The contributions of the participants should be dovetailed, mutually dependent.

3. There is some sort of understanding (which may be explicit but which is often tacit) that, other things being equal, the transaction should continue in appropriate style unless both parties are agreeable that it should terminate. [7]

In spite of that no one ever follows to all the maxims far all time, we might even do not need to, because as we can see, we may rely on implicature, to get the point of our addresser’s idea.

2.2 Flouting the cooperative principle

In the previous part, it was admitted that CP and maxims of conversation help the speaker and the hearer to understand each other.

Without cooperation, human interaction would be far more difficult and counterproductive. Therefore, the Cooperative Principle and the Gricean Maxims are not specific to conversation but to interaction as a whole. For example, it would not make sense to reply to a question about the weather with an answer about groceries because it would violate the Maxim of Relation. Likewise, responding to a request for some milk with an entire gallon instead of a glass would violate the Maxim of Quantity.

However, it is possible to flout a maxim intentionally or unconsciously and thereby convey a different meaning than what is literally spoken. Many times in conversation, this flouting is manipulated by a speaker to produce a negative pragmatic effect, as with sarcasm or irony. The Gricean Maxims are therefore often purposefully flouted by comedians and writers, who may hide the complete truth and manipulate their words for the effect of the story and the sake of the reader’s experience.

Speakers who deliberately flout the maxims usually intend for their listener to understand their underlying implication. Therefore, cooperation is still taking place, but no longer on the literal level. Conversationalists can assume that when speakers intentionally flout a maxim, they still do so with the aim of expressing some thought. Thus, the Gricean Maxims serve a purpose both when they are followed and when they are flouted.

There are several ways/reasons a speaker might break one of the rules:

1. Violating the Cooperative Principle. One instance in which a speaker might break the maxim of quality is if they are really trying to deceive the listener; but this would also be a violation of the cooperative principle.
2. Signaling a violation (minor violation). A person might essentially come out and tell you they are violating a maxim and why.

Examples.

“I don’t know if this is relevant, but...” (relation)

“I’m not sure how to say this, but...” (manner)

“I can’t tell you; I’m sworn to secrecy.” (quantity)

“This is just the word on the street; I can’t vouch for this information.” (quality)

1. Maxim clash. A speaker might violate one maxim in order to preserve another.

Example.

Carson is driving John to Meredith’s house.

CARSON: Where does Meredith live?

JOHN: Nevada.

Maxim violated: Quantity.

Why: There is clash between quantity and quality. Carson is looking for a street address, but John gives a weaker, less informative statement (hence the quantity violation). If John really doesn’t know anything more specific, however, he cannot give a more informative statement without violating quality.[18]

1. “Flouting” a maxim (major violation) to create a conversational implicature. By clearly and obviously violating a maxim, you can imply something beyond what you say.

Speakers should give enough information as necessary in order to understand the current conversation, but not provide more information than expected. This is known as the maxim of quantity, giving just the right amount of details so that the conversation flows smoothly.

Ia. A flouting of the first maxim of Quantity:

Examples:

1. Professor P. writes a letter of recommendation for Lucy when she applies for a programming job. The letter states, "Lucy is neat and well-dressed, comes to class on time, and has nice handwriting."

The letter is a blatant violation of several of the maxims, notably Quantity (insufficient information is given about Lucy's ability to program) and Relevance (irrelevant information is given).

But if the recipient of the letter assumes that Prof. P. is being cooperative overall, the recipient will conclude that the lack of information about Lucy's job skills is a way of communicating that they are insufficient, without explicitly saying so [8]

2. A: What should I do to get rid of this headache, Doctor?

B: Take some medicine.

Implication: B has not provided enough information – B did not say what medicine to take.

3. A: Where does C live?

B: Somewhere in the South of France.

Implication: B has not provided enough information – B did not say the exact address.

Extreme examples of a flouting of the first maxim of Quantity are provided by utterences of patent tautologies like Women are women and War is war.[7] They are totally noninformative according to the first maxim of Quantity and cannot be infringe it in any conversational context. But they are informative at the level of what implicated, and the hearer’s identification of their informative content at this level is dependent on his ability to explain the speaker’s selection ofthis particular patent tautology.

Ib. A flouting of the second maxim of Quantity.

4. A: Where’s Meredith?

B: The control room or the science lab.

Implication: B doesn’t know which of the two places Meredith is.

5. A: Excuse me–how much is this screwdriver?

B: $9.95. The saw is $39.50, and the power drill there on the table is $89.00.

Implication: B provides unnecessary additional information (marketers and salespeople often violate this rule in order to increase sales).

II. Examples in which the first maxim of quality is flouted.

1. Irony:

a) A is a good friend!

Implication: A betrays the speaker, and audience knows it.

b) Don’t be silly. I love working 80 hours a week with no vacation.

A: A lot of people are depending on you.

B: Thanks, that really takes the pressure off.

Implication: By saying something clearly untrue, B is implying that the opposite is true (sarcasm). The true meaning being expressed here is probably more like “That really puts a lot of pressure on me” and perhaps, by extension, “Stop pressuring me.”

1. Metaphor:
2. You are the cream in my coffee

Implication: The speaker is attributing to his audience some feature or features in respectof which the audience resembles the mentioned substance.

It is possible to combine metaphor and irony by imposing on the hearer two stages og interpretation.

You are the cream in my coffee – can be interpreted as ‘You are my pride and joy’, or, as irony interpretant, ‘You are my bane.’

1. Meiosis

Grice has such an example of meiosis, resulting from flouting the maxim of quality:

‘He was a little intoxicated’

Implication: This man is known to have broken up all the furniture.

1. Hyperbole. Usually in metaphor the second maxim of Quality is flouted.

Example: Everybody likes ice-cream.

Implication: it is clear, that there are people, who don’t like ice-cream.

It is not easy to find examples in which the second maxim of Quality is flouted, because they are rather contextual. They could be added by gestures, intonation to make the hearer sure that the speaker has a reasonable basis for such sayings.

Example; She’s probably deceiving her husband this evening.

Implication: the speaker posses some evidence of her love affair.

III. Examples of violation of the maxim of Relation.

Perhaps the most important rule is that your utterances must be relevant to the current topic at hand; this is known as the maxim of relevance. Going off-topic constantly will provoke displeasure with your fellow participants.[7]

A: How's the weather today?

B: There's a nice film opening at the theater tonight.

Implication: the answer does not correlate with the question.

Violation of this rule is quite useful in order to force a subject change:

A: Do you really love me?

B: I like Ferris wheels, and college football, and things that go real fast.

Implication: Either B doesn’t want to respond to A (perhaps he has problems discussing his feelings) or the answer is “no.”

C: Are you ever going to pay back the money I lent you?

D: It's very hot outside, isn't it?

Implication: D is not ready to pay back money.

Michael wants Pat to pass the salt. He says, "Could you pass the salt?"

In most cases, this question is not meant literally -- it is pretty clear that Pat is able to pass the salt. Therefore, the question violates some maxims, notably Relevance.

This violation of a maxim helps indicate to Pat that a non-literal use of the sentence is intended (most likely, an indirect request).[4]

IV. Examples in which maxims of Manner are flouted.

1. Ambiguity.

When the speaker answers with ambiguity, the hearer should define if this ambiguity was deliberate or accidental and react in proper way if it is a conversational game.

According to Grice, there can be two types of deliberate ambiguity:

1. examples in which there is no difference, or no striking difference, between two interpretations of an utterance with respect to straightforwardness; neither interpretation is notably more sophisticated, less standard. [7]

- I sought to tell my love, love that never told can be.

Implication: My love refers either to the emotions or an object of emotion, but as these notions are contextual synonyms, the flouting of maxim is acceptable.

b) Examples in which one interpretation is notably less straightforward than another.

1. Obscurity.

Sometimes the obscurity could be used in order to make the conversation unclear to the third party of conversation.[7]

A: Shall we get something for the kids?

B: Ok. But I veto I-C-E-C-R-E-A-M.

Implication: By spelling the word ‘ice-cream’ B wants to make the conversation unclear for children.

1. Failure to be brief or orderly.

Examples:

Miss B sang ‘Home sweet home’ vs. Miss B produced a series of sounds that corresponded closely with the score of ‘Home sweet home.’

A: When are you coming home?

B: I will codify that question to my superiors and respond at such a time as an adequate answer is preparable.

Implication: B is using unnecessarily complicated and confusing words and construction, because

B does not know or does not wish to give an answer to the question.

It is important to remember, that in English, speakers are accustomed to hearing events in chronological order (in some other languages, word order isn't as important.) This is why "We got married and had a baby", and "We had a baby and got married" have different meanings altogether.

Speakers sometimes deliberately violate the rules of ordinary conversation to achieve certain ends

Example:

1. A: Would you like to go out with Andrea?

B: Is the Pope Catholic?

Violated maxim: Relevance

Motivation: B is being humorous. By replying with a question whose answer is obvious, he is implying that the answer to A’s question is equally obvious: Yes!

2. A: I’ll pay you back in full next week, I promise.

B: Sure, and pigs will fly and fish will sing.

Violated maxim: Relevance

Motivation: B’s response implies sarcastically that he does not believe A.

3. A: What are the three most important things in real estate?

B: Location, location, and location.

Violated maxim: Quantity

Motivation: To emphasize the overwhelming importance of location

4. A: So tell me, do you like what I did to my hair?

B: Er…what’s on TV tonight?

Violated maxim: Relevance

Motivation: B does not like A’s hairstyle, so he changed the subject.

5. A: How can I develop a great body like yours?

B: Choose your parents carefully.

Violated maxim: Quality

Motivation: Indirectly saying that it is impossible, because it’s all in the genes.[4]

# General conclusion

The aim of our work was to describe the rules of conversation according to Paul Grice’s philosophy and demonstrate their practical application.

At the first part we mentioned that Paul Grice was rather a philosopher than a linguist, that’s why we made the argument for the necessity of reading Grice’s work ‘Logic and conversation’ in the philosophical context, rather than in isolation. Then, a consideration of this context showed a number of themes which recurred: logic, conventional/non-conventional and, most importantly, rationality.

Grice’s interests were in the system of language; that it is an example of human rational action, and thus can be accounted for through some variety of logic (although, not traditional formal logic, perhaps). His aim was to find the logic of conversation which could account for the gap between saying and meaning, saying and implicating, conventional and non-conventional meaning. The logic that he sought was seen as a manifestation of rational action.

Grice’s articles (1957, 1967) have a profound influence on speech act theory. Grice proformulated the idea that ordinary communication takes place not directly by means of convention, but in virtue of a speaker’s evincing certain intentions and getting his or her audience to recognize those intentions (and to recognize that it was the speaker’s intention to secure the recognition). In his view, the utterance is not itself communicative, but only provides clues to the intentions of the speaker. A later part of Grice’s program spelled out how various maxims of cooperative behavior are exploited by speaker’s intentions in uttering certain words under particular circumstances.

Grice distinguished between what is said in making an utterance, that which determines the truth value of the contribution, and the total of what is communicated. Things that are communicated beyond what is said (in the technical sense) Grice called implicatures, and those implicatures are depend upon the assumption that the speaker is being cooperative he called conversational implicatures.

In our work we defined that Cooperative principles is a set of maxims of conversation and usually people follow them in order to make the communication clear. However, it is possible to flout a maxim intentionally or unconsciously and thereby convey a different meaning than what is literally spoken. Therefore, cooperation is still taking place, but no longer on the literal level. Conversationalists can assume that when speakers intentionally flout a maxim, they still do so with the aim of expressing some thought. Thus, the Gricean Maxims serve a purpose both when they are followed and when they are flouted.

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