Revisiting the Mechanism of Griece's Cooperative Principle in Logic and Conversation

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Abstract. The paper is an attempt to the study of Grice's co-operative principle (hereafter CP), underlines meaning and communication. Grice claims that human beings communicate with each other in a logical and rational way, and cooperation is embedded in people's conversations. He argues that when we speak to one another we act cooperatively and mutually accept one another to construct meaningful conversations in a particular way. Grice's CP has been a central and controversial theme in pragmatics because a major source of controversy associated with the CP is that the term 'cooperation' is open to different interpretations due to the dichotomy of 'saying' and 'meaning.' Grice concerned the philosophical importance of the dichotomy a particular sentence 'A' and an 'utterer' 'U.' In this paper, we have to find out, first, what 'A' means, what 'U' said on a given occasion by uttering 'A,' and what 'U' meant by uttering 'A' on that occasion. Second, Grice produced an account of how saying and meaning dichotomy is possible. Third, Grice clarified the relationship between logic and conversation by characterising the philosophical distinction between 'semantics' and 'pragmatics' implications of a statement. Fourth, he provided philosophical aeration by positioning his notion of conversational implicatures (hereafter CI) to devastating effect against maxims. In order to construct meaningful conversation or well-organised communication, the CP and CI should be followed within the framework of Grice.

Keywords: Cooperative Principle, Conversational Implicatures, Maxims, Semantics, and Pragmatics.

I. Introduction

Human beings are socio-cultural linguistic creature need to communicate with each other to have social relationship and while communicating, human beings perform an action. Good action will be the result from a good performance. To make a good performance human being need some rules that govern the use of language. This action maintains the interaction to run smoothly and avoid any kind of miss-understanding. In proper understanding, it is important to the hearers to have knowledge

out of the sentence meaning what the speaker says, such as social, cultural context, etc. There is a study that concern about the relationship between language and context which is called pragmatics. For the process of human linguistic communication as determined by the conditions of society, it studies the functions of language. In pragmatics, we learn about the discourse analysis. In this paper, we would like to philosophise H. P. Grice's cooperative principle that governs the use of language.

II. Logic and Conversation in Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP)

It is very difficult to understand the notion of CP without knowing the Grice's notion of logic and conversation. Perhaps, with regard to CP, there are many problems in logic and conversation but we will focus on only certain problems which are more important for this paper. The problems are (i) the relation between semantics and pragmatics in use of language, (ii) the relation between conventional and conversational implicatures (CI), and (iii) influences of the causal theory of perception (CTP).

Problem one: The relation between semantics and pragmatics

This is about the notion of semantics (saying) and the notion of pragmatics (implied). With regard to the semantic notion of meaning Grice claims that what is said is closely related to the conventional meaning of the sentence uttered (Grice, 1991, p. 173). It is limited to what is meant conventionally by the sentence and does not include whatever else the speaker may have been trying to convey. But in case of the pragmatic notion of meaning, the speaker may be implying, suggesting, hinting, conveying, indicating, etc.

Problem two: The relation between conventional and conversational implicatures

This is about for and against arguments of CTP. According to CTP, seeing something blue is causal terms. Perhaps, something blue is causally responsible for its appearing to me that there is something blue before me. There are several arguments are going against the CTP: if one sees something blue, one does not normally say 'that appears (looks, seems) blue.' One simply says, 'That's blue.' One normally reserves, 'that appears (looks, seems) blue' for occasions on which there is some doubt in

one's mind about whether it is blue or something else. So it is part of the meaning of 'that appears (looks, seems) blue' that there is some doubt in the speaker's mind about whether it is blue. But in normal cases, when one sees something blue (it would be inappropriate to suggest that there is any doubt about whether the thing seen actually is blue), it is simply false that anything appears (looks, seems) blue to one. Therefore, seeing blue cannot be analysed in terms of being caused to be in a state in which something (looks, seems, appears) blue.

Problem three: Influences of the causal theory of perception (CTP)

Grice's just replaced 'implied' with the technical term 'implicated' from Grice's notion of saying and implied meaning. For Grice, 'That appears blue' may normally be taken to imply that it is not really blue, but he does not say that it is not really blue, he does not mean that it is not really blue. Most importantly, it can be true both that he sees something blue and that something appears to him to be blue. If this is the case, 'That appears blue' means that it isn't really blue, and then it would be contradictory to say 'That appears blue, and it is blue.' But it is not contradictory to say that the implication that the thing is not really blue can be explicitly cancelled. In other sense, 'That appears blue,' and 'I have no doubt that it is blue.' (Grice, n.d., p. 245)

Again, we can say that 'That appears blue, and I don't mean to imply that it isn't blue.' And if an implicatum of saying that 'P' can be cancelled, then that implicatum isn't part of the meaning or part of what is said by one who says that 'P'. It is implicated, but not said. This issue discusses the relationship between conventional and CI. For Grice, there are two main types of implicatures like; CI meaning is determined by the use of words or sentences without depending on any special features of the conversation; CI the meaning of a word or sentence is determined with a relation on special features of the conversation. (Grice 1975, p. 44) For example 1: 'She is an Englishman, so she is brave.' It is implicated, but not said, that (her) bravery is a consequence of (her) being English. Example 2: 'She is poor, but she is honest.' It is implicated, but not said, that (her) poverty clashes with (her) honesty. These are cases of conventional implicature. The implicatum (in these cases) is conveyed by the

conventional meaning of words like 'but', 'so', etc. So, the conventional implicatures of expression are part of its semantics. On the other hand, CI depends on features of the conversational situation or context and not just on the conventional meanings of the words used. The notion of a CI is thus a pragmatic notion. It is defined in terms of the CP.

III. Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP)

Grice's CP describes how people interact and behave with each other in a conversation. Before knowing about CP, let us know what CP is not. Because it is a better way of understanding CP. CP is not like an idea of fair and honest cooperation amongst human beings. The term 'cooperation' is not used in an everyday sense to refer to people's feelings. It does not designate a prescriptive set of rules and regulations for human interaction. As we know that there are different rules and principles in different places we should obey, such as rule and principle of educational institutions, rule, and principle of home or family, rule and principle of society and so on. Similarly, for our successful communication, we should follow and obey certain rule and principles. Otherwise, we cannot communicate among ourselves. Without this principles discourse cannot be possible and the semantic theory cannot be built. Therefore, Grice tries to develop a method of communication for effective communication called the CP. (Grice 1975, p. 2)

In order to examine the CP, we will first outline briefly the basic concepts behind the CP and Maxims. As we know that J. L. Austin (1962) and John R. Searle (1969) largely been concerned with the relationship between direct and indirect speech acts. They are proponents of the use theory had moved away from the truth values approach and the reliance on sense and reference as the source of meaning. There was also a growing interest in the meaning of utterances rather than just sentences. This has been noted that at the discourse level there is no one-to-one mapping between linguistic form and utterance meaning. A particular intended meaning (which could be produced via a direct speech act) can, in fact, be conveyed by any number of indirect speech acts. Grice is concerned with this distinction between saying and meaning. How do speakers know how to generate these implicit meanings? How can they assume that their

addressees will reliably understand their intended meaning? His aim is to discover the mechanism behind this process.

For Example, 1: Suppose, Ram asked to John, is there another bottle of water? John replies to Ram, I'm going to market in ten minutes. Here, a competent speaker would have little trouble inferring the meaning that there is no more water at the moment, but that some will be bought from the market shortly. Grice posits the CP and its attendant four maxims as a way of explaining this implication process. The main motto of CP is how various kinds of conversational implicatures can be used to interpret in the conversation. Therefore, he suggested a general 'Cooperative Principle' and its four conversational maxims with nine sub-maxims to specify how to be cooperative in conversation. These are as follows:

> (i) Maxim of Quantity (be true): The maxim of quantity, in which interactants should keep their conversational contributions as informative as is required for the purposes of the conversational exchange, but not more informative. There are two sub-maxims. These are as follows:
>
> (a) Contribute your thought for the exchange of thought as per the necessity.
>
> (b) Unnecessary thought should not be used due to certain unavoidable principle.

For example, Ram: Who won the Cricket match yesterday? John: India won.

Implicature: Assuming that John is cooperative and provides information for which he has evidence, his reply is true and therefore India won the match; otherwise, John would have provided a different answer.

> (ii) Maxim of Quality (be brief): The maxim of Quality, in which interactants should say only what they believe to be true or that for which they have adequate evidence. There are two sub-maxims which are as follows:
>
> (a) Fallacious hypotheses must be root out.
>
> (b) Inadequate evidence can't be permitted.

For example: Ram: I am feeling hungry. John: There is a biscuit pocket in the cupboard.

Implicature: As far as john knows, the cupboard is there and also biscuit pocket is in the cupboard. If neither of the two was true John would

not have said so. Therefore, Ram can find biscuit pocket in the cupboard.

Ram asked to John: Have you read Chetan Bhagat's novels? John reply: I've read some.

Implicature: John hasn't read all his novels, only some.

(iii)   Maxim of Relation (be relevant): The maxim of Relation, in which interactants should make their contributions relevant to the purposes of the overall conversation. There is one sub-maxim that is as follows:

(a) Evidence should be significant. For example: Ram asked: Can I borrow 100 rupees? John replies: My wallet is in the house.

Implicature 1: Provided John is cooperative and provides a relevant answer, I can borrow 100 rupees. Ram asked: How is your research going on? John replies: Not good, but I'd rather not think it now.

Implicature 2: The research is not going so well.

With regard to this maxim, Grice says that though the maxim itself is brief, its formulation conceals a number of problems that exercise me a good deal: 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 conversations are legitimately changed, and so on.

(iv) Maxim of Manner (be clear): The maxim of Manner, in which interactants should avoid obscurity of expression and ambiguity, should not engage in preventable prolixity and should present their contributions in an orderly manner. There are four sub-maxims which are as follows:

(a) The expression must be significant.

(b) The vagueness of expression must have vanished.

(c) The brief expression is permitted but pointless prolixity of the expression is not permitted.

(d) The expression must be methodologically sound (Grice, 1975, p. 45-46).

For example, Ram asked: Do you help me? John replied: Of course, I do.

Implicature: provided that John is cooperative, he is giving a clear, unambiguous answer to John; therefore, John helps Ram. The woman got

out of her car and went straight into the office.

Implicature: The woman got out of her car and then went to the office.

As we understood that without the limitation of the speaker's behaviour, it is very difficult to use these maxims and sub maxims in the framework of CI in a very systematic manner. Hence, Grice emphasizes on these conversational maxims as well as sub-maxims for sound, successful and well-organized conversation or effective communication in conversation is achieved in common social situations that how listeners and speakers must act cooperatively and mutually accept one another to be understood in a particular way. Grice, in the CP, has argued that fallacious assumptions are strictly avoided. So, He claims, the speaker should know a common purpose or a set of purposes which he/she is going to do in the conversation. In this regard, he has articulated a certain common norm of the development of conversational interaction. Grice states: "Make your contribution such as is required for participants, namely: unnecessary expressions are not being allowed in the framework of CI at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged (Grice, 1975, p. 45).

Grice calls this general principle of cooperative interaction as 'The CI.' He states that interlocutors are supposed to follow this basic principle governing conversation. It is based on the assumption that, in conversation, participants will cooperate with each other while making their contribution. With regard to Grice account of the CI, Kempson has argued that in this framework the use of language is subjugated by the speaker's communications and also the meaning that is not uttered accurately. Therefore, he says that a basic condition for a pragmatic theory is that it explains not only how speakers use sentences of the language in a way which corresponds to their meaning, but also how they succeed in using those sentences to communicate information which is not specified by the meaning of the sentence in question, and Grice's hypothesis of a CP between speakers provides a framework in which this is explained (Kempson, 1975, p. 142). According to Kempson, Grice's conversational maxims are social conventions of communication which are problematic in the aspects of the meaning of an utterance. Therefore, Meulen calls implicatures 'invited inferences which are not entailed by the sentence

uttered'. In this context, he claims that in this framework of Gricean maxims, it is very difficult to explain that how inferences are made from what is said in the conversation along with the speaker's shared assumptions and common knowledge. Thus, it can be said that Gricean maxims occupy a significant place in the study of CI (Partee, Meulen, & Wall, 1988, pp. 440-41). In addition, with regard to Gricean conversational maxims, a social implication arises from how something is said in context and tells us something about the speaker. Accordingly, Annabelle Mooney also claims that in the framework of CI we can exploit the knowledge of the maxims in conversation. So, the social implication is not part of communication, as normally we understood. It is explained by Mooney with an example of choice. Suppose a speaker has senses of humour and figurative language as options while talking to a person having a certain relationship, whether he chooses humour or figurative language has certain implications called as social implications (Mooney, 2004, pp. 907-908). There are chances of breaking Grice's maxims.

IV. The Flouting of Grice's CP

The flouting of CP comes about by deliberately not following some maxim, in order to exploit it for communicative purposes. Some of the maxims may be violated in this benign way, they are:

Maxim of Quality
Ram: You know, many people here are depending on you.
John: Great! That really is a relief…
Implicature: John's s answer is sarcastic; she says something which is obviously untrue, thus implying that the opposite is true. The true meaning here is something along the lines of "That really stresses me out".
Maxim of Quantity
Ram: Where does PUGU stay?
John: Block-B or Block-C.
Implicature: John does not know which of the two places PUGU stays.
Ram: What can you tell me about my seminar presentation?
John: You are always well-dressed and you are so punctual.

Maxim of Relation

Ram: Do you like your new dress?

John: That is a beautiful garden.

Implicature: John does not like her/his new dress.

Ram: Can you give me 10 thousand rupees end of this month?

John: There is a possibility of rain today evening.

Maxim of Manner

Ram: Do you love me?

John: I'll consider on that matter soon and answer explosions up; it will be delivered to you without hurriedness.

Implicature: John is being unnecessarily ambiguous and confusing; therefore, John either does not know or s/he does not want to answer the question.

Ram: Do you still think I was wrong?

John: Oh, just go to your room.

V. Criticism of Grice's CP

There are several criticisms of Grice's CP but this paper will deal with only one criticism that is very important to construct meaningful conversation. According to Robin Tolmach Lakoff, who is a linguist, he argues that there are two broad categories of rules for the pragmatic competence which are; (i) rules of conversation and (ii) rules of the logic of politeness. Both the categories of rules are equally essential for the meaningful conversation but Grice emphases the rules of conversation. The rules of conversation are known as Grice's CP or Grice's Maxims. These are already discussed above. Let us we discuss Lakoff's rules, according to Lakoff, in Grice's CP or Maxims, there are some problems like; a narrow sense of rules of conversation, rules look mysterious; there is friction in personal interaction. So, Lakoff argues that without avoiding these problems, it is very difficult to construct meaningful conversation. Therefore, he designed the Rules of Politeness to make people easily understand each other when they have a conversation which can be achieved if people are involved in cooperative transactions. However, unlike the Cooperative Principle, Politeness Principles are mutually exclusive. It is necessary to construct a meaningful conversation. He has suggested that this is another maxim

which is an important and an essential maxim (maxim of politeness). So, we should follow it like Grice's four maxims. Lakoff claims that without the maxim of politeness, the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of relation and maxim of manner are not effective. Therefore, Lakoff argues that to construct meaningful conversation or well-organized communication we must need the help of all the five maxims.

For Lakoff, the maxim of politeness is a form of behaviour that has been developed in societies. It is important in order to reduce friction in personal interaction. It is a way of describing and explaining how we construct our social worlds. Like other maxims, the maxim of politeness is consisting of three sub-maxims such as (i) Don't impose or Distance, (ii) Give options or Difference and (iii) Make a feel good or be friendly. Being polite in terms of language is important because the function of language itself is to transmit information, so it must be used in manner. When we speak, we are concerned not only about the information that we are conveying but also the effect that our words will cause towards our interlocutors. Though the message is clear, delivering it in an inappropriate form might evoke misunderstanding. Thus, politeness is a crucial point in human interaction in order to maintain a good relationship, to avoid imposing, and to give the other person some choice in responding.

5.1 Logic of Politeness: Lakoff's Maxim

Let's move on to the further explanation of Lakoff's Rules of the Logic of Politeness. His rules consist of three sub-rules such as; the first one is "Don't impose (Distance)". It means that we need to keep a distance with our interlocutor. The distance here means how close our relationship is with the person we are talking to. This can be in terms of age, family relation, occupation, and etc. This rule of politeness is usually applied when there is much social distance between the speaker and the hearer. We shall not neither ask about her/his personal affairs nor tell her/him about ours. Besides that, we tend to use formal expressions to convey the message to exclude personal emotion. For example, when a student wants to see her/his lecturer at the office, she/he uses the expression "I'm sorry to bother you, but may I come in to ask some questions about my paper?" This expression is used because it is more formal than "Can I come in?"

Besides, there is a clear apology for imposing. By using this expression, the lecturer will not be offended because she/he perceives the expression as a polite one.

The second rule is "Give option (Difference)". In order to be polite, we can't insist on our command, desire, or request to other people. In other words, hesitancy is needed in a conversation. Therefore, we need to give options to our interlocutor in giving response either to refuse or accept. This is usually done by using indirect speech in which we use another language form that actually carries different meaning with its syntax form. For instance, the use of a declarative form which actually carries a command: "I wonder if you could possibly lend me Quine's book from the library because I lost my Library Card. In this sentence, there is also a clear option for acceptance or refusal which shows the speaker acknowledges the second maxim of Lakoff's Politeness Principle.

The last one is "Make the audience feel good (friendly)". This principle emphasizes closeness between the speaker and the hearer. It is believed that being nice and friendly to our interlocutor is a sign of courtesy. Besides that, in Rule 3 we tend to use an informal expression to express a feeling of solidarity between the speaker and the hearer. For example, someone asks his/her friend about his/her new outfit:

R: Do I look big in this?

S: No, it suits you.

S says that the outfit suits R though actually he/she thinks Rlooks fatter in it. However, in order to be polite S says something nice (in an informal way), so A feels good. By doing so, S acknowledges the friendship of Lakoff's Politeness Principle (Lakoff, R. T. 1973, pp. 292-305).

VII. Conclusion

This is a stability thesis, accommodative with the social situation and provides a pattern medicine to avoid disturbing elements in communication. According to the Grice's CP, our conversation runs successfully even if there are flouting maxims. This is the positive impact of Grice's CP; it eliminates some problems of the conversation in some ways. I think, perhaps without the Grice's CP, we cannot be constructed meaningful conversation. Similarly, Lakoff's maxims are also important for the

same. Lakoff's maxims are one kind of protector of Grice's maxims. I found that Grice's maxims and Lakoff's maxims are complementary to each other. The Grice's maxims cannot construct meaningful conversation without the Lakoff's maxims. Similarly, the Lakoff's maxims cannot construct meaningful conversation without the Grice's maxims. Therefore, to construct meaningful conversation or well-organised communication the Grice's maxims and the Lakoff's maxims are equally essential at the same time.

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