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Observance and Non-Observance of Gricean Maxims in an Academic Setting.
Case Study of Masters Classes in the English Department at Mostaganem University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfilment for the Requirements of a Master's Degree in
'Linguistics'

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Abstract

The present paper aims to shed light on the notion of pragmatics in general and the conversational Gricean maxims in particular. Hence, it shows how these conversational maxims are flouted and/or respected in an academic context. The method used in this research is the quantitative analysis method. The data for this research were taken using a systematic classroom observation which was recorded, classified and pragmatically analysed. Findings of this paper indicate that masters students of the university of Mostaganem infringe the conversational maxims by not taking part in classroom interaction.

Keywords: pragmatics, cooperative principle, classroom interaction

Dedication

I dedicate this to no one

Everyone is better off reading a journal article

Dissertations are obsolete

Acknowledgements

I want to thank me first and foremost for putting up with this.

I would like to warmly thank my lovely and empathetic supervisor who kept an open mind and trusted me.

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List of Abbreviations

CP Cooperative Principle

PP Politeness Principle

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

With little conscious awareness of it, people are engaged daily in the comprehension and production of speakers' implied meaning, or conversational implicature. In face to face interactions people used wide range of strategies to exchange meanings. The linguistic behaviour results not only linguistic information but also non-linguistic one, which are carried by the voice, body gestures and facial expressions of the participants. Such non-linguistic features give hints about what speakers aim to transmit as a message or idea. With reference to both Austin's ideas and Grice's ideas, people usually 'if not sometimes' always say something and mean either directly or indirectly something else, that is the surface linguistic or structural form of words and sentences of the utterance says something, whereas the implicit or intended meaning is something else. To successfully understand the messages or ideas conveyed in daily interaction, it is needed that we learn and study about one of the ideas in the field of pragmatics which called 'the cooperative principle'. In producing a good conversation, participants intend to understand each others' meaning of the utterance when engaging in a talk. That is why they tend to follow this cooperative principle and the so called conversational rules or maxims. Grice (1975) categorized the cooperative principle and elaborates it in four sub-principles: (1) maxim of quantity, (2) maxim of quality, (3) maxim of relation, and (4) maxim of manner. Yule (1996) says that it is important to recognize these maxims as unstated assumptions we have in conversations. In this sense, the paper in hand tends to explore the types of conversational maxims that are followed and/or flouted not in face to face daily interactions but rather in an academic context. Particularly, the research will be analysing the linguistic behaviour of masters students' classroom interactions at the department of English at AbdelHamid Ibn Badis university in Mostaganem.

With the Gricean Maxims as a standard of a successful conversation, the present study therefore seeks to answer whether masters students at the department of English in the university of Mostaganem communicate effectively in an academic setting. And if teachers or the educational system in general affects their ability to communicate.

The hypothesis related to this study suggests that the students respect the cooperative principle and only flout or violate to generate an implicature. It is hypothesized that the fact that they share the same educational level, they have a good knowledge of the language and its culture. In addition to being university students, they're all adults with no issues communicating.

Moreover, this study is segmented up into two parts; the theoretical considerations and the practical one, in which the two parts include three main chapters. Part one introduces first chapter; it includes the theoretical overview, previous done-work and the definitions of the key concepts. While part two represents the last two chapters, which is merely practical. It includes the research methodology, data collection, analysis and results. The first chapter aims at highlighting the scope of pragmatics, context in pragmatics, theories that pragmatics is concerned with as well as the notion of conversational principles which are the focus of the study. The second chapter introduces the participants, explains the methodology implemented in the research process and details the procedure being used in collecting and analysing the data. The last chapter features an in depth discussion about the results obtained.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction:

This research provides an introduction to pragmatics, which deals with how speakers and listeners use language to communicate meaning in different real-life situations. This paper represents the first chapter that sheds some light to the fact that in many regular linguistic exchanges, many things are meant without being explicitly said, and accordingly tries to explain how this is possible. To do so, we need to tackle two broad points in pragmatics: (a) how meaning can depend on the context of use, (i.e. how context can affect the meaning of certain utterances), and (b) the contrast between what is said and what is communicated. In addressing (a) and (b), we will basically discuss the notion of pragmatics, and the theories that pragmatics is concerned with; starting first with the speech act theory, and its by-products the cooperative and politeness principles.

Defining Pragmatics:

The term “pragmatics” was introduced by Charles Morris in the 1930s. He defined pragmatics as “the science of the relation of signs to their interpreters”.

Pragmatics at its core has the notion of context. Hence in the early 1980s, when it first became common to discuss pragmatics in general textbooks on linguistics, the most common definitions of pragmatics were: meaning in use or meaning in context. However, those are too general.

George Yule in his book defines pragmatics as the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader). (Yule, 1996,p3) . It has more to do with the analysis of the “invisible” meaning, or how we recognize what is meant even when it isn’t actually said or written. In other words, ‘pragmatics is the study of speaker meaning ‘(ibid).

Stalnaker's definition of pragmatics is 'the study of linguistic acts and the contexts in which they are performed'.

The study of pragmatics is based on the relationship between the listener and the speaker, how close or distant they are to determine how much needs to be said, as speakers (or writers) must be able to depend on a lot of shared assumptions and expectations when they try to communicate.

Pragmatics' Theories:

The linguistic pragmatics is the study of meaning in context. To be able to do that, scholars of the field explain how the things we mean can go beyond the things we say and still be understood. In what follows, we will see how we can rely on pragmatics to interpret the intended speech act.

Speech Acts Theory:

Speech act theory is a subfield of pragmatics that is concerned with the ways in which words can be used not just to give information but also to carry out actions, first established by Austin (1962) and later expanded by American philosopher Searle.

The action performed by producing an utterance, i.e., speech act, consists of three related acts. There is first a locutionary act which is the basic act of an utterance which is producing a meaningful linguistic expression. We form an utterance with some kind of function. It's known as the illocutionary Act. The intended effect is the perlocutionary act. A brief illustration would be mentioned as follows:

a- Locutionary Act:

As cited in Yule's Book, locutionary act 'is the basic act of an utterance', Yule (1996). It means the ability to produce meaningful grammatical sentences or words; that is purely the

fact of using words or saying something. If a person has a difficulty or fails to produce a correct sentence (for example because it is foreign or he is tongue-tied) (Ibid), then he is failing to produce a locutionary act. Producing “je viens de faire du thé” in English will not normally count as locutionary act, whereas [1] will

[1] I've just made some tea.

b- Illocutionary Act:

This is the second dimension. For Yule, utterances are never well-performed purposelessly, but rather for a particular function in mind. Yule states that the illocutionary act 'is performed via communicative force of an utterance' (Ibid). We might utter [1] to make a statement, an order, a request or any other communicative purpose. Thus, it is what one does by saying something such as answering or apologizing. This is generally known as the illocutionary force of an utterance. For example, the utterance (I will see you later) can have different illocutionary forces such as:

- Prediction (I predict/ guess to see you).
- Promise (I promise to see you later) or
- Warning (I warn you that).

c- The Perlocutionary Act:

This refers to the assumption that hearers will recognize the effect of speakers' utterances. A particular act may succeed or not depending on certain conditions. The utterance [1] (for example, will account as an invitation drink tea). Another example, as in [2] Do you have any cookies? (Would be recognized as a question or request for cookies in a situation where the asker knows that the other person does in fact have cookies). An illocutionary act succeeds only if the listener recognizes the attitude being expressed, such as a desire in this case of

request. This is generally known as the perlocutionary effect. (Ibid, p. 49) In addition, the perlocutionary act can only be successful if the listener accepts it and actually does it (in this case; lends him some cookies).

Austin (1962) considers all utterances as performing acts when uttered in contexts. Therefore, he refers to all speech acts as performatives.

A performative verb is the verb which refers explicitly to the speech act done by the utterance in which it occurs (e.g., promising, naming, betting, agreeing, swearing, declaring, ordering, predicting, warning, insisting, declaring or refusing). Take the following scenario as an example:

[3]. I admit that I was wrong.

[4]. I promise I'll never do it again.

[5]. I apologize if you were ever hurt by my actions.

The verbs admit, promise and apologise refer directly to the actions (i.e., admitting, promising, apologizing) performed by the utterances above, thus, they are all performative verbs.

Austin (1962, p. 57-61) proposed the hereby test to differentiate performative verb from nonperformative verb. This test is applied in this way. The word hereby is inserted between the subject and the verb so that if it sounds acceptable, then the verb is performative, if not, it is not. The utterances above all accept this test.

On the other hand, if the utterance does not accept the hereby test, it cannot be said to have a performative verb. For example, I go to work every day cannot accept this test (* I hereby go to work every day). Hence, it does not contain a performative verb.

The following questions are now raised: do only utterances containing performative verbs perform actions, as Austin (1962) claims? And do utterances with performative verbs always carry out actions? Let us have a look at the examples below:

[6]. I apologize for my bad behaviour.

[7]. I apologize for having a human body.

[8]. I am sorry for not saying goodnight.

It is obviously clear that sentence [6] is performative; the speaker performs the speech act of apologizing for his/her bad behaviour. Sentence [7], although it has the verb apologize mentioned explicitly, it is by no means considered to perform the act of apologizing. The most problematic for Austin was sentence [8] and the like. In our daily interaction, we use such a sentence to perform the speech act of apologizing despite the absence of the performative verb 'apologize'. Such sentences led to the collapse of Austin's view that only sentences containing performative verbs perform actions. Sentences [7] and [8] clearly show the possibility of finding a performative verb not performing the act it is correlated with, and an utterance performing an action despite not having a performative verb.

Felicity conditions:

Austin (1962, p.14-15) introduced the concept of felicity conditions which refers to the set of conditions the availability of which renders the performative used felicitous or successful. Austin's felicity conditions are as follows:

A:

- (1) There must exist a conventional procedure with a conventional effect.
- (2) The circumstances and persons must be appropriate for the invocation of the procedure.

B:

- (1) The procedure must be executed correctly.
- (2) The procedure must be executed completely.

C: Often

- (i) The persons participating in the procedure must have the required thoughts, feelings and intentions and
- (ii) If consequent conduct is specified, then the relevant participants must do it.

In the light of these conditions, in order for a sentence like I pronounce you husband and wife to be felicitous, it must be said in the right procedure, at the right place and time and the person who utters it should have the status required to perform the act of marrying people. Otherwise, it is going to be infelicitous. Sentence [7] is considered infelicitous as an act of apologizing because the speaker does not have the intention required for making an apology, i.e., he is using the form of apology, yet performing a different speech act. The act may be regretting, joking, etc. depending on the situation wherein the utterance is uttered.

Searle (1969) developed Austin's notion of felicity conditions. he attempts to systematize and formalize Austin 's conditions establishing a set of constitutive rules. He also argues that speech acts are subject to four types of felicity conditions: propositional content condition (future act of hearer), preparatory condition (hearer is able to do the act, the speaker believes that the hearer is able to do the act, it's not obvious to both the speaker and the hearer that hearer will do the act in the normal course of events of his own accord), sincerity condition(speaker wants the hearer to do the act), and essential condition(Counts as an attempt to get the hearer to do the act). Searle (1969, p. 66-67) offers a set of rules or conditions for nine speech

acts: promising, requesting, asserting, questioning, thanking, advising, warning, greeting, and congratulating.

Thomas (1995, p. 95), although considering Searle's conditions as helpful in recognizing some speech acts, raises some problems related to his work. One problem lies in the difficulty of distinguishing one speech act from another in some cases (e.g., ordering versus commanding).

Another problem relates to the elasticity of speech act verbs, i.e., the same speech act verb can be used to perform a range of different speech acts.

Various attempts have been made to classify speech acts. The most prominent were those of Austin, who proposed a classification that became the basis for later classifications, and Searle who revised and re-classified Austin's categories.

The first attempt to classify speech acts is made by Austin (1962). Austin's categories of illocutionary forces are mentioned below, (Austin, 1962, p. 150-163):

1. Verdictives: these acts refer to the process of giving a verdict by a jury, arbitrator, or umpire.

2. Exercitives: they are the exercising of powers, rights or influencing a decision. Examples are verbs like: vote, order, warn, advise, claim, appoint, enact, name, etc.

3. Commissives: these are the type of acts which, when made by the speaker, s/he commits him/herself to some course of action. Some possible examples are: promise, swear, vow, bet, undertake, etc. Commissives also include "declarations or announcements of intentions which are not promises, and also rather vague things which we may call espousal", (p. 152), e.g., intend, declare my intention, espouse, etc.

4. Behabitives: these acts have to do with attitudes and social behaviour. Examples are apologizing, congratulating, commending, condoling, cursing, and challenging.

5. Expositives: they make plain to what extent our utterances fit into the course of an argument or conversation. Examples are ‘ I reply ‘ , ‘ I argue ‘ , ‘I concede’ , ‘ I illustrate ‘ , ‘ I assume’ .

Austin’s classification has been subject to criticism by several scholars. Searle’s criticism leads him to introduce his more comprehensive classification of speech acts.

Searle (1976, p. 9-10) highlights the problems with Austin’s classification. These are summarized as follows:

- i. There is confusion between verbs and acts.
- ii. Not all the verbs are illocutionary verbs.
- iii. There is overlap among the categories.
- iv. There is too much heterogeneity within the categories.
- v. Many verbs do not fit the category under which they are listed.
- vi. There is no consistent principle of classification.

Searle’s classification constitutes five major categories of illocutionary acts:

1. Representatives: the acts which describe states or events in the world: committing the speaker/ addresser to the truth of the expressed proposition,

e.g., affirming, reporting, assessing, describing, etc.

2. Directives: the acts which attempt to get the hearer/ addressee to do something,

e.g., warning, advising, requesting, begging, asking, etc.

3. Commissives: the acts which commit the addresser to doing something in the future,

e.g., promising, swearing, vowing, committing, etc.

4. Expressives: the acts by which the addresser expresses his own feelings towards something,

e.g., apologizing, condemning, congratulating, welcoming, thanking, etc.

5. Declarations: the acts which, when uttered, a state of affairs comes into being,

e.g., quitting, declaring, nominating, appointing, christening, naming, etc.

Scholars differ in their views towards Searle's model of classification. Some of them agree with his taxonomy while others criticize it. Among those who criticized Searle's model is Edmonson (1981, cited in Flowerdew, 1988, p.74). He states that Searle's model commits the same mistake for which he criticizes Austin, i.e., confusing between English verbs and illocutionary acts.

Direct and Indirect Speech Acts:

A good distinction can be made on the basis of structure. Yule provides us with a simple structural distinction of three general types of speech acts; he stresses that in English we have basically three sentence types (or what he calls structural forms) as well as three communicative functions. He refers the former to (declarative, interrogative and imperative), whereas the latter to (statement, question, request/command) (Ibid). As shown in the coming example, we can easily distinguish between the three sentence types and the communicative function as well.

a. You eat well. (Declarative)

b. Do you eat well? (Interrogative)

c. Eat well! (Imperative)

Whenever there is a direct relationship between the sentence type and the function; we say that we have a direct speech act. In the other hand, whenever there is an indirect relationship between the structure and the function, we say that we have an indirect speech act. To make it simple, a declarative that is used to make a mere statement is a direct speech act, whereas a

declarative used to make a command for instance is an indirect speech act. Let's consider the example below as an illustration.

- Goodness me, it's hot in here.

It is obvious that this sentence structurally represents a declarative. When this sentence is being uttered for the sake of telling about the weather, it is functioning as a direct speech act. In the contrary, if the same sentence is being uttered for the sake of making a request or a command (to get the hearer to fuck, for example), it is clearly an indirect speech act. Yet, not only declaratives are meant to function as an indirect speech act, but also the other types. For example, the sentence: Are you using that? is an interrogative in form (a question), but it is an indirect request (request/command of handing that thing). So, it is an indirect speech act.

Yule claims that the most common type of indirect speech act in English has the form of interrogatives. They are not meant to ask questions or requests; that is we do not expect just an answer from a question, but also we expect an action. A simple example can be added in here:

- Could you pass me that dumbbell, please?

Asking this question by saying (could you/can you/would you) with the assumption that the hearer is able to do it (something), will count as a request to do that thing. The fact that we use those different formal expressions demonstrates that indirect speech acts are associated with greater politeness. This latter, as we shall see later in the chapter, is another theory that pragmatics is concerned with.

Context:

The concept of context is critical in recognizing speech acts. Its significance in determining the meaning of an utterance, whether spoken or written, cannot be overstated. Many

scholars have approached context from various perspectives.(Malinowski, Firth, Hymes, Halliday et al). Malinowski was a pioneer to talk about the concept of context with his well-known theory of the context of situation. Firth further developed Malinowski's notion of context of situation. Firth (1950) views context in terms of four components: participants, action (verbal and non-verbal), other relevant features of the situation (i.e., surrounding objects and events), and effects of the action (i.e., the changes made by the participants' verbal act). Austin (1962) discusses context in relation to performing individual speech acts. His concept of context focuses on two components for the appropriate realization of speech acts: participant presence (i.e., speaker and hearer) and situation (by which he appears to refer to the immediate environment in which the speech act is performed).

Grice's Cooperative Principle:

Grice's Cooperative Principle was a by-product influenced by the speech acts theory. Grice's (1975) principle explains how interlocutors can achieve an effective communication in every day interaction. Like Searle, Grice was interested in explaining the distinction between saying something and meaning something else. He argued that although people do not always mean exactly what they say, they can still understand each other well. That is, people can generate each other's implicit meanings and assume each other to understand those meanings by relying on the Cooperative Principle. Grice's CP has become the conceptual basis for (or at least related to) most politeness theories, especially Brown and Levinson and Leech's theories. Which we'll get to later.

According to Grice (1975), when people communicate, they cooperate with each other for the sake of constructing meaningful conversations.

Grice further elaborates on this cooperative principle in four conversational maxims. The maxim of quality, the maxim of quantity, the maxim of relevance, and the maxim of manner.

In the maxim of quality the speakers should be truthful, they should not say what they think is false, or make statements for which they have no evidence. In the maxim of quantity the speaker should be as informative as is required for the conversation to proceed; it should be neither too little, nor too much (it is not clear how one can decide what quantity of information satisfies the maxim in a given case). In the maxim of relation, the speaker should relate clearly to the purpose of the exchange. In the maxim of manner, the speaker should be perspicuous: clear, orderly, brief, avoiding obscurity and ambiguity.

Grice advises us to assume that there is another meaning to be inferred and an implicature to be generated if the utterance does not abide by these maxims (one or more maxims flouted or violated). When flouting a maxim, the speaker does not intend to mislead the hearer but wants the hearer to look for the conversational implicature, that is, the meaning of the utterance not directly stated in the words uttered. Therefore, when the speaker intentionally fails to observe a maxim, the purpose may be to effectively communicate a message (Thomas 1995). Through speakers appear not to follow the maxims; they expect hearers to appreciate the meaning implied. In contrast to flouting, when violating a maxim, the speaker intends to mislead the hearer. A speaker can be said to 'violate' a maxim when they know that the hearer will not know the truth and will only understand the surface meaning of the words. The speaker deliberately supplies insufficient information, says something that is insincere, irrelevant or ambiguous and the hearer wrongly assumes that they are cooperating. When opting out of a maxim the speaker is unwilling to cooperate and reveal more than s/he already has. The speaker chooses not to observe the maxim and states an unwillingness to do so. When the speaker infringes a maxim, the speaker unintentionally deceives or fails to observe the maxim. The speaker does this with no intention of generating an implicature. Infringing occurs when the speaker does not know the culture or does not master the language well enough, as when s/he is incapable of speaking clearly, as for example, when drunk or incapable to speak clearly.

By proposing these maxims, Grice introduces a categorical model for a successful communication.

Politeness Theory:

Another by-product of the speech acts theory. Defining politeness in terms of the common-sense notion of proper behaviour clarifies why politeness is not limited to language, but it extends to involve non-verbal or non-linguistic behaviour (Eelen, 2001, p. iv). Politeness is seen as a phenomenon connected with language and social reality. That is why politeness research is carried out from the perspective of linguistics, pragmatics and sociolinguistics (Eelen, 2001, p. 1). Several attempts have been made to define politeness, but still, there is no consensus among researchers about one definition.

According to Brown and Levinson (1987), politeness is a consequence of rational behaviour which refers to the strategic mitigation of face-threatening acts. Similar to Brown and Levinson, Lakoff (1990 as cited in Yule (1996)) and Kasper (1990) also believe that aggression or confrontation is potential in human interaction, and they see politeness as systematized strategies to redress this confrontation. Lakoff (p. 34) defines politeness as ‘a system of interpersonal relations designed to facilitate interaction by minimizing the potential for conflict and confrontation inherent in all human interchange’. Kasper (p. 194) considers communication as ‘a fundamentally dangerous and antagonistic endeavour’. Therefore, politeness is seen in terms of the strategies used to minimize the antagonism in that communication.

Brown and Levinson’s theory is the most influential in the field of politeness. It has triggered too numerous reactions and critiques to mention.

Brown and Levinson propose their Model Person which has two properties; rationality and face. They argue that these features are inherent in all people, i.e., they are universal properties possessed by all mankind.

In Brown and Levinson's words rationality is the 'the application of a specific mode of reasoning ... which guarantees inferences from ends or goals to means that will satisfy those ends', (1987, p. 64).

The second property of Brown and Levinson's model person is face. They derive their notion of face from that of Goffman. According to them, face has two opposing aspects: positive face (the one's desire to be liked and approved of by others) and negative face (the one's desire to be free and unimpeded by others) (Brown and Levinson, 1987, p. 13). They further claim that these two aspects of one's face are subject to threat when using most speech acts and, it is here where, politeness strategies are used to avoid or, at least, reduce that threat. According to Brown and Levinson, the speaker, first, has to decide whether to do the act or not. If s/he chooses to perform the act, then s/he has got four strategies at his/her disposal.

Thomas (1995, p. 169-75) summarizes these strategies in a neat order. Three sets are of 'on-record' strategies: (1) perform the act on-record directly without any mitigation; (i.e., bald-on record strategy) , e.g., Turn on the TV; (2) perform the act on-record using positive politeness (i.e., maintaining the positive face wants), e.g., If you feel bored, I can turn on the TV; and (3) perform the act on-record using negative politeness (i.e., maintaining the negative face wants), e.g., I would be grateful if you could turn on the TV. The fourth set is 'off-record' strategies, e.g., I'm bored it's kind of quiet (as an implicit request to turn on the TV). However, the speaker may choose to avoid doing the act itself by saying nothing if s/he thinks that the threat is going to be great (fifth strategy).

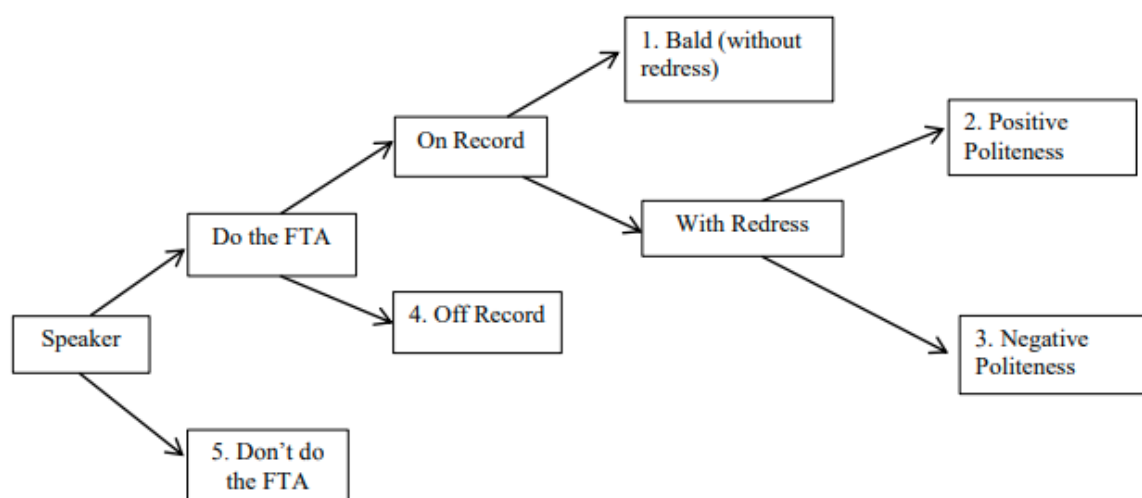


Figure 1. Brown & Levinson's (1987) Possible Strategies for Doing FTAs (slightly adapted)

Leech's (1983) views politeness as conflict avoidance. Leech argues that, although Gricean Principle enables the participants to communicate in a cooperative way, it does not explain the degree of politeness expressed in social interactions (Felix-Brasdefer, 2008, p. 16).

Leech's theory is proposed to complement Grice's CP. Leech (1983, p. 82) argues that his PP has —a higher regulative role than the CP in that it functions —to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place. Leech (1983, p. 80) views politeness as a crucial factor for explaining 'why people are often so indirect in conveying what they mean'. He introduces this PP as rescuing and complementing the CP maintaining that it can account for the apparent exceptions not satisfactorily explained by the CP, i.e., why addressers do not always observe the Gricean maxims.

Leech (1983, p. 132) introduces a number of conversational maxims which are similar to the maxims formulated by Grice (i.e., Quality, Quantity, Relation and Manner). These maxims are typically formulated as imperatives, but this does not mean that they are in any sense

rules for good behaviour. Rather, they are simply the statements of norms which addressers should observe in their communication. However, the speaker might deliberately want to cause offence (i.e., be impolite). For such cases, Leech (1983, p. 82) proposes the Irony Principle (IP) to be used. This IP permits the hearer to arrive at the offensive remark without overtly conflicting with PP by means of implicature.

The PP is generally formulated as minimize the expression of impolite beliefs and maximize the expression of polite beliefs (Leech, 1983, p. 81). Similar to the CP, PP involves various maxims: tact maxim (minimizing cost and maximizing benefit to the hearer), generosity maxim (minimizing own benefit and maximizing that of the hearer), approbation maxim (minimizing dispraise and maximizing praise of the hearer), modesty maxim (minimizing self-praise and maximizing self-dispraise), agreement maxim (minimizing disagreement and maximizing agreement between self and other), and sympathy maxim (minimizing antipathy and maximizing sympathy between self and other (p. 132). Tact and generosity maxims belong to commissive acts such as promises, refusals, offers, etc.

What is significantly important in Leech's Politeness Principle is that it is not only accounting for inherently face-threatening acts (i.e., impolite acts), but it also deals with potentially face-saving/enhancing acts (i.e., polite acts). Leech's principle helps us to account for how an utterance like 'help yourself' at a party is perceived as a polite form although it has the form of a direct command which appears to be impolite.

Are speech acts universal or culture-specific?

The question whether speech acts are universal or culture-specific has been of great interest to scholars of pragmatics. Some scholars like Austin (1962), Grice (1975) and Searle (1969) argue for the notion of universality and some others like Eelen (2001), and Wierzbicka (2003) argue against it.

Supporters of universality claim that speech acts operate by universal principles of pragmatics (e.g., Austin, 1962, and Searle, 1969) side by side with principles of Cooperation (Grice, 1975) and/ or politeness, (e.g., Brown and Levinson, 1978, 1987; Leech, 1983). According to those scholars, these general principles govern the interaction between interlocutors. Opponents of universality claim that conceptualizing and realizing speech acts vary across languages and cultures due to the differences in cultural conventions and assumptions.

Being highly controversial, the universality versus culture-specificity of speech acts has been a source of debate between many scholars. The most significant of these debates is that between Searle (1975) and Wierzbicka ([1991] 2003). Searle (1975), who advocates Austin's (1962) claim that depicts speech acts as semantic universals and thus not bound by specific culture, maintains that speech acts are realized across different languages and cultures in terms of general norms. However, although he believes that the forms embodying these norms may differ from one culture to another, he pays no attention to those cross-cultural differences considering them unimportant. Wierzbicka (2003) rejects Searle's claim of the unimportance of cross-cultural differences and believes that performing certain speech acts in certain circumstances and contexts relies on cultural norms and cultural values rather than on general mechanisms. Wierzbicka (2003, p. vi) further states that 'diversities in ways of speaking and interacting are not superficial at all and that they can be accounted for, above all, in terms of different cultural attitudes and values'

Wierzbicka (2003, p. 25) criticizes speech acts studies for suffering from "an astonishing ethnocentrism" as their observations are based on English alone. Those studies "take it for granted that what seems to hold for the speakers of English must hold for 'people generally'".

Providing an adequate answer to the question regarding universality or culture-specificity of speech acts seems still beyond reach. Many other studies should be conducted all over the world involving all languages and cultures with the aim of examining all speech act patterns of realization. Only, then, an answer to this question might be plausible.

Conclusion:

Linguists and philosophers bring sharper focus to the scope of pragmatics in the late 1970s. It focuses attention on users of language and the context of language use. To conclude, pragmatics covers all those aspects of meaning that semantics, the study of utterances' linguistic meaning, fails to take into account. In other words, pragmatics has to do with the factors that participants rely on for the interpretation of what is being said. In this respect, the scope of this study is beyond a detailed treatment on the notion of Gricean cooperative maxims. People are assumed to be cooperative and follow the conversational maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner, these maxims serve a purpose in both cases; when they are followed as well as when they are flouted.

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction:

The aim of this research is to investigate how the Grecian maxims are maintained in an academic setting. The study also aims at identifying which teaching strategies are the most influential to the students' communication skills. In this chapter, we will present the research methodology and procedures used to answer the research question.

Method:

A research can be done in any way especially in linguistics. We can use any method in doing a linguistics research such as experimental method, ethnography, and case study. In term of teaching and learning development, classroom can be a perfect place to do a research. As a researcher, we can observe what is really going on in a class and doing a research at the same time. That is why classroom observation is best suited for this study.

Systematic classroom observation is a quantitative method of measuring classroom behaviours from direct observations that specifies both the events or behaviours that are to be observed and how they are to be recorded. Generally, the data that is collected from this procedure focuses on the frequency with which specific behaviours or types of behaviour occurred in the classroom.

Participants:

Masters' classes of English were chosen as they master the language and have an understanding of its culture. All of the different specialties were taken into consideration to get more variety and hence more accurate data.

Data collection instruments:

To collect data for this research study, a systematic classroom observation was carried out with the focus on the Gricean maxims and classroom interaction in which they occurred. A total of eight classes were observed and the full sessions were recorded. The classes were half first year masters and half second year masters for more variety hence more data accuracy. All classes were from different majors at the department of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University, Mostaganem.

Data Analysis:

The aim of this research is to investigate how the Grecian maxims are maintained in a classroom and its relation to teaching methods. The collected data was analysed first in terms of the frequency of the observance and non-observance of the maxims. And then attempted at identifying which teaching strategies are the most influential to the students' communication skills.

The data was gathered in a natural environment while students and teachers carried out their classes in the usual manner uninterrupted by the researcher or their presence. Information relating to the classrooms such as the number of students that attended as well as the teacher's strategies of teaching were taken into account. Other factors that might have an impact on the study like the environment of the class was also taken into consideration. The students' behaviours were observed as it is crucial to the study.

After gathering sixteen hours of recording from the eight classrooms, the data was transcribed and analysed as follows starting with the basic data.

Class	Number of Students	Number of Interactions
A	14	22
B	15	34
C	16	12
D	28	26
E	28	36
F	10	04
G	21	15
H	29	20

Table 01. A table showing the number of classroom interactions in the classroom with its respective number of students.

The table above shows the number of students along with the number of interactions in a single session of two hours. It was noted that the classroom interaction drastically reduces in the second hour of the session.

The classes were given an anonymous label to protect the privacy of the teachers and their students. Every teacher has their own way of teaching, however teaching theories or methods can be organized into four categories based on two major parameters: a teacher-centred approach versus a student-centred approach, and high-tech material use versus low-tech material use.

In a teacher-centred approach to learning, teachers are the main authority figure in this model. Students are viewed as "empty vessels" whose primary role is to passively receive information (via lectures and direct instruction). Classes such as [A][B][C][F][H] fall under this as the teachers may or may not (like class [F]) provide a syllabus or handouts beforehand or

during the session. The classroom [G] is student-centred as the students themselves present the lectures and discuss it among themselves. The teacher merely monitors the class. Class [E] is an example of a high tech approach. The teacher uses a computer in class to present their lecture as well as using the G Suite. The last classroom left [D] uses a low tech approach as the teacher forces the students to manually take notes. Although, some research has shown that it may boost learning.(Mueller & Oppenheimer, 2014).

In the mentioned classroom interactions, the analysis of the maxims, whether they were observed or not, varies from one class to the other as follows.

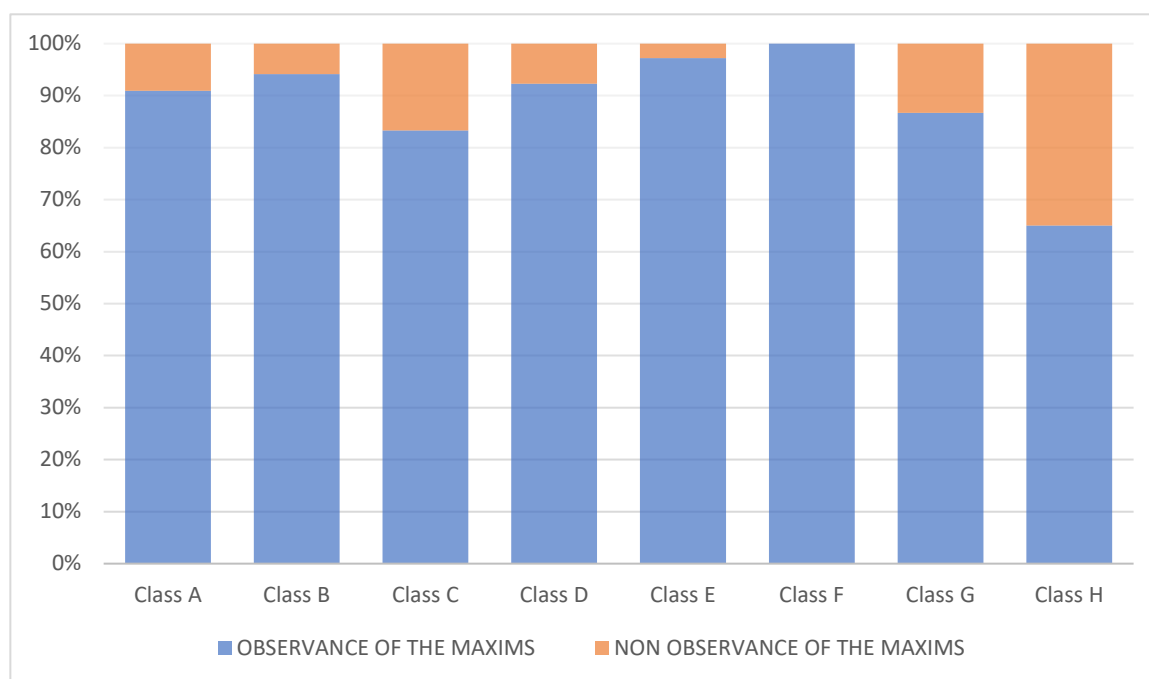


Figure 02. A stacked column of the observance and non-observance of the maxims in masters' classes interactions.

If we observe the figure [02] above, it would seem like most students respect the cooperative principle. However, they mostly interact only when prompted by the teacher when they ask a question. If they know the answer they'll answer correctly respecting the CP.

e.g: Teacher: What do we mean by critical discourse analysis ?

Student: Critical discourse analysis is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse that views language as a form of social practice.

In the example above, the teacher asked a straight forward question and one of the students provided a correct concise answer respecting all of the maxims.

Students tend to not observe the maxims generally when they don't have an answer to what the teacher asked.

e.g: Teacher: What is the Cooperative Principle?

Student: It's a theory.

Here, the student purposely flouted several maxims implying that they do not actually have an answer to the given question.

Teacher sometimes flouted the maxims to assess the students, and sometimes even maintain social relationship with the students and thus establish mutual trust that is one of the fundamental factors of efficient exchange of ideas.

e.g: Student: But the book has said that.

Teacher: That's the book.

It can be noticed that the teacher was not cooperative with her student and did not communicate effectively with her learner flouting several maxims (quantity and manner). Hurting the student's feeling, for the example by directly saying "You are wrong" could be avoided if politeness had been given more importance than transmitting the information. So here the teacher was given a choice between saying the truth or hurting students' feeling.

The numbers in figure [02] represent the number of class interactions. However, not all students interacted in class. In fact, only four students from each class were the ones generating those interactions. If we consider the silence of students as an infringement of the maxims, a more realistic chart would be as follows.

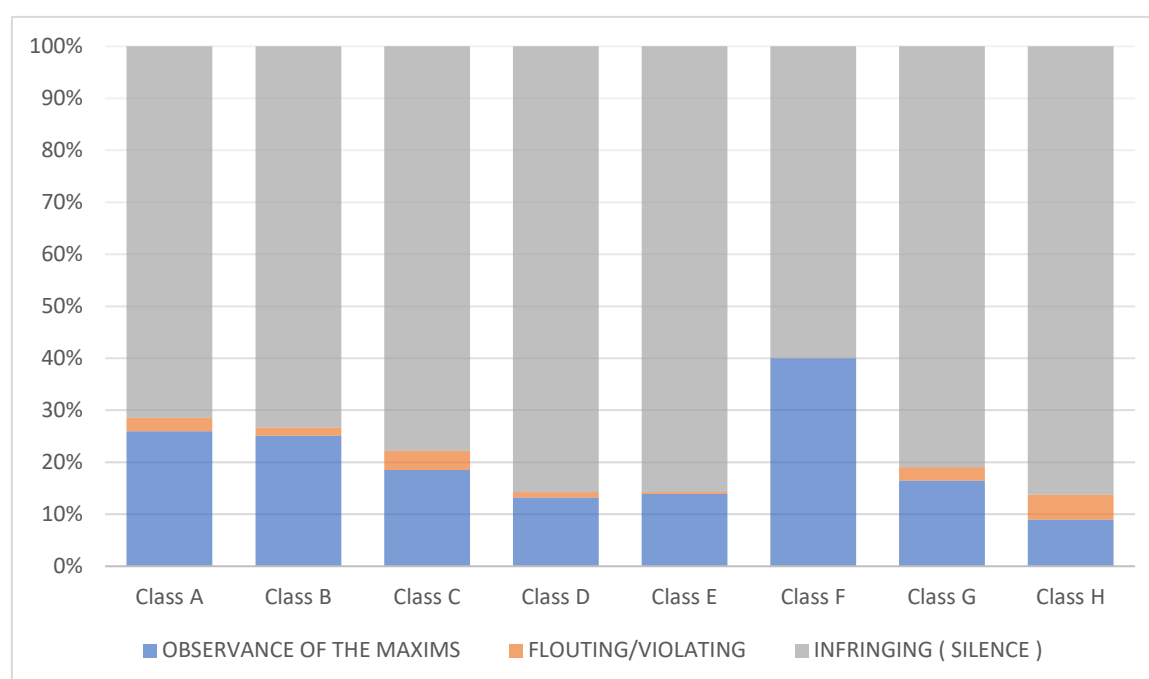


Figure 03. A stacked column of detailed observance and non-observance of the maxims in masters' classes in relation to the number of students.

In figure [10] above, we can see that actually most students did not observe the maxims. Not for the reason of generating an implicature, they just didn't partake in the conversation. This will be further analysed in depth in the next chapter.

A few remarks had to be noted such as noisy classroom environment due to nearby roadwork, late students often disturb the flow of the classroom when entering the class, some students tend to zone out on their phones or just not pay attention in class.

Conclusion:

After collecting data and analysing it, a glance of the answers to the hypotheses proposed in the study can be seen which will be answered in the coming chapter as well propose solutions and find out the reasons behind those results.

CHAPTER THREE

Introduction:

This chapter will provide the results of the study, solutions as well reasons as to why those results were found in the first place based on the previous information of theoretical background that was presented in the first chapter, and the main findings that were revealed in the second one.

General Result of the Study:

Going through the data displayed in figure [02], it looks like the results are going the same way as the hypothesis that was constructed at the start of the research. Most interactions seem to respect the cooperative principle, and the ones that don't, often generate an implicature which would mean the students are indeed communicating effectively in an academic setting which is the classroom.

The data in figure [03], however, changes the course of the study. It drastically alters the end result refuting the main hypothesis of the research. The fact that most students do not interact in class means they are not cooperative.

The second point of the study was whether the teachers have an effect of the learners' communication or not. By looking through the data in table [01] and the one further provided in the second chapter, the teachers' strategies have very little effect on the students' classroom interaction.

Interaction in the classroom is always the most difficult task to involve the majority of learners in classes. Some of these factors are related to the students themselves, but others are due to the learning environment. In the case of the department of English at AbdelHamid Ibn Badis university in Mostaganem, having ongoing construction nearby disturbs both the teachers and students, and disturbs the course of the session. Students coming in late does the same thing.

In addition to disturbing the class, late students already missed part of the lecture so they're not caught up with the rest.

Some students may seem to dominate the class, and they spend much time interacting without giving their classmates the floor to do so. Other students may prefer not to interact due to their doubts of being incorrect, and some others keep silent, show no interest or participation all along the course.

Psychological factors such as anxiety or shyness, lack of confidence, lack of motivation, and fear of mistakes are the factors commonly that hinder students from speaking.(Nunan (1999); Schwartz (2005); and Thornbury (2005) as cited in Juhana (2012)). Lack of self-confidence has a significant impact on almost everything students intend to do: on the way they engage in activities, dealing with challenges, and interacting. Shyness is the act of feeling uncomfortable in social situations. New and unfamiliar situations can bring out students' shy feelings. The classroom is an area of much stress for shy students. Overcrowded classes are one of the main reasons for shyness; they feel uncomfortable about interaction in a classroom which contains a large number of students. Shy students may lose a lot of successful opportunities; they will participate less and feel anxious when they do. These psychological factors are the reason why students do not interact because they are not sure of how to act, what will happen and how others will react.

Recommendations:

These are some solutions and ideas for some of the problems that the study has come across in the general result.

Although it would be challenging to apply these solutions in the real world, they could still be implemented nonetheless.

To eliminate the environmental disturbances, classes should have better insulation. As construction cannot be anticipated. Other disturbances such as students coming in late could be easily handled by teachers. If the teacher closes the door for example, the student should just walk away and not disturb the class. It would also fix the problem of late students not catching up with the rest of the class.

The biggest obstacles are the psychological ones. Anxiety and shyness could be reduced if the students establish some sort of “friendship” between them. Students would be more at ease, not afraid to make mistakes. It could also make up for their lack of confidence. Teachers could help build “friendships” by doing more group work for example. Giving everyone their own time would make students feel at ease other than just having a few students dominate the classroom.

Teachers would argue that students show no interest or motivation in class. Students agree with that. Mainly because most students attend solely for the reason that classes are mandatory. If attendance is not taken into account for assessment, students that aren’t interested in the subject wouldn’t attend and teachers will be more at ease dealing only with students interested in their classes.

Conclusion:

To sum up, the study indicates that students face numerous challenges in the form of lack of words, stress, shyness as well as other identified factors that hinder their ability to communicate effectively in class. Consequently, teachers should be conscious of these problems and eventually try to solve them to promote classroom interaction.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The objective of this study was about applying the Gricean maxims in an academic context. It was mainly to investigate how these Gricean conversational rules and maxims are maintained in the classroom. In addition to identifying which strategies teachers use to manage their classes.

The first chapter of the research has presented the scope of pragmatics in general and its theories in particular, ending up with a significant overview about one of these theories that is the focus of the study ; which is the cooperative principle in which the conversational maxims belong.

The second chapter illustrated and analysed samples for observing and/or not observing the four maxims of speech (quantity, quality, manner and relation) in the classroom.

The results in the third chapter indicate that students unintentionally fail to observe the maxims with no intention of generating an implicature. Moreover, findings has concluded that the teachers' strategies have little impact on the students' communicative abilities.

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