УДК 81'.276

THE ESSENCE OF THE COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLE AND CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE

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Дана стаття присвячена дослідженню сутності кооперативного принципу та комунікативної імплікатури. Стаття містить декілька дефініцій кооперативного принципу, імплікатури, а також комунікативної імплікатури з погляду вчених, які займалися вивченням цієї проблеми. Розглядаються чотири максими кооперативного принципу, а також два види комунікативної імплікатури, яка може виникати в разі дотримання чи недотримання максим кооперативного принципу.
<u>*Ключові слова*</u>: *комунікативна імплікатура, комунікація, кооперативний принцип, максима.*

Данная статья посвящена исследованию сущности кооперативного принципа и коммуникативной импликатуры. Статья содержит несколько дефиниций кооперативного принципа, импликатуры, а также коммуникативной импликатуры с точки зрения учёных, изучающих данную проблему. Рассматриваются четыре максимы кооперативного принципа, а также два вида коммуникативной импликатуры, которая может появляться в случае соблюдения или несоблюдения максим кооперативного принципа.
<u>*Ключевые слова*</u>: *коммуникативная импликатура, коммуникация, кооперативный принцип, максима.*

This article is concerned with the investigation of the essence of the Cooperative Principle and conversational implicature. The article contains different points of view on such phenomena as the Cooperative Principle, implicature and conversational implicature stated by the linguists who contributed a lot to this issue. Cooperative Principle, namely the maxim of Quality, the maxim of Quantity, the maxim of Relation and the maxim of Manner are examined. The authors also consider types of conversational implicature which can arise from either observance or non-observance of the maxims of the Cooperative Principle.
<u>*Key words*</u>: *communication, conversational implicature, Cooperative Principle, maxim.*

Communication is not a matter of logic or absolute truth, but of cooperation. In reality people, who go into conversation with each other, follow the maxims of the Cooperative Principle, i.e. both the speaker and the listener are assumed to want a conversation to work.

The Cooperative Principle is a guarantee for successful communication and a premise for the generation of any conversational implicature. There are times when people say exactly what they mean, but generally they are not totally explicit. They manage to transmit far more than their words mean or even something quite different from the meaning of their words.

The problem of the Cooperative Principle and conversational implicature was investigated by such researchers as W. Davis, G. Gazdar, G. Green, P. Grice, P. Griffiths, L. Horn, G. Leech, S. Levinson, N. Schwarz, J. Thomas, G. Yule et al., who possess both similar and different opinions on the concept and distinctive features of these phenomena.

The goal of the article is to reveal the essence of the Cooperative Principle and conversational implicature.

P. Grice, an Anglo-American philosopher of language, was the first scholar who proposed the theory of the Cooperative Principle. In 1975, he published a seminal article entitled "*The Cooperative Principle*" that caused a stir on the linguistic scene and generated a considerable number of linguistic publications based on his postulates.

According to the scholar, speakers and hearers share a cooperative principle in an ordinary conversation. The basic assumption lies in the fact that any discourse, either

spoken or written, is a joint effort. Both the speaker and the addressee have to follow certain pragmatic, semantic and syntactic rules in order to communicate effectively. So, they have to cooperate.

The general principle based on the assumption that interlocutors cooperate with each other in most cases runs as follows: "Make your 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" [3, p. 36]. Consequently, we can say that this principle provides a description of how people usually behave in a conversation. To be more specific, people, who obey the Cooperative Principle in their language use, make sure that what they say in a conversation furthers the purpose of that conversation. Obviously, the requirements of various types of conversations are different.

P. Grice claims that our oral exchanges do not consist of a series of disorganized remarks. There is a set of maxims guiding the conduct of conversation. The maxims arise from basic rational considerations and may be formulated as guidelines for the efficient use of language in a conversation. In other words, a conversation is not a chaotic process. Thus, the scholar identifies four basic maxims of a conversation (D. Crystal calls them conversational maxims; they are also sometimes named Grice's or Gricean maxims) which together form the Cooperative Principle.

There are such Gricean maxims as:

1. *The maxim of Quality* (this maxim is also called "supermaxim" [2, p. 478]) upholds the following principle: "Try to make your contribution one that is true". In other words, speakers are expected to be sincere and tell the truth. This maxim is subdivided into two related submaxims:

- do not say what you believe to be false;
- do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence [3, p. 25].

2. *The maxim of Quantity* comprises such two submaxims as:

• make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purpose of the exchange;

• do not make your contribution more informative than is required [3, p. 26].

In N. Schwarz's words, "speakers should provide all the information that is relevant to the ongoing conversation and they should respect the established common ground by providing the information that hearers   need" [8, p. 5].

3. *The maxim of Relation* (the other terms for this maxim are "simple and straightforward" [1, p. 102]) enjoins speakers to say something that is relevant to what has been said before.

4. *The maxim of Manner* asks interlocutors to make their contribution such that it can be understood. To do so, speakers not only need to avoid ambiguity and wordiness, but also have to take into account their audience's characteristics. This maxim includes the supermaxim "be perspicuous" and such submaxims as:

• avoid obscurity of expression;

• avoid ambiguity;

• be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity);

• be orderly [3, p. 27].

P. Grice points out that "the speaker can certainly observe all the maxims" [3, p. 28], for instance:

Sarah: "*Hi. How are you? We're interested in a single room. How much will that be?*"

Receptionist: "*A single room is $ 200 a night*".

So, we can see that the receptionist answered clearly (the maxim of Manner), truthfully (the maxim of Quality), gave just the right amount of information (the maxim of Quantity) and directly addressed Sarah's goal in asking the question (the maxim of Relation).

In everyday language people can fail to observe or fulfill the maxims on many occasions. It happens because, for example, they are incapable of speaking clearly (they are nervous, frightened, have a stammer, etc.) or they deliberately choose to lie. Accordingly, P. Grice suggests four ways of failing to observe the maxims: *flouting a maxim*, *violating a maxim*, *opting out a maxim* and *infringing a maxim*. As opposed to

P. Grice, J. Thomas is convinced that there are five ways of the maxims' non-observance and adds *suspending a maxim*.

Flouting a maxim. It occurs when the speaker blatantly fails to observe a maxim, not with any intention of deceiving or misleading, but because he/she wants the hearer to look for the meaning which is different from or, in addition to, the expressed meaning [10, p. 70]. For instance, the speaker can flout *the maxim of Quantity* by giving either more or less information than the situation requires.

Doctor: "*I am just checking your glands right now. You take all these pills?*"

Helen: "*Yes. They are different diets. Then I have my antidepressants and my sleeping pills*".

Violating a maxim. It is unostentatious non-observance of a maxim. If the speaker violates a maxim, he/she will be liable to mislead [3, p. 49]. For example, the speaker can violate *the maxim of Quality* by telling a lie.

Mike: "*They make a nice couple. He is charming and very attractive… Are you okay?*"

Alex: "*Yeah*".

So, we can say that Alex is violating the maxim of Quality, because he is not OK. He feels sick because of drinking alcohol.

Having examined two ways of non-observance of the maxims, we can see the difference between flouting a maxim and violating a maxim. People do not generally find out that they are misled by violating the maxims, whereas flouting the maxims is meant to be noticed.

Opting out a maxim. It happens when the speaker is unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires [3, p. 49]. Consider the example of opting out *the maxim of Quantity.*

Jack: "*She is cheating on you!*"

Tom: "*How do you know?*"

Jack: " *'Cause I know*".

We can see that Jack does not provide the information that Tom asks.

Infringing a maxim. It can occur when the speaker has an imperfect command of the language (a child or a foreigner), he/she is nervous, drunk or because of some cognitive impairment [10, p. 74]. Regard the example of infringing *the maxim of Quality*.

Bill: "*Is this a woman's hair?*"

Peter (a bit drunk): "*Is this… is this a woman's hair? I mean, it could be… I suppose. Possibly from, uh, the taxi. It was… I mean, I think, you know, all the people in and out, I probably sat up in… I guess, the woman's hair.*"

Suspending a maxim. The speakers do not observe the maxims, because there is no expectation on the part of any participant that they will be fulfilled. This category may be culture-specific. Instances of suspension of the maxim of Quality can be found in funeral orations and obituaries, of the maxim of Quantity in the case of telegrams, telexes and some international phone calls, of the maxim of Manner in poetry, and of all three maxims in the case of jokes. It is difficult to find any convincing examples, in which the maxim of Relation is suspended [10, p. 76 – 78].

In conversation the utterances produced by interlocutors have explicit and implicit meanings. The explicit meaning can be understood both by predicting the semantic meaning of words within a conversation and by knowing the syntactic structure of the language used in a conversation. In the other hand, to understand the implicit meaning in a conversation the rules of semantics and the syntactic structure of the language are insufficient. Therefore, the concept of conversational implicature is introduced.

Before we start examining conversational implicature, we consider what the term "implicature" means.

According to P. Grice, who was the first to put forward the key ideas of implicature, an implicature is "a piece of information that is conveyed indirectly by an utterance" [3, p. 67].

R. Fowler deals with an implicature and describes it as something that is said "between the lines", i.e. people can say one thing and mean something else. The definition of an implicature given by this scholar sounds as follows: "An implicature is a proposition emerging from something that is said, but not actually stated by the words uttered, nor logically derivable from them" [2, p. 135].

When the term "implicature" is clear, regard such a phenomenon as conversational implicature.

Conversational implicature refers to a kind of extra meaning that is not literally contained in the utterance. It is a meaning different from the "meaning" in semantics. The "meaning" in semantics is the literal meaning of a word or a sentence. For example, *"Have you read today's newspaper?"* just means that the speaker wants to know if the listener has read the newspaper or not. The "meaning" in pragmatics is totally different. So, the sentence mentioned above can mean *"Please, pass the newspaper to me since you have read it"*. The "meaning" in semantics and the "meaning" in pragmatics can be the same, and can be different. When they are different, conversational implicatures are made [9, p. 177].

According to S. Levinson, conversational implicature is "one of the most important notions in pragmatics. It provides some explicit account of how it is possible to mean (in some general sense) more than what is actually said (i.e. more than what is literally expressed by the conventional sense of the linguistic expressions uttered)" [6, p. 97]. He illustrates the concept of conversational implicature by giving the following examples:

(1) A: "*Can you tell me the time?*"
   B: "*Well, the milkman has come*".

From the semantic point of view the exchange is interpreted as follows:

(2) A: "*Do you have the ability to tell me the time?*"
   B: "*The milkman came at some time prior to the time of speaking*".

We can see that the dialogue implies more than is said, there are extra levels of meaning:

(3) A: "*Do you have the ability to tell me the time of the present moment, as standardly indicated on a watch, and if so, please, do so, tell me*".
   B: "*No, I do not know the exact time of the present moment, but I can provide some information from which you may be able to deduce the approximate time, namely the milkman has come*".

Conversational implicatures can be produced in two ways:

1) when interlocutors observe the maxims of the Cooperative Principle, for example:

Husband: "*Where are the car keys?*"

Wife: "*They are on the table in the hall*".

So, it is obvious that the wife answered clearly (the maxim of Manner) and truthfully (the maxim of Quality), gave just the right amount of information (the maxim of Quantity) and directly addressed her husband's goal in asking the question (the maxim of Relation).

2) when interlocutors do not observe the maxims of the Cooperative Principle, for instance:

"*He is a tiger*".

We can say that this utterance is literally false, openly against the maxim of Quality. But the hearer still assumes that the speaker is cooperative and then infers that he is trying to say something distinct from the literal meaning. The hearer can understand that probably the speaker meant to say that he has some characteristics of a tiger.

It should be mentioned that scholars divide conversational implicature into two types:

1. *Generalized conversational implicature* (GCI)

• GCI is a conversational implicature generated by default, that is to say, in all cases except in those, where there is contrary evidence to it [5, p. 124], for example:

"*Some of my students went to the lecture*".

GCI: Not all my students went to the lecture.

• GCI is a conversational implicature that does not depend on context – it is context independent [4, p. 104], for instance:

"*I have been to some countries in Europe*".

GCI: I haven't been to every country in Europe.

2. *Particularized conversational implicature* (PCI)

• PCI is a conversational implicature generated by saying something in virtue of some particular features of context [5, p. 125], for example:

A: "*So, are you headed for the Neckarwiese afterwards?*"

B: "*The weather report said it will be raining this afternoon*".

PCI: I won't be going to the Neckarwiese, because I don't want to be there if it rains.

To sum up, conversations are governed by the Cooperative Principle, the theory of which was put forward by P. Grice. The Cooperative Principle is, in essence, a sort of agreement between participants to work together (cooperate with each other) in order to create coherent and effective exchanges. The Cooperative Principle is associated with four conversational / Grice's / Gricean maxims (the maxim of Quality, the maxim of Quantity, the maxim of Relation and the maxim of Manner), each of which consists of one or more specific submaxims. The maxims can be non-observed on many occasions. Consequently, there are five ways of the maxims' non-observance: flouting a maxim, violating a maxim, opting out a maxim, infringing a maxim and suspending a maxim. The term "implicature" was coined by P. Grice, who developed an influential theory to explain such a phenomenon as conversational implicature. Conversational implicature is something meant, implied or suggested distinct from what is said. It can arise from either observance or non-observance of the maxims of the Cooperative Principle. Furthermore, there are two types of conversational implicature: generalized conversational implicature, which is context independent, and particularized conversational implicature, which is context dependent.

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