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Grice's Requirements on *What is Said*

KEPA KORTA

1 Introduction

Grice imposes two important requirements on the concept of what is said. On the one hand, he takes it to correspond with the usual concept, among linguists and philosophers, of what is said by a speaker by uttering a sentence, *aka* the proposition expressed, the truth-conditions, the content, or the literal meaning. On the other hand, Grice takes what is said to be a critical *input* for the inference of implicatures by the hearer. In this paper, I'll argue that these are incompatible roles for a single proposition to play. You can take what is said to be the proposition expressed by the utterance, or you can take it to be the input for the inference of implicatures, but not both. If I am right, the relevant content for the inference of implicatures can be any of a variety of propositions that differ in various ways from what is said. In other words, Grice's theory needs various forms of contents and not just what is said.

2 Grice's What is Said

Grice 1967a famously distinguished between *what a speaker says* and *what she implicates* by uttering a sentence. Think about Anne and Bob talk

ing about their common friend Carol. Both of them know that she recently started working in a bank. Anne asks: "How is Carol getting on in her job?" Bob replies: "Oh quite well… She hasn't been to prison yet." Bob is clearly suggesting something here; something related to Carol's tendency to yield to the temptation provided by her occupation, as Grice would put it. However, that's not something he said, but something he implicated in saying what he said.[1] But what did he say?

Grice's remarks suggest that his concept of 'what is said' can be taken as equivalent to 'the proposition expressed', 'the literal meaning' or 'the content' of the utterance.[2] He claims that to know what someone said by uttering a sentence one has to know

(i)   the conventional meaning of the sentence uttered;
(ii)   the disambiguated meaning of the sentence in that particular occasion of use; and
(iii)   the referents of referential expressions.

It is not clear how much of pragmatic 'intrusion' into what is said Grice would allow,[3] but there seems to be a wide consensus that what is said in Grice's framework roughly corresponds to the proposition expressed or the content of the utterance.

Just limiting our attention to utterances of sentences containing singular terms – that is, proper names, demonstratives indexicals and (some uses of) definite descriptions –, the question is, what kind of proposition is that?

Traditional philosophy of language offers two general, seemingly incompatible, answers: the proposition expressed is either a singular proposition involving an individual referred to by the singular term (the referentialist view) or a general one, involving a mode of presentation of the individual, provided by its linguistic meaning (the descriptivist view). Grice's own remarks are compatible with a referentialist view on what is said. He says (my italics):

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[1] Grice included in his overall picture of meaning and communication non-linguistic 'utterances' like gestures and movements, but I will limit the discussion to linguistic utterances.

[2] These more technical terms used by philosophers are not without problems, since they can suggest that implicatures are not contents of the utterance, or they are not propositional. Gricean implicatures (at least conversational particularized ones) are also full-blown truth-conditional (though more or less indeterminate) contents of the utterance, but I'll ignore this issue here, and follow common practice using 'content' only to talk about the contents that are on the 'what-is-said' part of the Gricean divide.

[3] Bach 1994a, b takes Grice to assume that the elements of what is said must correspond to elements in the sentence uttered. Grice would then be a 'minimalist' regarding the pragmatic intrusion into what is said. Carston 2002: 171-177 questions this interpretation.

> To work out that a particular conversational implicature is present, the hearer will rely on the following data: (1) the conventional meaning of the words used, *together with the identity of any references* that may be involved; (2) the Cooperative Principle and its maxims;... (Grice 1967a/1989: 31)

Given item (1), Grice seems to suggest something close to the referentialist view.

My aim is to study a particular requirement Grice imposes on the concept of what is said within his theory of implicatures: a requirement that seems to be present in the previous remark and others, including the following, where Grice is reconstructing a bit of a hearer's reasoning:

> He has said that p; there is no reason to suppose that he is not observing the maxims or at least the C[ooperative] P[rinciple]; he could not be doing this unless he thought that q; (…) (ibid.)

To 'calculate' or infer what the speaker implicated, the hearer must identify what the speaker said. That is, the proposition expressed by the speaker constitutes, in the Gricean framework, the input for the inference of implicatures. I will argue that this input can be taken to be neither just a singular proposition, as the referentialist would claim, nor a general proposition to which the singular term contributes a mode of presentation determined by its linguistic meaning, as the descriptivist would say. Instead, a full array of propositions, which John Perry and I call 'utterance-bound' and 'speaker-bound' contents, (see Korta & Perry 2006, 2011) must be brought into the theory of implicatures.

In the next section, I'll discuss some examples suggesting that the relevant input for the inference of implicatures varies between singular and general propositions. Moreover, the general proposition can involve not only linguistic but also psychological modes of presentations or 'cognitive fixes' on the referent. In section 4, I briefly introduce the view of cognitive fixes and their relation with referential devices elaborated with Perry. Section 5 presents the variety of contents of an utterance and applies them to the solution of various issues of cognitive significance and the inference of implicatures. My main point is that the appropriate input for the inference of implicatures is not usually what is said, or the proposition expressed, but an utterance- or speaker-bound content that the speaker intends the hearer to grasp. In section 6, I discuss Grice's addition of a new maxim of manner and argue that, in fact, this addition, with some amendments, makes perfect sense within the present approach. In section 7, I try to clarify my view on the plurality of contents of the utterance, especially with respect to the inference involved in utterance comprehension.

3   Eros's Thirst

Situation I
Suppose I am giving a talk at a conference. I notice that the audience, including my friend, the much-admired philosopher Eros Corazza, is becoming bored. Eros is clearly ready to give up listening to philosophy talks for the day in favor of conversation over drinks, and this is obvious to his other friends in the audience. I decide to finish mine. Gesturing towards Eros, I utter

(1)   He is thirsty.

I implicate that I intend to hurry up, finish my talk, and miss the next lecture, because my friend Eros wants me to go for a beer. In the imagined circumstances, an utterance of

(2)   Eros is thirsty

would have worked as well.

At least at first glance, this seems to fit well with the referentialist picture. Both (1) and (2) express the same proposition, namely, the singular proposition we could represent as:

(3)   That **Eros** is thirsty.

This proposition is true if and only if Eros is thirsty, even in worlds in which nobody uttered (1) or (2) or Eros was named 'Thanatos'. (1) and (2) are just two different ways of saying the same thing, and, as long as the maxims of manner are not involved in the inference of implicatures, that's all that counts, according to Grice. Since (1) and (2) express the same proposition, they convey the same implicatures. (3) is the proposition that constitutes the input for inferring implicatures from (1) and (2). This gives us a reason to think that the input of implicatures coincides with the referentialist notion of what is said, with what Perry and I call the *referential* truth-conditions of the utterance. But when we take a second glance, we see that this doesn't seem to work in all cases.

Situation II
Suppose, now, Eros is organizing a get-together at his place – an apartment he keeps free from tobacco smoke – and asks me whether there is anyone from the institute he should invite. I tell him:

(4)   Well, maybe, what's-his-name… he is fun, interesting, and a good guy… but he smokes.

Here Eros's cognitive fix is what Perry and I call 'speaker-bound'. If he heard the utterance, but for some reason couldn't determine that I was the speaker, he would grasp only the 'utterance-bound' content: that the person the speaker of (4) calls 'what's-his-name' is a fun and interesting smoker. Since he recognizes that I am the speaker, Eros can go further and grasp the 'speaker-bound' content: that the person I refer to is a fun and interesting smoker. But Eros can't go further; his cognitive fix on the prospective guest remains 'speaker-bound.'

So Eros doesn't really know whom I am talking about in the ordinary sense of that phrase. Still, he immediately says "No way". In this case, my plan doesn't require Eros to have any kind of utterance and speaker independent cognitive fix on the referent of 'what's-his-name' and 'he'. Eros doesn't need to grasp the referential content of (4). It suffices for him to grasp the speaker-bound content, that my candidate is fun, interesting, and a smoker. This is enough for Eros to grasp my implicature, that Eros might not want to invite the fellow, since he is a smoker. So, in this case, the relevant input for Eros to calculate the implicatures of (4) is its speaker-bound-content, namely:

(5)   That *the male Kepa has in mind* is fun, interesting, and smokes.

This is the content Eros grasps in virtue of hearing my utterance and seeing that I am the speaker. He need not understand (and I don't plan for him to understand) anything further to infer what I am implicating. This doesn't mean that (4) doesn't *express* a singular proposition. 'What's-his-name' is, at least arguably, a way of referring to someone the speaker has a notion of and some beliefs about, but can't remember the name of. (In many situations, although not in this one as I am envisaging it, the hearer is able to identify a person referred to in this way, and supply the speaker with the name.) So I express a singular proposition, but Eros has no cognitive fix[4] of the person it is about, except his speaker-bound cognitive fix as 'the male I have in mind.'

One might suppose then, again at first glance, that this sort of case favors the descriptive theory as an account of the input for implicatures. The proposition that I expressed was a singular proposition about the referent. The utterance-bound content is a proposition about the utterance. The speaker-bound content is a proposition about me. These contents are singu-

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[4] See next section for my conception of cognitive fixes.

lar propositions, but they are not singular propositions about the referent. The referent identified only descriptively, as 'the male the speaker of (4) has in mind' and 'the male Kepa has in mind.' Since Eros cannot go further than this, his cognitive fix on the referent is descriptive.

So far, it seems then that both traditional options, the referentialist and the descriptivist, have a role to play in an account of how we grasp implicatures. But they are not enough.

Situation III

Suppose that Eros and I are in a bar late at night. Surprisingly, the bartender serves me my glass of beer, but forgets about Eros. I tell the bartender:

    (6)   He is thirsty,

implicating that she forgot about Eros's beer and that she should serve it to him. To infer these implicatures and, accordingly, serve the beer to Eros, it does not seem to suffice that the bartender grasp either the singular proposition, that Eros is thirsty, nor even the descriptive one, that the male I have in mind is thirsty. She needs to grasp a proposition such as,

    (7)   That *the guy in front of me who is not speaking* is thirsty.

Grasping (7) will jog her memory that Eros ordered a beer too, and she will get him one. This is not a singular proposition but a general proposition involving a descriptive cognitive fix on Eros, as *the guy in front of me who is not speaking*.[5] As Bezuidenhout 1996 points out, the general proposition is not determined by the meaning of the words used, but involves a 'psychological mode of presentation'.

In this case, the descriptive cognitive fix the bartender grasps fits into my plan. In other words, (7) involves the *target cognitive fix* in his plan: it involves a mode of presentation that is apt for what I want the bartender to do: calculate my implicature, remember Eros's order, and serve him his beer. Here the use of the demonstrative is apt, if not quite essential. If I had said merely,

    (8)   Eros is thirsty,

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[5]As long as it includes the bartender as an individual –'me'–, this is not a 'pure' general proposition (or 'purely qualitative', using Kaplan's terminology); it is general but 'lumpy' (using Perry's terminology in Perry 2001), but I will ignore these nuances here.

I wouldn't achieve my aim, unless the bartender knows Eros's name and can recognize him as the guy in front of her. (Of course, another possibility is that I take the chance that the bartender is good at implicature detection, and will be able to infer from (8) the complex implicature that the person beside him is named "Eros", and that she should get that person his beer. But I am not that adventurous.)

To sum up, if I am right, we have cases in which the input for the inference of implicatures of an utterance involves a singular proposition and cases in which it involves a general proposition closely tied to the meaning of the sentence used. But a general account requires bringing in the speaker's plan, with all the range of utterance contents and the cognitive fixes it may rely on.

I conclude, then, that Grice was not quite correct in taking what is said, or the proposition expressed, to be the input for calculating implicatures. Whether one takes what is said in these cases to be a singular proposition, in line with referentialist thinking, or some descriptive proposition, it is not what is said that, in the general case, serves as the input to implicatures. The appropriate input is the speaker's plan, which will involve grasping a number of propositions, utterance-bound, speaker-bound, and hearer-bound (as the content that involves the target cognitive fix will be). But it's time I say what I understand by a 'cognitive fix'.

4   Singular Terms and Cognitive Fixes

Our knowledge about objects is held, as Frege would have put it, relative to, or via, modes of presentation. Your knowledge that Eros is a great philosopher was held via the name 'Eros' before you read this; you might have a notion of him that includes his 'being the author of *Reflecting the Mind*' or 'being the best philosopher of language born in Ticino, Switzerland'. These are what Perry and I call cognitive fixes. They are not the *Sinne* of Frege's theory of names, or the hidden descriptions of Russell's, associated to *expressions*. They are cognitive fixes on *objects*. And the various referential expressions exploit paradigmatically different kinds of cognitive fixes.

A nominal cognitive fix involves a name, a notion with which the name is associated, and a network of which that notion, and the utterances it motivates, is part. The object plays an epistemic and a pragmatic role in the life of a person, in virtue of having such a notion. People can pick up information about the object by reading and hearing statements using the name on that network, and they can say things, and answer test questions about the object by using the name on that network. In the unlikely situation that you never heard of Eros or anything about him, but you were part of the bored audience at my talk in *Situation I*, your cognitive fix on Eros would have

been created when I first uttered

(2)   Eros is thirsty.

Your notion of him would include just his name and the idea that he was thirsty. A pretty thin notion, but a notion anyway that allows you to make statements or ask questions about him, to add later that he is the author of *Reflecting the Mind,* he is a much admired philosopher, etc. But initially, it wouldn't allow you to get the intended implicatures of (2): that I am going to finish my talk early to go to have a beer with him. First of all, you should have known that he was at the room, and you will not do that from (2) and your thin notion of Eros. As I said above, in those circumstances, (1) would be a better option:

(1)   He is thirsty.

A demonstrative cognitive fix on an object involves paradigmatically what, following Perry 2001, we can call a perceptual buffer, that is, a short-lived notion in which we temporarily store the information we get of objects with which we are in a perceptual relation. John has a buffer of the glass in front of him that allows him to make the movement to grab it and drink water from it. Demonstratives are, usually, used to talk about objects that are perceptually accessible to the hearer. That's why, in *Situation III*, I uttered

(6)   He's thirsty,

to allow the bartender to get a content involving her buffer of Eros.[6]

Demonstratives do not give much information about how to identify the intended referent – that's why a demonstration is often required. But indexicals do. In their paradigmatic use, they are systematically linked with some specific aspects of the utterance context: the speaker, the time, the place, and maybe the world of the utterance. So, Eros can utter

(9)   I am thirsty,

which would have the same referential content as (6), but would provide another route, another content, for the bartender to get and act accordingly. The utterance-bound content of (9) includes an utterance-relative cognitive

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[6] The intended cognitive fixes need not be explicitly and consciously represented in the speaker's mind, but can perfectly be operative at the sub-personal level, as are many intentions postulated in the theory of action.

fix:

(10)   That the speaker of (9) is thirsty.

Perceiving the utterance, the bartender has an easy route to a perceptual cognitive fix on Eros such as 'the guy in front of me who is not speaking', so she can give Eros his beer. The cognitive fix on the referred object that the speaker intends the hearer to get is what Perry and I call the *target* cognitive fix.[7]

5   Identity, Implicature, and Cognitive Significance

To account for the meaning and content of utterances involving singular terms, Perry's critical referentialism or reflexive-referential theory provides a variety of contents that includes general propositions that include linguistic mode of presentations (*reflexive* or *utterance-bound* contents) and singular propositions (*referential* contents), as well as more contents with varying degrees of context-sensitivity.

Referential contents are needed to account for issues of same-saying and counterfactual truth-conditions. As we saw before, (1) and (2) are naturally taken as two utterances that say the same thing: that Eros is thirsty. And the proposition they express seems to be true just in case Eros is thirsty, i.e., even in those worlds in which he had some other possibly less mythical name, or in which nobody ever uttered (1) or (2). (3) seems to give us the subject matter of those utterances; what the speaker is talking about; what his statement is about.

Singular propositions, however, have problems in accounting for the cognitive significance of some utterances or cases in which there is no object designated by the singular terms. In *Situation II*, for instance, Eros understood my utterance, including its implicatures, even if he wasn't able to identify the referent of my use of 'he'. He understood a proposition that includes the mode of presentation determined by the linguistic meaning of 'he' and the fact that I was the speaker: the speaker-bound content of (4), proposition (5).

Take now the case of Stretch, a case that Perry discussed at length in *Reference and Reflexivity*. It involves a photograph by Linda Cicero of two dogs on the verandah of the Stanford Bookstore (reproduced on the cover of the paperback edition of *Reference and Reflexivity*). Both dogs are partially concealed by a pillar on the verandah, and we can pretend that there is only

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[7] For a discussion on the GDTPA structure of referential intentions that include *grammatical*, *directing*, *target*, *path* and *auxiliary* intentions, see Korta & Perry 2011, Chapter 4.

one dog, which we call 'Stretch', whose head can be seen emerging from one side of the pillar, and his tail emerging from the other side. H has just asked S how many dogs there are on the verandah. Pointing first to Stretch's head and then to his tail, S utters

(11)   That dog is that dog.

Since there is no other candidate for a second dog on the verandah, and the only grounds for believing that there are two dogs would be the supposition that the head and the tail belong to different dogs, S clearly intends to implicate that there is just one dog. S could have uttered (11) while pointing twice to Stretch's head, and her utterance would have had the same referential content, but the implicature would not have been generated. So this example poses a problem for a woodenly referentialist account of cognitive significance, and equally for a Gricean account of what's going on, if it is combined with a referentialist position on what is said.

The natural solution to this difficulty, from the present perspective, is to suppose that the inputs to Gricean reasoning are the utterance-bound and speaker-bound contents, rather than the referential proposition. From the utterance-bound content of (11), plus the fact that S is the speaker and his demonstrations were to the head and the tail, H realizes that (11) is true if there is a single dog whose head is the demonstrated head and whose tail is the demonstrated tail. The truth of this proposition, which undermines any reason one might have for thinking that there is more than one dog on the verandah, generates the implicature, supposing that that's what S intends to convey.

6   The Maxim of Manner of Reference

Grice indicates that in the cases of different ways of referring to the same thing, his theory can account for differences in implicature because different maxims will be involved. And he allows that in the cases in which the maxim of manner is involved, what is said is not the input to the calculation of the implicature. We need to investigate whether in the cases we have discussed so far, Grice's original theory can be maintained, in the light of these remarks.

In 'Logic and Conversation' Grice remains agnostic about whether proper names and descriptions make the same contribution to what is said by a speaker in making an utterance:

> This brief indication of my use of *say* leaves it open whether a man who says (today) *Harold Wilson is a great man* and another who says (today) *The British Prime Minister is a great man* would, if each knew that the

singular terms had the same reference, have said the same thing. (Grice 1967a/1989: 25)

Then, he adds:

But whatever decision is made about this question, the apparatus that I am about to provide will be capable of accounting for any implicatures that might depend on the presence of one rather than another of these singular terms in the sentence uttered. Such implicatures would be merely related to different maxims. (Ibid.)

It is not clear how we should take this last remark. Let's keep aside definite descriptions for a moment, and stick to proper names and demonstratives. Take the following two utterances in *Situation III:*

(6)   He is thirsty

and

(8)   Eros is thirsty.

It seems clear that the name 'Eros' and the demonstrative 'he' make the same contribution to what is said – namely, the individual Eros – as I am happy to assume, with referentialists. But, while (8) would be quite an awkward way to convey to the bartender the implicature that she forgot to serve Eros his beer, (6) carries the implicature smoothly. Even if (8) would serve to get Eros his beer, the implicature involved would be different, including the information that the person sitting next to me was named 'Eros'. So the implicature seems to depend on the presence of one singular term rather than another. If this is so, according to Grice, there must be some maxim that is related to (6) and its implicature, which is different from the maxim that would be related to (8) and its implicature. And that should work whether we take (6) and (8) as saying the same thing or not. If we stick to the referentialist position on what is said, so that (6) and (8) do say the same thing, I don't see how the difference in implicatures could be accounted for appealing to different maxims. If what is said remains constant, the maxims of quantity, quality, and relevance would make no difference, as far as I can see.

The only maxims that could distinguish between (6) and (8) are the maxims of manner. These concern the way in which what is said is said. But the ones presented in 'Logic and Conversation' do not seem helpful:

Manner
- (Supermaxim): Be perspicuous.
- (Maxims):

    o   Avoid obscurity of expression.
    o   Avoid ambiguity.
    o   Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
    o   Be orderly.

The difference between 'Eros' in (8) and 'He' in (6) does not seem to relate to obscurity, ambiguity, prolixity or order in any clear sense.

    Grice proposed the addition of another maxim of manner in 'Presupposition and Conversational Implicature':

> "Frame whatever you say in the form most suitable for any reply that would be regarded as appropriate"; or, "Facilitate in your form of expression the appropriate reply" (Grice 1981/1989: 273).

He introduces the maxim in the context of his theory of generalized conversational implicatures, when discussing the difference between the use of a definite description and its hypothetically semantic equivalent Russellian expansion. I think that, within this approach to reference and implicatures, it is a reasonable 'maxim' to be observed by speakers when using singular terms, and has application for particularized implicatures as well. We could rephrase it as

    Maxim of reference
      • Choose your way of referring according to the cognitive fix you want your hearer to get on the reference, to facilitate the inference of implicatures.

This maxim allows us to account for the difference between (6) and (8). (6) complies with the maxim; so long as it is clear to the bartender that I use 'he' to refer to someone on whom he has a perceptual cognitive fix, she will readily have an appropriate cognitive fix on Eros, to understand the relevance of my remark, grasp the implicature, and get Eros his beer.

    Assuming the bartender has no idea who Eros is, (8) flouts the maxim. But flouting can generate particularized implicatures. Given that my remark is intended to be relevant and helpful, the bartender may grasp that it is his friend who is thirsty, and infer that he is named 'Eros'. She may infer that I not only intend her to understand that my friend is thirsty, and to remember that he ordered a beer, but also to figure out that his name is 'Eros', perhaps because I would like her to interact with him in a more personal way, by saying something like "Oh, you must be Eros! Sorry I forgot your beer."

    So I think that Grice's additional maxim of manner, although motivated by his wish to make a rather subtle point about Russell's theory of descriptions, is a good addition to the basic Gricean toolbox.

Consider this slightly different version of Grice's original example: A, the British Prime Minister Harold Wilson, is standing by an obviously immobilized car and is approached by B. Wilson wants B not merely to tell him where he can obtain some petrol, but also to offer to fetch some for him; he is after all the prime minister, a busy and important man. He might try:

A: I am out of petrol.

But television was not so common in the 1960s as now. B might not recognize A as Harold Wilson, and so simply reply:

B: There is a garage around the corner.

Wilson might try saying:

A: Harold Wilson is out of petrol.

His intent would be to flout the new maxim of manner, and thereby induce B to realize that the speaker must be Harold Wilson. But B may not be so good at calculating obscure implicatures, and merely reply,

B: That may be the least of his problems, but anyway, what can I do about it?

Wilson's best bet is to say,

A: I am Harold Wilson, your prime minister. And I am out of petrol.

He would explicitly provide both cognitive fixes appropriate to the responses he wants, and throw in the relevant fact that he is the prime minister, as well. B will almost certainly grasp both implicatures; that A needs to know where to get some petrol, and that furthermore he thinks it would be appropriate, given his high station, for B to fetch it for him. Of course, if B is a committed Tory, he may choose to be of no help, and just walk away.

Proper names typically exploit a notion that a hearer already has of the referent. The use of a proper name to refer to someone complies with the new maxim of manner, in cases in which the speaker intends for the hearer's response to be informed by information he has in his notion of the named person. But proper names do not secure the link with a perceptual cognitive fix like 'the person in front of me' unless the hearer's notion incorporates the relevant recognitional information. If B is a Tory, Wilson

might have been better off to convey his need for petrol without encouraging B to access all the information he has in his Wilson-notion.

While the new maxim of reference may strengthen Grice's theory, I don't see it as especially tied to generating and calculating implicatures, but as part of the description of the practice of referring to objects, people, or places with communicative intentions, for all sorts of purposes. It is an advantage of the general account of the pragmatics of reference I elaborated with Perry (Korta & Perry 2011) that it explains why some expressions are better suited than others to convey various implicatures in various circumstances. Indexicals, demonstratives, proper names, and descriptions provide different paths for the hearer in understanding the utterance, facilitating some inferences, and blocking others. These differences are taken into account in the speaker's plan and they explain the choice of one term rather than another.

I don't see the appeal to the maxim of reference as undercutting the main point in this essay, that the input to Gricean reasoning on the hearer's part, and so the focus of the speaker's plan in provoking such reasoning, is not, in the general case, what is said, or the proposition expressed, but the utterance-bound content that speakers and hearers always ultimately rely on. The maxim of reference moves the maxims of manner from the periphery to the center of a Gricean theory, and so is basically a way of recognizing my point.

7 Inference and Implicatures

Given that I have been considering the input for the inference of implicatures assuming Grice's general framework, one might think that my account may be subject to criticisms that have been made, regarding the psychological implausibility of Grice's theory. If Grice's model assumes that utterance comprehension involves, first, the identification of what is said, and then, the inference of particularized implicatures (in some cases, with the inference of generalized implicatures, somehow in between), there are good reasons to reject Grice's model on psycholinguistic grounds. To begin with, there seems to be no processing time differences in understanding literal and non-literal utterances (Gerrig and Healy 1983, Gildea and Glucksberg 1983, Gibbs 1986). Other, more philosophical reasons to reject Grice's serial model are given, for instance, by Recanati 1995, who argues that the inference of non-literal meanings need not go via the identification of literal ones. The plurality of contents of the utterance that the present account admits could suggest that the complexity and, thus, the implausibility of my approach is even clearer than Grice's.

I could reply that interpreting Grice's theory of implicatures as a psychological model of utterance understanding is just wrong (see Bach 1994b). Grice was providing instead a philosophical account, a rational reconstruction of the sorts of information involved in understanding an utterance. I could tell the same story about the present approach. In any case, I want to clarify what I mean by 'the contents' of an utterance and their role in utterance production and understanding.

As I understand them, contents are properties of utterances derived ultimately from the informational content of cognitive states and events, and success conditions of acts. The informational content of an event or state is relative to constraints and particular facts. The variety of constraints and facts that can be taken as *given* produces a variety of contents that the event or state has. In the case of utterances, their contents are relative to the meaning of the sentence used, facts about the speaker's plan (intentions and beliefs), and circumstances of the utterance. Just considering utterances of simple declarative sentences that contain singular terms, Perry and I have distinguished between the purely utterance-bound content and the referential content, plus a variety of contents with various cognitive fixes of an object. The number of contents to be distinguished will depend on the theoretical purposes at hand. Contents are *objective* properties of utterances, determined by different factors, including the beliefs and intentions of the speaker, but also by external factors that might or might not be represented in the speaker's mind but nonetheless be part of the content.

Now, by claiming that an utterance has a plurality of contents, I don't mean that the speaker has to somehow entertain thoughts with all those contents or the hearer must understand all those contents, say, inferring one after the other. Quite the opposite, my point is that the input of implicatures is the critical content: the content the speaker intends her utterance to have, and the content she intends the hearer to get in understanding the utterance. So, there is neither more complexity nor more implausibility in my approach than in Grice's.

Moreover, regardless of what Grice's approach implies regarding the inferential process of understanding, I don't assume a serial process in which, first, the content of the utterance should be identified so that, then, the inference of implicatures starts. I am sympathetic with Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995) on this point. I take our content to be like their explicature. The explicature has often been taken to be a proposition that results from processes of ambiguity and vagueness resolution, reference assignment and other pragmatics processes (roughly called enrichment processes) performed on the 'logical form' of the sentence uttered. This 'fully developed' proposition would constitute the input for the inference of

implicatures. Cappelen and Lepore, to cite just one case, seem to assume that:

> We agree with her [Carston] that you need a contextually shaped content to generate implicatures in all of the cases she discusses… What's needed in order to derive the implicature in these cases is a contextually shaped content, i.e., a contextually shaped what-is-said. (Cappelen and Lepore 2005: 180)

But I take it that this is not the right interpretation of the input of implicatures, within relevance theory. Instead, as I understand the theory, it is assumed that both explicatures and implicatures are derived fast, on-line and parallel, and the inferences are carried out following what they call the *Relevance-theoretic comprehension strategy*:

> (a) Consider interpretations (disambiguations, reference assignment, enrichments, contextual assumptions, etc.) in order of accessibility (i.e. follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects).

> (b) Stop when the expected level of relevance is reached. (Carston 2002: 143)

Both (a) and (b) seem basically to be compatible with our view, in predicting that the path is not simply from the information conveyed by the linguistic meaning to the referent, but that a particular cognitive fix on the referent is what the hearer should reach. The hearer's comprehension process starts from the utterance-bound truth-conditions of the utterance (our version of their 'logical form'). Then, the reference assignment process would stop when the target cognitive fix is reached. This is all is needed for the inference of implicatures (which can be on-line, and in parallel), and other perlocutionary effects the speaker intends to generate.

8   Conclusion

Grice seems to require his concept of what is said to do two different jobs:

> (i)   to account for the notion of the proposition expressed by the utterance of a sentence; the proposition that philosophers of language have identified as what is said by the speaker in uttering the sentence; and
>
> (ii)   to account for the input of the calculation of implicatures.

I have argued that both jobs cannot be performed by a single kind of content. Whatever we decide to be the correct characterization of the proposition expressed by the utterance – a singular proposition or a general one – this proposition will not always constitute the input for the inference of implicatures. Rather, a content involving an appropriate cognitive fix on an

object will constitute that input. Our referential devices are suited to provide different routes to that content, involving different cognitive burdens on the hearer. That's why it is justified to add a new maxim of manner to Grice's conversational maxims.

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