

Lecture 18

LCD 306: Semantics & Pragmatics

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Outline

- 1 Implicature
- 2 Co-operative Principle
- 3 Gricean Maxims
 - Maxim of Quantity
 - Maxim of Quality
 - Maxim of Relation/Relevance
 - Maxim of Manner

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3 types of Inferences

- Entailment
 - (logical)
- Presupposition
 - (conventional)
- Implicature
 - (conversational)

Inference

- Speakers:
 - implicates
 - presupposes
- Listeners:
 - infers

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Co-operative Principle

- In any conversation, you assume your interlocutor is co-operating.
- Helps us understand how the statements are related at the discourse level.
- Otherwise conversations are full of non-sequiturs

Co-operative Principle

- The observation that speakers tend to follow these basic rules is called the **Cooperative Principle**.

Co-operative Principle

We have expectations that speakers will follow some basic rules so that communication goes more smoothly:

- Tell the truth.
- Give just enough information.
- Stay on topic. Be orderly.
- Be clear. Avoid ambiguity.

Co-operative Principle

- The CP is not a prescriptive rule book, or rules for language etiquette
- The CP represents the assumptions that we make when we are part of a conversation

Co-operative Principle

- “Make your conversational contribution such as is required,
- at the stage at which it occurs,
- by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (Grice, 1975).

Co-operative Principle

- The principles of conversation proposed by Grice are called:
 - **Gricean Maxims**

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Gricean Maxims

Maxim of...

- Quantity
- Quality
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Maxim of Quantity

- Make your contribution as informative as is required, but not more, or less, than is required.
- Give just enough information.

Maxim of Quantity

A: Do you have any pets?

B: I have a dog.

A: Can you watch my bird for a couple of days?

B: I'm afraid my cat would eat it.

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Maxim of Quality

- Do not say that which you believe to be false or for which you lack adequate evidence.
- Tell the truth.

Maxim of Quality

A: What time is it?

B: 5:00PM

Maxim of Quality

(A's car broke down. B said "I can fix it")

A: You said you could fix it!

B: I thought I could!

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Maxim of Relation/Relevance

- Be relevant.
- Stay on topic.

Maxim of Relation/Relevance

A: How was your weekend?

B: I met Catherine's mum.

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Maxim of Manner

- Be clear, avoid ambiguity, brief, and orderly.

Maxim of Manner

A: What did you do on Sunday?

B: I woke up, ate North Carolina
BBQ in Bushwick and watched
TV.