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LINGUOPRAGMATIC FEATURES OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL LETTERS BY GRICE'S MAXIMS

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Abstract: *In this article, the writer narrows the problem of violation and flouting the maxims only between two main types of letters (Formal and Informal). The writer will collect and analyze the utterances, which break maxim of quantity, maxim of quality, maxim of relation and maxim of manner.*

Key words: *implicature, maxims, conversational implicatures, violation, flouting of maxims, the Cooperative Principle, Grice's maxims*

Human social life and work are what necessitate conversation in the first place and in its turn. It is shaped by human life and work. To identifying and classifying the phenomenon of implicature, Grice developed a theory designed to explain and predict conversational implicatures. He also sought to describe how such implicatures are understood. Grice (1975: 26–30) postulated a general “Cooperative Principle,” and four “maxims” specifying how to be cooperative. It is common knowledge, he asserted, that people generally follow these rules for efficient communication. The philosopher Grice introduced the term conversational implicature. They are: a Maxim of Quality. Make your contribution true; so do not convey what you believe false or unjustified. b Maxim of Quantity. Be as informative as required. c Maxim of Relation. Be relevant. d Maxim of Manner. Be perspicuous; so avoid obscurity and ambiguity, and strive for brevity and order.

Grice viewed these rules not as arbitrary conventions, but as instances of more general rules governing rational, cooperative behavior. For example, if a woman is helping a man build a house, she will hand him a hammer rather than a tennis racket (relevance), more than one nail when several are needed (quantity), straight nails rather than bent ones (quality), and she will do all this quickly and efficiently (manner). (George Yule & Brown Gillian. 1983, Discourse Analysis).

Violation and Flouting the Maxims Theory

Violation, according to Grice (1975), takes place when speakers intentionally refrain to apply certain maxims in their conversation to cause misunderstanding on their participants' part or to achieve some other purposes. The following are examples of violation in the four aforementioned maxims:

Mother: *Did you study all day long?*

Son who has been playing all day long: *Yes, I've been studying till now!*

In this exchange, the boy is not truthful and violates the maxim of quality. He lies to avoid unpleasant consequences such as; punishment or to be forced to study for the rest of the day.

Unlike the violation of maxims, which takes place to cause misunderstanding on the part of the listener, the flouting of maxims takes place when individuals deliberately cease to apply the maxims to persuade their listeners to infer the hidden meaning behind the utterances; that is, the speakers employ implicature (S. C. Levinson, 1983). In the case of flouting (exploitation) of cooperative maxims, the speaker desires the greatest understanding in his/her recipient because it is expected that the interlocutor is able to uncover the hidden meaning behind the utterances. People may flout the maxim of quality so as to deliver implicitly a sarcastic tone in what they state. As in: *Teacher to a student who arrives late more than ten minutes to the class meeting: Wow! You're such a punctual fellow! Welcome to the class.*

Student: Sorry sir! It won't happen again.

It is obvious from what the teacher says that he is teasing the student and his purpose is, by no means, praising him. He exploits the maxim of quality (being truthful) to be sarcastic. Likewise, the student seems to notice the purpose behind the teacher's compliment and offers an apology in return. In this study, the writer applies descriptive-qualitative research method. The data is taken in written form and conversational implicature uttered between writers of 2 types of letters (Formal and Informal). The source of data is from the letters given and the supporting data is knowledge and comprehension of the writer as the researcher and theories related with this study.

Analysis of Conversational Implicature in Formal letters

Formal letter >> Business letter: *DearsSirs, Though the courtesy of your embassy in China, we learned that your firm is interested in establishing business relations with a Chinese firm to sell various light industrial products of your country to China. We have been engaged in import business for many years and are well connected with all the major dealers here. We, therefore, feel sure that we can sell large quantities of your goods if your offers are favorable.*

We would like you to send us a catalogue and pricelist, and possibly some samples of the goods that you are principally interested in selling, so that we can study the sales possibility in our market. As to our credit standing, please refer to Bank of China, Beijing.

We look forward to hearing from you. Yours faithfully

Analyze :As here in the ordinary business letter the information is clear , in right order , relevant to the given aim of the letter which shows there is no sample for violation of maxims . in contrast we can see highly pointed expressions to the usage of maxims : *We, therefore, feel sure* – shows the maxim of quantity .In addition , we

can see some linguistic expressions which show politeness (*We would like, please* etc.) which is not relevant to the topic Implicature.

Informal Letter: >>1: *Dear Tom*

I'm just writing to let you know I quit my old job and found something new. I was really fed up with being a brain surgeon because it wasn't really much of a challenge anymore. You know me; if I'm not learning new tricks, I get bored too easily and have to find something new. I'm now teaching English as a foreign language in Vietnam and it suits me down to the ground. I teach two adult classes and a kindergarten class, which is not only challenging but also rewarding too. Can you believe it? I also have some other amazing news- I'm getting married. She was one of my first ever students and I guess it was love at first sight for both of us. Make sure you keep the first weekend in July free, so you can come and celebrate with us. Keep in touch

Chris

Analyze :In the above given ordinary informal letter we can see some violations of manner maxim as the information is not clear (*found something new*), of quantity maxim as the given information sometimes is too long in quantity (*I was really fed up with being a brain surgeon because it wasn't really much of a challenge anymore. You know me; if I'm not learning new tricks, I get bored too easily and have to find something new*), the relevance maxim as the aim of the letter was to inform only about quitting the previous job and to share details about newly found job but later we can see additional information about marriage .

>>2: *Hi there, Doreen*

Long time no see. Hope all's well in your world! I haven't been to JALT all year, shame on me, but I needed the break.

I still see the guys and I'm going to the national, so don't write me off yet! I was trying to remember who you've published with in the past, and I wondered if you had any contacts at Nan'Un-Do. I want to send a proposal to them but have no names, and the personal touch is always best! I might go to see Jane Willis, family commitments permitting, any plans in that direction? Going to Shizuoka I presume?

Bye for now

All the best

Analyze :In this informal email, we can also find some examples for the violation of Grice's maxims: the violation of manner maxim as some given grammatical expressions are not clear if the person is not a native speaker or does not have deep knowledge in grammar the given information will not be understood (*Long time no see, Going to Shizuoka*) and some abbreviations are also not clear (*JALT, Nan'Un-Do, S*). the last sentence seems not to have relevance to the above

mentioned information (*I might go to see Jane Willis, family commitments permitting, any plans in that direction?*) which shows the violation of relevance maxim.

To conclude, according to the research question there were analyzed two types of letters : formal and informal . The analysis showed, that mostly Grice's maxims are violated in the informal type of letters rather than formal ones . In contrast, formal letters mostly try to show the usage of maxims in the right way to show the effectiveness of this type of letters . There may be other samples which can contradict the result of this research as , the conducted research analyzed not all the letters but some samples of the given type letters (formal/informal)

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