5. Qualitative vs. quantitative approaches

Clashes are sometimes considered a weakness:

> " Sperber and Wilson properly criticize the Gricean framework for failing to resolve the clashes of its maxims. "
> (Davis '98:98)

> " In our framework, with its single principle, there is no possibility of clashes. "
> (Sperber and Wilson '86:389)

But these remarks overlook *the empirical relevance of clashes*.

Fair enough, we do need a procedure for resolving clashes:

- in principle, existing *quantitative* accounts might do, e.g., Bayesian, game theory, OT, Relevance Theory (?);

- however, such work often aims to *reduce* the maxims to a more 'pure' notion of rationality, e.g.:

> " The hope would be that, at least for idealized cases, we could view the speaker's following of the Gricean maxims [...] as simply rationally compelling behavior, given the set-up of the game. "
> (Rothschild '13)

This ignores the ideal/actual distinction, and will probably fail.

> Q *Actual* cooperativity can be grounded in general rationality; but what shapes *ideal* cooperativity?

E.g., should we expect more cross-linguistic variation in how *ideal* cooperativity is construed?

6. 'Weakness' of conversational implicatures

- Gricean CIs are often considered 'weak', 'defeasible', etc.
- My proposal negates *one* reason for this: that ideal cooperativity would merely be a defeasible assumption.
  (cf. Westera '13, SPE7)

CI's apparent weakness is due to a failure to control for:
  (i)   features of the context;
  (ii) the ways in which compliance is indicated.

Cooperative speakers *will* control for this (Manner).

...and so should experimenters! (cf., Schwarz '96)

7. Conventional vs. conversational?

> Q If compliance is conveyed by means of conventional signs, then what remains of the conventional/ conversational distinction?

- As an instance of sentence meaning vs. speaker meaning, it doesn't seem to add anything...

- As a subdivision of 'speaker meaning' it seems to be a misnomer.

- As a *processing* distinction? Nah... (e.g., Saul '02)

8. Discussion

The distinction between ideal and actual cooperativity seems to be a fertile one.

It grants us:
- a defense (in some sense) of maxim-based pragmatics;
- a division of labour between qual./quant. approaches;
- new empirical adequacy criteria on the maxims;
- a new, plausible (?) theory of the final rise;
- something (else) to control for in experiments;
- some more things to think about.

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**SPE8, Cambridge
September 17th 2015**

Ideal and actual cooperativity
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Main aims

Gricean explanations tend to rely on the assumption that **the maxims are complied with**.

?

But it is commonly assumed that **maxims can be cooperatively violated**.

This talk aims to resolve this tension, and show that:
- it is empirically relevant (e.g., intonation);
- it is conceptually interesting (?);
- it has broader methodological implications.

1. Ideal and actual cooperativity

Gricean pragmatic accounts start from the assumption of intended compliance with the maxims, e.g., QUALITY:

(1) It was raining. → *speaker believes it was raining.*

- Grice's justification: the *Cooperative Principle*.
- But this is insufficient if maxims can be co-operatively violated, as is commonly assumed.

We must distinguish two senses of cooperativity:

Ideal cooperativity: compliance with the maxims;
Actual cooperativity: trying one's best to reach the ideal.

Q What really warrants the assumption of *ideal* cooperativity that drives most pragmatic accounts?

A To be *actually* cooperative entails indicating whether one takes one's utterance to be *ideally* cooperative.

- This answer need not be controversial,
- but perhaps some of its consequences are.

Main aims:
- to highlight some of those consequences;
- to illustrate *how* compliance may be indicated, and how this imposes new adequacy criteria on the maxims.

2. The maxims

Defined in Montague's *Intensional Logic*, given:
(i) any *informational intent* p – a proposition (type $\langle s,t \rangle$);
(ii) any *theme* $\mathcal{T}$ – a set of propositions (type $\langle\langle s,t\rangle,t\rangle$).
(theme ≈ question under discussion, *QUD*)

Definition

$$\text{QUALITY}(p) \quad = \, {}^{\vee}p$$

$$\text{RELATION}(p,\mathcal{T}) \, = \, \mathcal{T}(p)$$

$$\text{QUANTITY}(p,\mathcal{T}) \, = \, \forall q \left(\left(\begin{array}{c} \Box\text{QUALITY}(q) \, \wedge \\ \text{RELATION}(q,\mathcal{T}) \end{array} \right) \to p \subseteq q \right)$$

(A certain theory of themes is presupposed.)

3. Clashes

Assumption
Maxims are suspended/violated only in case of a clash.

If so, then: which maxims can be suspended depends on which maxims may clash.

Definition Let an *admissible model* validate the definition of the maxims, along with KD45 for doxastic modality (□).

Fact: for all admissible models M,
$$M \models \exists p \, \Box(\text{QUALITY}(p) \wedge \text{QUANTITY}(p,\mathcal{T}))$$

That is: QUALITY and QUANTITY don't clash (contrary to Grice).

In contrast, the other pairs of maxims *can* clash, i.e.:

Fact: for some admissible model M,
$$M \models \neg\exists p \, \Box(\text{RELATION}(p,\mathcal{T}) \wedge \text{QUANTITY}(p,\mathcal{T}))$$

(If something is held true but merely potentially thematic.)

Fact: for some admissible model M,
$$M \models \neg\exists p \, \Box(\text{QUALITY}(p) \wedge \text{RELATION}(p,\mathcal{T}))$$

(If nothing is taken to be both thematic and true.)

4. Example: intonational marking   (Westera '13)

Assumption. Meaning of the *final rise* (↗):
"the utterance has no informational intent that the speaker takes to comply with the maxims relative to the main theme":
$$↗ :: \neg\exists p \in I \, \Box\text{MAXIMS}(p,\mathcal{T}_0)$$

(*I* refers to the intents of the utterance; $\mathcal{T}_0$ to its main theme.)

I. QUALITY suspension $\neg\exists p \in I \, \Box\text{QUALITY}(p)$

(2) A. *[Enters the room with an umbrella.]*
    B. (to A) It's raining?↗

- This must be due to a clash with RELATION.

Furthermore:
- QUALITY is more important than RELATION, so QUALITY may be suspended only if compliance is sufficiently probable.
- This is why (2B) expresses a *bias* (cf. Gunlogson '03).

II. RELATION violation $\neg\exists p \in I \, \Box\text{RELATION}(p,\mathcal{T}_0)$

(3) A. Was John at the conference?
    B. It was raining...↗ (does that help?)

This appears to be due to a clash with QUALITY.

Note that (3) necessitates a strict notion of 'theme', countering:

> [Roberts'] *Relevance* is overly restrictive and should be weakened at least to allow for discourse moves which merely raise or lower the probability of some answer to the QUD being correct. (Simons et al. '10)

III. QUANTITY suspension $\neg\exists p \in I \, \Box\text{QUANTITY}(p,\mathcal{T}_0)$

Yesterday, when entering the UK:

(4) A. What is the purpose of your stay?
    B. A conference...↗ (do you need more info?)

This must be due to a clash with RELATION.

IV. MANNER suspension

Supposing the speaker is not fluent in French:

(6) I'd like... er... je voudrais... a black coffee?↗

What we gain, if all of this is on the right track, is a new set of adequacy criteria on the maxims, e.g.:

- RELATION must be very restrictive (3);
- QUALITY must clash with RELATION (2); and
- QUALITY must *not* clash with QUANTITY – after all:

(7) A. Who was at the party?
    B. John, Mary and Bob. ↘   → *and no one else*

(And of course we gain a unifying account of the final rise.)