
GRICEAN COOPERATIVE MAXIMS FROM PRAGMATICS AND SEVEN CS OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATION: A COMPARATIVE STUDYMuhammad Asif Javed¹, Hazrat Umar²

Original Article

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Abstract

Business communication is an essential phenomenon for smoothly conducting operations in business and other professional organizations. For this reason, business communication courses are made a part of business and other professional studies. As an academic discipline, business communication comprises various theoretical contents, among which Seven Cs are vital in addressing the multiple facets of composing a business message. This study examines the harmony and compatibility between the Seven Cs of business communication and Gricean cooperative maxims from pragmatics on qualitative theoretical grounds through a review of the characteristics and traits of both sets of concepts. It is found that there exists harmony between the Seven Cs and Gricean cooperative maxims, whereby the latter can make value addition to the former in both theory and practice. The cooperative maxims seem facilitative in producing better business communication discourse due to their compatibility with Seven Cs. Future studies can explore theoretical compatibility among more concepts from business communication and pragmatics. Moreover, empirical investigations can also be conducted on the interface of business communication and pragmatics.

Keywords: Gricean cooperative maxims, Seven Cs, Pragmatics, business communication

Introduction

Business Communication includes all kinds of oral, written or nonverbal communication in the business world. However, most of the formal discourse in business communication is in written form, e.g. letters, memoranda, reports, proposals. Business communication is purpose-oriented and audience-centred. As an academic course, it aims at preparing the students of business/professional studies for effective professional communication in their future careers. Business communication aims at informing the audience or getting a task accomplished by the target audience; it addresses the audience who may know more or

less than the sender; it aims at establishing and strengthening a connection between a sender and audience (Dias, Freedman, Medway, & Paré, 1999). Organizations demand effective communication from their employees, especially in management meetings, negotiating with different levels of staff of technical fields (Singh & Choo, 2012). Koriche(2015) asserts that familiarity with “the social features and interactional aspect of the language” is also an essential for infield business correspondence which the students should be taught (p. 539). Thus, the professionals need to strengthen their communication skills for various roles in business organizations.

The professionals working in business organizations are required to be expert

communicators while performing their duties for the successful operations of their organizations. Business schools focus on developing and refining their communication competence and skills through business communication courses to prepare future professionals for their future communication ventures. In this regard, Orban(1994) sees business communication courses as vital in training the learners' communication skills to help them perform and compete effectively in their future ventures. For on job training and development, Hyland (1998) asserts that requirements of organizational discourse should be explored, and employees' communication should be trained accordingly. Jendrych (2011) recommends that individuals be taught the business etiquettes to save the company from any possible harms caused by a lack of awareness.

Since linguistics relates to study, explorations, implications and applications of language in human life, Prabhakaran (2017) argues that linguistics has immense significance in business communication with reference to its usage in the business world. Business graduates need to be "rhetorically savvy" in their communication, i.e. they should know the purpose, requirements, demands of the situation, expected audiences' response, and suitable genre for a certain correspondence (Cox, Ortmeier-Hooper, & Tirabassi, 2009), and the knowledge and application of pragmatics can effectively help in 'rhetoric communication'. Owing to the importance of relevant disciplines in improving/refining communication, Ponomarenko and Malyuga (2012) suggest incorporating stylistic and rhetoric aspects from linguistics into business communication. Devimeenakshi and Tyagi(2013) advocate the incorporation of useful linguistic elements in business communication.

Business communication, both as a genre and academic discipline, is a specific field of communication. Academic courses on business communication include various theories and principles for producing effective business

messages, e.g. Seven Cs (completeness, conciseness, consideration, courtesy, clarity, correctness, and concreteness) are such a set of principles for efficient correspondence (Hartley & Bruckmann, 2002; Murphy, Hildebrandt, & Thomas, 2007; Quible, 1991; Roebuck, Sightler, & Brush, 1995). Seven Cs contribute to imparting and sharpening business communication skills.

For well-groomed business communication knowledge and skills, it seems important to explore theories and principles from various disciplines of linguistics. In linguistics, pragmatics is the specific branch that deals with communication issues of day-to-day life and field-specific correspondence (e.g. business communication). Among the concepts of pragmatics, Gricean maxims of quantity, quality, relevance and manner deal with successful and cooperative communication between a sender and a receiver. Seven Cs are guiding principles for effective and successful communication, and similarly, Grice's (1975) cooperative principle and maxims (quantity, quality, relevance and manner) also address various ways to make communication cooperative and efficient. This paper examines similarity and harmony between Seven Cs and Gricean cooperative maxims to discover an integrated approach for composing comprehensive business messages.

Research Question

- What kind of relevance does exist between the Seven Cs of business communication and Gricean maxims?

Literature Review

Gricean Cooperative Principle and Maxims:

Gricean cooperative principle emphasizes the encoders (writers/speakers) to cooperate with the decoders (readers/listeners). Cooperation in communication is further explained through four maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner. Gricean cooperative maxims are of great assistance in interpersonal communication. For the present study, we have taken Grice's (1975)

version of the 'Cooperative Principle,' and Yule's (1996) explained version of Gricean cooperative maxims. In a general perspective, the cooperative maxim of quantity concerns the size of information. The speaker should contribute as much as is required for the specific purpose of a particular communicative event. The maxim of quantity binds the encoders to give enough information, neither more nor less than required.

The cooperative maxim of quality addresses the truthfulness of a message. Maxim of quality binds a speaker not to communicate false, doubtful, or evidence-lacking contents. Furthermore, this maxim ensures genuine, sincere, and true and fact-based information in the written or spoken discourse. The maxim of relevance asserts that the utterances in an event should be relevant to the context of communication. Maxim of relevance stipulates such contents as conveying the intended message according to the topic and situation for the audience's convenience. The maxim of manner requires that message should be conveyed clearly, precisely and concisely, and utterances should not cause ambiguity. Thus, the maxim of 'manner' ensures that an utterance reflects clarity, and a speaker should avoid obscurity of expression, ambiguity, unnecessary wordiness and verbosity, and poor orderliness (Yule, 1996, p. 37). Gricean maxims make receivers' assume that their senders are communicating cooperatively in terms of truth, size, relevance and clarity. Gricean cooperative maxims ascertain that encoders observe specific cautions in relaying utterances. On the other hand, the decoders assume that encoding has been plied cooperatively. These principles also address surface meaning, context, implicature, flouts, and many common assumptions.

Flouting of Cooperative Maxims: In day-to-day conversations, cooperative maxims are not often observed. Non-observance of cooperative maxims is termed flouting (Yule, 1996). Gricean maxims are flouted for plenty of reasons by individuals as well as communities. Different linguistic communities may have different

patterns for extending or shortening a message (flouting of quantity). A particular communication situation may demand communicators say doubtful or evidence-lacking utterances (flouting of quality). Communicators may flout the 'relevance maxim' during a communication event for certain reasons, especially on informal occasions (flouting of relevance). Communicators may produce utterance which are ambiguous, wordy, verbose, and lacking orderliness (flouting of manner).

Gricean maxims smoothen and regulate the conversations, though Grice himself did not intend to force the language users follow his maxims; instead, he was more interested in, either purposive or unintentional, 'flouting' or 'non-observance' of these maxims by the masses; he was curious to explore the hidden aspects or hidden meanings caused through 'flouting' (Cutting, 2002; Yule, 1996). The 'unsaid part', context, and many other pragmatic features play their role in 'flouting' and compensation of flouting.

Implicature and Explicature: Utterances often carry additional meanings which are not apparently in words but are drawn through inferences. Such inference-based meanings or additionally conveyed meanings are termed implicatures (Yule, 1996, pp. 35-36). Implicature is a crucial pragmatic content frequently employed in decoding by a listener/decoder since it helps understand communication contents containing some flouts of the cooperative principles and maxims. Implicatures "arise from breaches of some of the norms that underlie human communication and determine its efficient and rational character" (Cap, 2010, p. 211). Implicature is better understood when contrasted with explicature, which is a 'basic interpretation' of any utterance and based on 'contextual information', knowledge about the surrounding world, information about referring expressions, and awareness of disambiguation during utterance interpretation (Griffiths, 2006, p. 6). The explicature of an utterance may go beyond its mere 'literal meaning' or 'sentence

meaning', and it depends more on context for clear understanding and disambiguation; whereas in making an implicature, the sender's apparent and implied intentions are also explored along with the solid contextual clues (Griffiths, 2006).

Implicature is communicators' implied or suggestive meaning, in addition to the literal meaning of actual words in an utterance. Griffiths(2006) asserts that an implicature provides a clue on the meaning of an utterance and the sender's intentions (p. 7). Griffiths is also convinced of the vital role of 'inference' in this regard which an addressee may develop on 'background information' and the sender's viewpoint on a particular issue in a specific context. Semantics also plays its role in this regard, as implicature is based on 'explicature' and explicature is based on literal meaning. The literal meaning is based on the semantics of a particular sentence, explicature is developed through pragmatic reference to lessen 'disambiguation', and implicature is built upon pragmatic hints (Griffiths, 2006, p. 7). Implicature is the practical aspect of meaning and is connected with contextual, conventional and literal dimensions of words (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 33). Furthermore, implicatures are linguistically generated meanings and are distinct from implicit meanings and shape the utterances as not merely 'say' something but also 'do' something (Christie, 2000, pp. 99-149).

Compensation of Flouting through Implicature: The non-observance of Gricean maxims is compensated through implicature. Implicature interprets the non-existent, extra, irrelevant, obscure segment of an utterance (Yule, 1996, pp. 35-36). The communicators often say more or less than what is required. In this case, the listener has to rely more on implicature to interpret the unsaid/extra part of an utterance. The listener draws certain inferences from an utterance to derive additional meaning to understand what a speaker implies, suggests, or means apart from actual words. The listener/receiver draws inferences when

s/he feels that there is a difference between what has been uttered and what should have been actually uttered in a conversation, and these inferences are mere "informed guesses" (Griffiths, 2006, pp. 7-9). Furthermore, the words which show a semantic scale, like 'OK', 'good', 'excellent', also provide solid foundations for pragmatic inferences and explicatures which depend on one's pre-existing knowledge about the circumstances or parameters of using the 'scale' words (Griffiths, 2006, pp. 7-9). Implicature is more a pragmatic meaning than a semantic one in decoding a message. To develop a precise implicature, the listener needs to be familiar with contextual, conventional, and literal facets of words and phrases in an utterance (Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 33). In pragmatics, implicature is often contrasted with entailment.

Entailment: Entailment is considered a purely logical concept (Yule, 1996, pp. 33-34). In contrast to explicature and implicature, which are purely pragmatic inferences and are cancellable, entailment is 'a guarantee' as it is non-cancellable (Griffiths, 2006, pp. 19-20). Entailment establishes the relationship between two statements where the truth of one (A) requires the truth of the other (B). Implicature and entailment are closely associated in pragmatics. In implicature, the truth of one statement (A) suggests the truth of (B). An entailment is considered to be necessarily true if its accompanying proposition is true. Entailment depends on the language, whereas implicature results from the context (Griffiths, 2006). Entailment is also different from presupposition. Entailment does not face negation, whereas presuppositions can be negated. Entailment is closely associated with the sense which a word carries with it, and all possible senses of a word are a part of the entailment while the word is being used in a sentence (Griffiths, 2006, p. 21). An understanding of implicature, explicature, presupposition and entailment may assist in both oral and written communication.

Seven Cs of Business Correspondence: The literature on business communication contains seven fundamental principles of business correspondence or 7Cs, namely completeness, conciseness, consideration, courtesy, clarity, correctness and concreteness (Hartley & Bruckmann, 2002; Murphy, Hildebrandt, & Thomas, 2007; Quible, 1991; Roebuck, Sightler, & Brush, 1995).

'Completeness' requires that all necessary information be included in a business message to convene the receiver to understand it and act accordingly. 'Conciseness' stresses eliminating unnecessary and irrelevant information and wordiness and verbosity in a message. 'Consideration' recommends an audience-centred approach and realistic, thoughtful, positive language. 'Courtesy' requires the use of respectful expressions. 'Consideration' and 'courtesy' focus on the receiver's perspectives, feelings, respect, and expectations. 'Concreteness' is brought into a business message using vivid, specific, explicit, simple, comprehensible expressions. 'Correctness' requires grammatical appropriacy, facts and figures, and effective writing mechanics. 'Clarity' is produced through concrete and familiar words, effective sentence and paragraph structure, easy reading devices, along with explaining examples and illustrations to convene the receiver in understanding a business message.

The Seven Cs are important in all kinds of verbal and nonverbal communication. They are equally fruitful for effective speaking and writing. The knowledge and use of these principles facilitate formulating a business message with a clear identification of purpose for a targeted and general audience. These principles also convene the audience in understanding the business message in a communication context. These principles are helpful for business professionals in understanding the diverse nature of the business correspondence. Cleland (2003) narrates the very nature of business correspondence:

Most business professionals understand that the ability to communicate clearly and concisely is not an optional business skill—it's a critical one...At its best, it's conversational without being chatty, accessible without being too familiar, clear without being overly simplistic, and professional without being stuffy. (p. ix)

Cleland's afore narrated reservations are aptly overcome through mastery of seven Cs, making a message clear and concise, formal and comprehensible, and proficient and sophisticated from an organizational perspective.

Interface between Pragmatics and Business Communication: The importance of pragmatics awareness for business professionals has been highlighted by various researchers. Rose (2005) perceives pragmatics as effective in specific educational contexts and communication use. Kasper (2001), Lin (2007), Krisnawati (2011), and Moody (2014) also highlight the significant role of pragmatics in developing and refining communication competence. Dash (2004) and Riddiford and Joe (2010) insisted on awareness of pragmatics concepts by professionals while interacting with persons from different pragmatic backgrounds. Köksal (2000) emphasizes equipping business professionals with "socio-cultural, socio-pragmatic and pragma-linguistic information/competence to be able to identify the pragmatic content of the message" for the sake of saving professionals from pragmatic communication failure (p. 630).

Present-day organizations face globalization as a challenge and opportunity, whereby communication plays a significant role in corroborating internationalization (Murphy, Hildebrandt, & Thomas, 2007). Globalization also leads to interlingual/intercultural communication situations. Ponomarenko and Malyuga (2012) suggest incorporating stylistic and rhetoric aspects from linguistics into academically taught business communication. Devimeenakshi and Tyagi(2013) advocate the

incorporation of useful linguistic elements into business communication courses. Prabhakaran (2017) perceives linguistics significant in business communication with reference to its usage in the business world. Learning pragmatics can contribute to developing sociocultural/intercultural competence (Jendrych, 2011). The knowledge of pragmatics can facilitate understanding the intended meaning, underlying assumptions, purposes and goals, speech actions through various linguistic forms in a conversation (Yule, 1996).

The role of awareness of pragmatics has been widely endorsed by various researchers. Davies (2004), after investigating the role of teachers' pragmatic competence/awareness in developing learners' awareness of cross-cultural pragmatics, emphasizes the need to include pragmatics in teachers' education and training programmes. Similar to Davies' (2004) notions on the inclusion of pragmatics in education and training programmes, Brock and Nagasaka (2005) advocate the explicit instruction of pragmatics to enhance learners' communicative competence for appropriate expressions, accurate interpretations and proper understanding. Many researchers, e.g. Castillo (2009), Eslami-Rasekh (2005), Félix-Brasdefer (2008), Félix-Brasdefer and Cohen (2012), Gholamia and Aghaeib (2012), and Taguchi (2008 & 2011) have agreed with the massive role of pragmatics awareness in better communication.

The extant literature on both seven Cs and Gricean maxims ascertains the grounds for

this study, i.e. exploring the relevance between them. The literature review also reveals that no study has been conducted to theoretically explore and establish relevance between Grice's cooperative maxims and Seven Cs. The researchers have addressed the research gap in the present study by investigating the relevance between Gricean maxims (quantity, quality, relation, and manner) from pragmatics and Seven Cs (completeness, conciseness, consideration, courtesy, clarity, correctness and concreteness) from business communication. The present study is expected to contribute to the existing literature on theoretical underpinnings of both Seven Cs and Gricean cooperative maxims.

Research Methodology

The present study investigates whether Seven Cs (from business/communication) and Gricean maxims (from pragmatics) are relevant to each other, and if so, how that relevance is effective in business communication. For the present study, we have taken Grice's (1975) version of the 'Cooperative Principle' and their explained version by Yule (1996). At the same time, the version of Seven Cs propounded by Murphy, Hildebrandt and Thomas (2007) has been chosen. Theoretical comparative analysis has been used to explore similarities between Seven Cs and Gricean maxims and other relevant concepts from pragmatics by relating the basic features of Seven Cs and Gricean cooperative maxims. The comparison process adopted for this study is shown in figure 1 below:

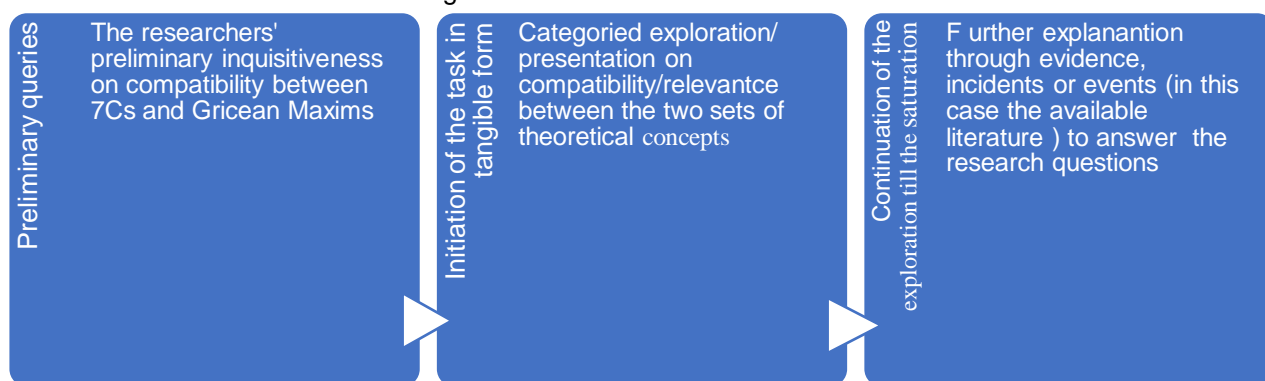


Figure 1: The Steps Followed to Explore the Relationship between 7Cs and Gricean Cooperative Maxims

The results (on the comparison, i.e. similarity/harmony) have been presented under the topical headings of Seven Cs. Firstly, the features and characteristics of each principle of Seven Cs have been discussed; secondly, these features and characteristics have been compared with those of Grice's maxims. The study has been delimited to investigate the harmony and compatibility of the two sets of notions on theoretical grounds.

Theoretical Framework: For the mode of comparative analysis used in this study, the researchers have taken inspiration from Pickvance (2001). Pickvance (2001) recommends a comparative analysis to explain similarities or differences and to "explore a theoretically postulated relationship" between two or more cases (2001, p. 15). Pickvance (2001) further asserts that two conditions should be fulfilled for comparative analysis: (1) "Data must be gathered on two or more cases", as in this research, the Seven Cs and Gricean maxims are taken, (2) "There must be an attempt to explain rather than only to describe" (p. 11), as in this study, theoretical compatibility/harmony between the two sets of theoretical concepts has been explored.

Comparative Analysis of Seven Cs vis-à-vis Gricean Maxims

The section below comprises an analytical discussion on the relevance and harmony between Seven Cs, i.e. completeness, conciseness, consideration, courtesy, clarity, correctness, and concreteness and Gricean maxims—quantity, quality, relevance and manner. This section also presents a comprehensive narration of each principle of Seven Cs and the relevant Gricean cooperative maxim(s), along-with their relationship in the form of resemblance, reflection, and complementation.

Completeness: The principle of completeness requires including all necessary information in a message to convey a sender's intended version on the one hand and to convene a receiver in

understanding and acting accordingly on the other. One easy way to bring completeness in a business message is to provide answers to all the questions the receiver has either asked explicitly or may have in his/her mind for understanding and appropriately interpreting the message. 'Completeness' can be achieved through putting facts, illustrations, tables, and relevant examples in a message. Completeness in business messages is essential to bring desired results through conveying a message. Otherwise, the receiver fails to understand the message or perform as is desired. Thus, completeness contributes to making a business message effective and helps avoid the hazards caused by missing information.

The principle of completeness has a close resemblance with Gricean maxim of quantity. Maxim of quantity concerns the size of information. According to this maxim (quantity), a speaker should contribute as much as required for the specific purpose of a particular communicative event. The maxim of quantity binds the encoders to give enough information, neither more nor less than required. 'Quantity' enforces the comprehensiveness and appropriate bulk of contents in a message.

Though there is an intense focus on observing 'completeness' in business messages, pragmatics provides specific laborations for violating 'completeness' or 'quantity'. In certain situations, a business message is extended or shortened for some predefined reasons. For example, in business correspondence, the persuasive messages are written as per the AIDA plan, which comprises extra information, and indirect bad news messages contain 'buffer' as an extra text (Murphy, Hildebrandt, & Thomas, 2007). Though they are deemed necessary, the components of AIDA plan and indirect bad news messages flout Gricean maxims. In pragmatics, the non-observance of quantity is termed as flouting of quantity. AIDA and indirect bad news plans are justified in business communication since they are purposely used to achieve predesigned goals.

Pragmatics also allows such purposive use of language contents. The awareness of Gricean maxim of quantity, its flouting, and compensation of its flouting through implicature seem facilitative for communicators in both encoding and decoding processes.

Conciseness: Conciseness complements completeness and focuses on avoiding unnecessary repetition, redundancy, wordiness and verbosity in a business message by including only relevant information. Conciseness is essential for effective business correspondence with its major benefits of time-saving, cost-saving and avoidance of misinterpretation. A concise message appeals to its audience as it is brief and comprehensible. Conciseness can be achieved and retained if a sender conveys a message in the fewest possible words.

From the concepts of pragmatics, both completeness and conciseness resemble Gricean maxim of quantity. According to this maxim (quantity), the sender should contribute as much as is required for the specific purpose of a communication event. Cooperative maxim of quantity concerns the size of information, and in business communication, it seems to endorse that a business message should be complete and concise. In the light of this maxim, a business message should neither contain irrelevant and extra information nor be devoid of required contents for the interpretation. From the perspective of 'conciseness', 'persuasive request messages', and 'indirect bad news messages' are clear violations. Whereas, from the perspective of pragmatics, business messages composed as per 'indirect bad news plan' (with components such as buffer, explanation, decision, friendly close) and 'persuasive request plan' (with components known as AIDA—attention, interest, desire, action) are void of 'conciseness' and 'quantity'. Pragmatics sees these violations as 'on-purpose' flouts. Pragmatics seeks and afterwards extends justification for such flouts of cooperative principle/maxims. Since the

organizational plan (i.e. composition) for 'indirect bad news plan' and 'persuasive request plan' are deliberately structured to achieve predefined objectives, these 'plans' are justified in business communication.

Consideration: The principle of consideration binds a sender to consider the receiver and adopt a 'you-centred attitude' while composing and conveying a message. The other requirements of this principle are avoiding accusation or blame, abstaining from an emphasis on negative and unpleasant, being realistically and positively tactful and thoughtful, showing the audience benefits and interests. Consideration endorses empathy, i.e. to feel receivers via anticipating their troubles and tribulations, requirements, desires, sentiments and reactions while one is a sender. The principle of consideration emphasizes realizing various dimensions of 'human nature' in business correspondence.

'Consideration' resembles Grice's original notion of cooperative principle, which he presented in 1975 with the main argument that the speaker (sender) should consider the listener (receiver) and that the speaker should be cooperative with the listener in conversations. Grice (1975) proposed the cooperative principle while keeping in focus the receiver of a conversation. The same is the emphasis of 'consideration' in business communication. Many other linguists also focus on considering the audience and occasion in communication which is the prime motive for the Gricean cooperative principle. Crystal (1997) emphasizes considering the users' viewpoint, users' choices, constraints faced by users, use of language in social interactions, effects of using language, and nature of a communication event. Lin(2007) stresses upon socio-cultural perspective for speech appropriateness. Vasquez and Sharpless (2009) also endorse socially appropriate communication.

Courtesy: The principle of courtesy relates to 1) realizing the receiver's feelings, 2) adopting a

sincere 'you attitude', 3) being tactful and thoughtful in composing a message, 4) using respectful and nondiscriminatory expressions. Within Seven Cs, courtesy is closely associated with consideration. Courtesy is an important instrument of building and retaining goodwill and strengthening relationships in organizational and personal perspectives. A courteous message strengthens the bond between a sender and the receiver, either the communication is at an individual or organizational level. Courteous and respectful expressions are often required in business messages since 'courtesy' shows a sender's sincere attitude towards the receiver.

'Courtesy' like 'consideration' also coincides with the fundamental spirit behind Grice's cooperative principle, which endorses cooperation by a speaker. According to Grice's (1975) 'cooperative principle', the responsibility of being cooperative is laid on the speaker/sender. Likewise, the principle of 'courtesy' suggests a sender be courteous in a business message through showing respect and considering the comfort and convenience of the receiver. Besides the main 'cooperative principle', some other concepts from pragmatics, e.g. face, face-saving acts, face-threatening acts and politeness, are also relevant with 'consideration' and 'courtesy'. These pragmatics concepts can contribute a value addition to learning and practicing Seven Cs. These concepts of pragmatics can play a complementary role in making interpersonal communication successful since they endorse avoidance from intentional abruptness or bluntness, which may cause discourtesy.

Courtesy requires awareness of the receiver's perspectives, feelings, and sincerity and appreciative attitude for him/her. Being courteous entails tactful and thoughtful of any possible effect on the receiver's perceived respect and honour. Offensive, derogatory, irritating, sender-focused expressions can make a business message discourteous, and business communicators need to be cautious of such hazards. The concepts of pragmatics also focus

on considering the receiver's respect (face), feelings, emotions, status, and prestige (which provide a base for a person's script and schema) in a communication event. Thus 'cooperative principle' and other concepts mentioned above from pragmatics are highly relevant to the Seven Cs of business communication.

Clarity: 'Clarity' pertains to making a message easily understandable, with all intended ideas and thoughts appropriately conveyed through precise and concrete expressions. A message should comprise familiar words, effective writing mechanics of sentence and paragraph structure, easy reading devices, along with the desired amount of examples, details and illustrations/visual aids. Gallo (2006) asserts the importance of simplicity and clarity for effective communicative skills of business administrators and business leaders: "Leaders on the front lines of any industry must strive for simplicity and clarity if they hope to inspire and motivate employees, customers or shareholders" (p. 106). 'Clarity' requires that a sender's message should be understandable and comprehensible for a receiver as the sender has intended. A message is successfully communicated when a sender conveys the addressee to recognize the intended meaning, and the addressee recognizes what the sender intends to convey (Griffiths, 2006). 'Clarity' is produced through putting completeness, conciseness, concreteness and correctness in a business message.

Similar to the Seven Cs of business communication, Gricean cooperative maxims also mitigate obscurity and misinterpretation. Kecskes(2010) maintains that Gricean maxims provide comprehensive rules for a sender's encoding of an utterance, and thus these maxims warrant cooperation between communicators (p. 56). 'Clarity' resembles Gricean maxim of manner, which mainly focuses upon the explicitness and understandability of a message. Like 'clarity', the maxim of manner focuses on avoiding obscurity, vagueness,

ambiguity and uncertainty. In case, the maxim of manner is violated, misunderstanding can occur, or even communication can entirely fail. Grice's main cooperative principle recommends a speaker to facilitate the audience in understanding 'what is said'. Maxim of manner makes a conversation smooth, successful and effective through explicitness of the message conveyed. Besides its resemblance with the maxim of manner, 'clarity' is also closely associated with some other contents from pragmatics, e.g. speaker's intentions, listener's interpretation, entailment, implicature, pre-existing knowledge structures, frame and schemata. The resemblance between 'clarity' and concepts from pragmatics implies that awareness of pragmatics concepts can facilitate both the learners and practitioners of business communication.

Correctness: 'Correctness' requires that a business message be correct in every possible aspect to make it effective. Correctness endorses grammatical soundness, verification and double-check of statistics, the inclusion of updated information, appropriate level of formality/semi-formality/informality, 'right level' of language including effectual writing mechanics and procedures and diction, the accuracy of presented facts and figures, and message formulation (from the perspective of pragmatics) according to power dimensions of sender and receiver. Correctness adds credibility to the source/sender as well as to the message itself. Correctness is equally vital in day-to-day organizational communication as well as communication for strategic planning and decision making. Any incorrect message, with any inappropriateness, can spoil the goodwill and image of an individual sender and his/her organization.

'Correctness' is much relevant with Gricean maxim of quality which endorses authentic and truthful information with 'adequate evidence' in an utterance. Grice (1975) recommends a sender to put truthful contents in a message and to avoid the contents about

which the sender is either sure that they are false or the sender is doubtful or lacks ample evidence regarding their truthfulness. Thus, the maxim of quality is much similar to the 'correctness' of Seven Cs as both of these principles endorse truthful and correct contents in a message. Besides 'quality', 'correctness' also partially resembles 'quantity', which endorses putting the required information and 'relevance' which endorses only putting the relevant information and not missing the relevant information.

Concreteness: The principle of concreteness endorses a message be definite, vivid, specific, simple, convincing, understandable and 'actable', and not obscure, vague and generalized. Use of active voice ('The teacher administered the quiz.' in place of its passive voice version 'The quiz was administered by the teacher'), image building diction (e.g. 'a classroom with 20 feet width and 40 feet length with a seating capacity for fifty students' and not 'a big classroom'), sensory appealing language (e.g. lush green velvety grass), and avoidance from noun clusters, unfamiliar jargons (e.g. terms like 'glass ceiling'), literary and figurative language (e.g. analogies through similes and metaphors) are important tips for bringing concreteness into business correspondence.

Concreteness has a close resemblance with Gricean maxim of 'manner' since both of them contribute towards the explicitness of a message. According to the maxim of manner, a message should be understandable for the audience. Maxim of manner facilitates in making a conversation smooth, successful and effective through incorporating explicitness in it. In case, the maxim of manner is violated, misunderstanding or communication failure can occur. 'Concreteness' is also associated with the maxim of quantity, which recommends putting the information contents as much as necessary to convene the receiver in understanding the message. The maxim of quality can also contribute to making a message concrete by putting correct and truthful contents in a

message. The maxim of relevance is also helpful in making a business message concrete as the maxim urges to put relevant information only. The maxim of manner, like the other maxims, focuses on avoiding obscurity, vagueness, ambiguity and uncertainty in messages. Gricean maxims contribute significantly towards making a message concrete.

Findings

By comparing the features and characteristics of both Seven Cs and Gricean maxims, it is revealed that the Seven Cs of business correspondence are closely associated with Gricean cooperative maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner.

1. From the Seven Cs, 'Completeness' and 'conciseness' address the size of information. They resemble the maxim

of quantity, which addresses the size of information too.

2. 'Correctness' relates to maxim of quality since they both are concerned with truthfulness and precision of the contents in a message.
3. 'Relevance' is associated with 'completeness', 'conciseness', 'clarity' and 'correctness'.
4. 'Manner', with its focus on the explicitness of a message, is closely related to 'completeness', 'clarity' and 'concreteness'.
5. Pragmatics concepts of 'face' and its types, face-saving/threatening acts, implicature, and schema are associated with 'courtesy' and 'consideration', and thus these pragmatics concepts can also help in general and business communication.

The following figure depicts the relationship between each of the Gricean maxims with relevant principles of Seven Cs.

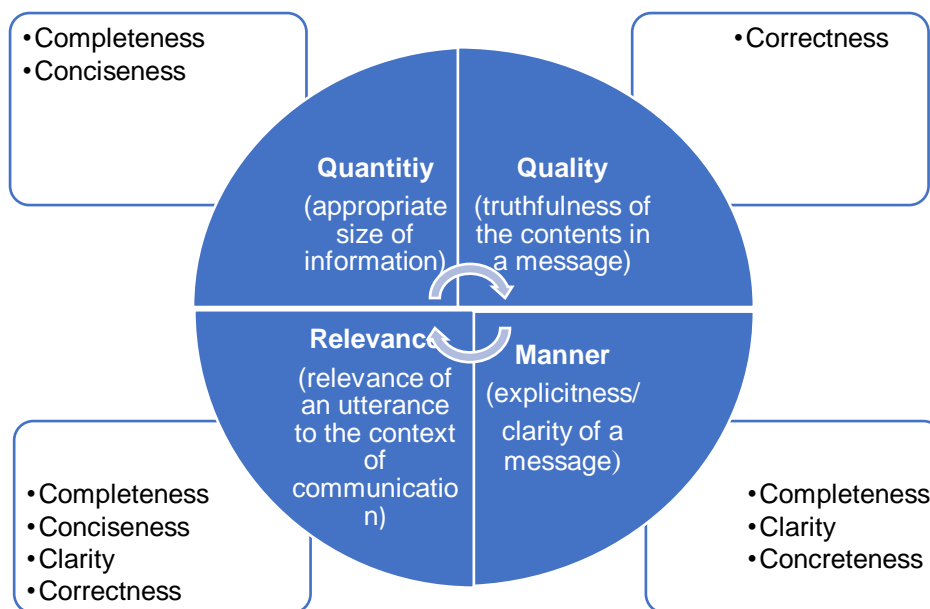


Figure 2: Interrelationship between each of the Gricean maxims with relevant Seven Cs (keeping Gricean maxims at the central position), adapted from Javed and Umar (2019)

The cooperative maxims facilitate in producing effective discourse since these maxims establish strong cooperation between a

sender and the addressee. Adherence to Gricean maxims seems facilitative for communicators in general and business

professionals in particular to achieve the targeted communication goals.

Conclusion

In the light of findings, it is concluded that Gricean cooperative maxims (quantity, quality, relevance and manner) are compatible with Seven Cs. These maxims can play an influential role in making business communication effective and successful. Seven Cs guide various steps of planning, composing and revising and follow-up, analyses of audience and occasion and purpose; they can be enriched through Gricean cooperative maxims of quality, quantity, relevance and manner. Awareness and application of the relevant pragmatics concepts can supplement the application of Seven Cs. The theoretical underpinnings of this study suggest that communicators (in case of business communication—business professionals) are expected to benefit from Gricean maxims: the sender at the time of encoding a message through incorporating the cooperative maxims to facilitate the receiver; and the receiver in decoding of a message, either the maxims are aptly observed, or the receiver interprets the message through implicature if the maxims are flouted. Based on its findings, the present study propounds that Seven Cs can be made more effective through including Gricean cooperative maxims and other relevant pragmatics concepts in both theory and practice of business communication.

Recommendations for Further Research:

Future researchers may explore the effectiveness of awareness of concepts of pragmatics in organizational issues, such as resolving conflicts, holding negotiations and other communication situations in business organizations. Further studies can explore the impact of teaching Gricean cooperative maxims and Seven Cs on students' discourse completion tasks and infield business professionals' communication in organizational contexts.

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