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# The Performativity and Dynamics of H.P. Grice's "Logic and Conversation": An Interdisciplinary Re- conceptualization

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The Performativity and Dynamics of H.P. Grice’s “Logic and Conversation”: An  
Interdisciplinary Re-conceptualization

by

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## Abstract

The following paper covers an interdisciplinary examination and re-conceptualization of philosopher H.P. Grice's "*Logic and Conversation*." By way of interdisciplinary analysis and theory building, this paper breaks down Grice's philosophical understandings of conversational pragmatics as well as significant components of *speech act theory*, as put forth by philosopher J. L. Austin and revisited by J. R. Searle, and *interactive frame theory* as understood in sociocultural linguistic anthropology by Deborah Tannen and Cynthia Wallat. It interrogates shortcomings of Grice's understanding of conversation and draws from speech act and frame theory to fill these shortcomings and expand on Grice's original work. The result is a new, interdisciplinary method of conversational analysis which accounts for the *performativity* of conversational contributions and the *dynamics* of the contextual knowledge which shapes the *dexterity* of participants in an interaction. This new method of understanding may be applied to discourse analysis settings in a variety of areas of study. Additionally, it may be used to examine how specific facets of language function in conversational context (i.e. gender or race) and may be applied to arenas of interaction outside of verbal conversation.

## Introduction

Theories of language and discourse have long been explored within various fields of study, including philosophy, sociology, anthropology, English studies and linguistics. As social beings, conversation and interpersonal interaction lie at the heart of the human experience. Understanding the nature of human interaction through structures of language and other forms of non-verbal communication is essential to understanding successful (and failed) collaboration and

to creating newer and more effective conversational strategies. Indeed, understanding interaction plays a central role in the pursuit to better understand the relationship between the external, social world and the human mind.

As such, philosophers have interrogated the functions, values, and processes through which the wheels of language and conversation turn. Central to the field of philosophy, H.P. Grice's extremely influential "Logic and Conversation" proposes a system for analyzing the implicature (definitive qualities) and "success" values of conversations through adherence to a number of conversational maxims which, together, form a theoretical ideal of conversational cooperation between participants as they work in tandem toward an agreed-upon trajectory.<sup>1</sup> Grice further creates a groundwork method for understanding conversational contributions through the meanings produced and derived from the contents of what is said, as well as the surrounding context. This paper centers Grice's work as a foundation from which to build upon. Using Grice's understanding of pragmatics and conversation, I expand on his work by incorporating components of two other theoretical frameworks--namely speech act and interactive frame theories.

In order to rethink Gricean thought I draw upon an understanding of language and conversation that predates Grice's work. Also rooted within the field of philosophy of language, speech act theory, conceptualized originally by J. L. Austin and developed further by John R. Searle promotes an understanding of language in action by analyzing the performative values invoked through the production and reception of utterances. Critics have argued that placing complete emphasis on communicative performativity disregards the meaning derived from language as a formal system of information. While Grice's work accounts for this oversight, its

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<sup>1</sup> H.P. Grice, "Logic and Conversation," *Studies in the Way of Words*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 22-40.

concept of implicature verges on disregard for performativity altogether, revolving around the concept that the content of a conversational contribution contains its meaning rather than the action of producing the contribution itself. To compensate for this oversight I expand on Grice's original work to incorporate the performative properties of language and conversation which are central to speech act theory.

In addition to expanding on Grice's work from within field of philosophy, this thesis extends across disciplines in an effort to deepen understandings of language and conversation from a variety of angles. Within the fields of linguistic sociology and anthropology, there also exist a number of theories pertaining to discourse and interpersonal interaction which I draw upon to add one more layer of understanding this Gricean reconceptualization. While these theories have emerged independently of and stand separate from those put forth in philosophy, they are complimentary. Although the work of Deborah Tannen and Cynthia Wallat--hailing from backgrounds in linguistics and sociology--does not directly address philosophy as a school of thought, their work in discourse analysis sports a theory of *frames* and *schemas* that very easily fits into the realm of philosophy of language. These terms are not new to the fields of linguistics, cognitive psychology, and artificial intelligence, though they were initially conceptualized as structures of expectation that humans process as they internalize their external world.<sup>2</sup> However, as use of these concepts has expanded into the worlds of anthropology, sociology, and linguistic anthropology (circa the late 20th century) they have been adopted as tools for understanding the interactive components to discourse and interpersonal navigations--effectively the "footing" which accounts for human dexterity to adapt, interpret, and move within

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<sup>2</sup> Deborah Tannen and Cynthia Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," *Social Psychology Quarterly* 50, no. 2 (1987): 206-207.

a conversational experience moment to moment.<sup>3,4</sup> Tannen and Wallat have broadened the use and understanding of frames to take on a linguistic, sociological, and anthropological component. I draw from interactive frame theory to incorporate aspects of conversational dynamics and dexterity into my expansion of Grice's foundational thought.

Recognizing the great value in interdisciplinary engagement of theories of language, the following work aims to analyze, expand, and interweave the central work of H.P. Grice's "Logic and Conversation" with concepts borrowed from both speech act and interactive frame theories and construct a hybridized method of conversational analysis by means of interdisciplinary analysis and the development of new analytic and theoretical epistemologies. After examining Grice's work as a foundation, I analyze components of speech act theory, which I then use to rethink aspects of Grice's understandings and build a new framework of Gricean thought that incorporates performativity. I then repeat this process of analysis and incorporation, turning my attention to interactive frame theory, from which I borrow concepts of dynamics and conversational dexterity to revise and build upon Gricean thought. The end result aims to expand Gricean concepts of language and conversation to incorporate the performative value of language as introduced in speech act theory and the dynamics of human interaction as conceptualized within interactive frame theory. This reconceptualized theoretical framework may be used in the future as a tool of conversational analysis and metathought across multiple fields of study.

### A Critical Review of H.P. Grice's "Logic and Conversation"

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<sup>3</sup> Erving Goffman, *Forms of Talk*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).

<sup>4</sup> John Gumperz, *Discourse Strategies*, (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1982).

Grice lays out a formula of a logically utopian conversation which he categorizes under a single dominant feature of cooperation.<sup>5</sup> His correspondingly coined *Cooperative Principle* (CP) advises participants in a conversation to keep their contributions appropriate to the mutually agreed upon trajectory and goals which the conversation aims to fulfill at the moment in which the contribution is made.<sup>6</sup> Under the umbrella of the CP, Grice explicates four maxims and a number of sub-maxims, which generally contribute to the participants' accordance to the CP.<sup>7</sup> The first of these maxims, *Quantity*, regards the amount of information provided by the conversant as evaluated through two submaxims--that one should make their contribution as informative and no more informative than is necessitated by the trajectory of the conversation.<sup>8</sup> The second, *Quality*, necessitates that one's contribution should be "true," in that one mustn't contribute information they know to be false or lack sufficient evidence grounded in truth.<sup>9</sup> The following maxim, *Relation*, contains only the directive to make one's contribution relevant to the conversation.<sup>10</sup> The final maxim, *Manner*, constitutes an awareness not to the content of the contribution itself but rather how the contribution is presented.<sup>11</sup> To "*be perspicuous*" is Grice's advice, which he breaks down into four submaxims: to avoid obscurity and ambiguity, and to be concise and orderly.<sup>12</sup>

There are instances in which these four maxims may also exist outside of the verbalized component of a conversation, in the sphere of unspoken communication.<sup>13</sup> For instance, if one

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<sup>5</sup> H.P. Grice, "Logic and Conversation," *Studies in the Way of Words*, 307.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Grice, "Logic and Conversation," *Studies in the Way of Words*, 308.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

were to assist another individual in fixing their car, it would be expected that one would assist no less or more than necessary, assist only in areas in which they are well-versed, and attend to only parts that are relevant to the particular state of the vehicle while verbally clarifying what one is doing to the individual's property.<sup>14</sup> The application of these maxims is, as such, versatile, examining conversation as contextual and behavioral rather than simply through script.

In defining these maxims that together compose the CP, Grice asks what basis might account for the maxims and the CP we all tend to follow.<sup>15</sup> While the most simple answer is that we follow these maxims out of habit derived from social conditioning imposed upon us as early as in infancy, Grice seeks an answer that accounts not only for the natural, but for the *reasonable* drive behind our actions.<sup>16</sup> Perhaps, he speculates, our usage of conversational conventions may be attributed to the rationale that these practices are logically reasonable and therefore *should* be followed.<sup>17</sup> This rationale constitutes what Grice views as a universally accepted quasi-contractual agreement, so that in every--or at least most conversations--the conversant operates under the presumption that all conversants share this rationale and will therefore work cooperatively.<sup>18</sup> This idea, however, Grice deems too selective to account for all variety of interaction, so he broadens the scope of his work to show that observance of the CP and associated maxims is deemed rational on the basis that anyone who cares about the goals of a conversation will have an interest in conversational profitability as fulfilled in accordance with the maxims and the CP.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Grice, "Logic and Conversation," *Studies in the Way of Words*, 309.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*



Indeed, failing to abide to a maxim(s) threatens to jeopardize the profitability of a conversation. Grice outlines four actions that may result in the failure of a maxim, and in most cases, the corresponding failure to abide by the CP: 1) the inconspicuous *violation* of a maxim, 2) the explicitly indicated *opting out*, 3) the *clash* resulting from an inability to fulfill one maxim without violating another, and 4) the *flouting* of a maxim, or the blatant act of failure to fulfill it.<sup>20</sup> In certain instances, flouting a maxim may not diminish the cooperative value of the conversation, but may serve to exploit the maxim and shift what is conversationally implied.<sup>21</sup> This phenomenon may be clarified by the following example of a verbal distraction as a means of changing the subject:

Two individuals are having a conversation about politics which becomes uncomfortable to one of the people involved. The uncomfortable individual asks, “How has the weather been in your neck of the woods lately?” This question flouts the maxim of relation as it has absolutely no relevance to the subject which they have been talking about. By blatantly flouting the maxim, however, the individual exploits an awareness of irrelevance of their contribution to indicate their discomfort to the other conversant and steer the conversation in a new and mutually enjoyable direction. While in isolation this question may have a straightforward meaning, when used in the act of flouting a maxim it gains a more situationally specific conversational implication. The utterance no longer retains its verbatim meaning. Rather there is a shift in the meaning of the question, implying that the individual is uncomfortable and intends to push the conversation onto a different topic.

Grice distinguishes conversational implicature from conventional implicature by virtue of constructed versus natural presumption. While the word “implicature” indicates the presence of

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<sup>20</sup> Grice, “Logic and Conversation,” *Studies in the Way of Words*, 310.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

intuition and a sort of “gut response” so to speak, *conventional implicature* encompasses literal meaning and that which we may intuitively grasp. *Conversational implicature* must be traceable, able to be deconstructed in its derived meaning.<sup>22</sup> Conversational implicature may be *particularized* to a specific conversational context, or it may be *generalized*, at which point it may exist under the guise of conventional implicature, yet under examination proves to be explainable even in common or normalized thought processes.<sup>23</sup> This generalized conversational implicature is exemplified in the conversational and contextual social norms under which individuals operate. While normalized meanings appear natural to the naked eye, they are in fact derived through construction that has become unanimous through its consistency overtime.

Grice further distinguishes conversational and conventional implicature in his conclusion that only conversational implicature is “cancellable” under the presumption that conversational implicature stems from abiding with the CP, as well as accepting an ability to opt out of the CP by failing to fulfill a maxim.<sup>24</sup>

Grice posits that conversational implicature is an essential component to deriving the meaning of a contribution, for changing or excluding a conversational implicature shifts the contribution in meaning as well, unless a satisfactory substitution is implicated.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, in order to speak approximately and still abide with the CP, there must be a conversational implicatum (definition, so to speak) that is excluded in the expression’s conventional meaning.<sup>26</sup> An implicatum’s truth value is not dependent on the literal truth value of an utterance, but rather by *how* it is conveyed, and since it is necessary to account for what is expected to be

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Grice, “Logic and Conversation,” *Studies in the Way of Words*, 314.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Grice, “Logic and Conversation,” *Studies in the Way of Words*, 315.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

presupposed in a conversation in order isolate and focus in on the exact meaning of a contribution, conversational implicature is an essential component to successfully cooperative conversation.<sup>27</sup>

### Gricean Thought and Speech Act Theory

Grice's notion of successful conversation as measurable by the participants' collective ability to cooperate and achieve a conversational "goal" maps neatly onto theories of speech acts proposed originally by philosopher J. P. Austin and revisited by John R. Searle. Speech act theory defines language and speech as more than just a mechanism for information and conventional meaning. A speech act, much like a conversation, involves both the speaker and the receiver(s) of a language contribution. Austin's concept of speech as *performative*--meaning that it carries out a specific intended action through the utterance based on the goal of the utterer-- supports the notion that conversational contributions are performative towards accomplishing a shared conversational goal.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, Austin speculates that the success of a speech act depends on the consumer of that act perceiving the same goal intended by the producer of the utterance. This is consistent with Grice's notion that there must be a communally agreed upon goal of conversation, and failure to cooperate to achieve that goal may ensue failure in the conversation.<sup>29</sup>

Austin specifies three types of speech acts that may add further understanding to Grice's categorizations of conventional and conversational implicature. While the conventional definition of a speech act has come to encompass only the last of these three components, all

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, (Oxford: the Clarendon Press, 1962), 4-6.

<sup>29</sup> Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, 39 and 102.

three may be applied in understanding Gricean implicatures.<sup>30</sup> The *locutionary act*, the physical act of producing the phonetic components comprising an utterance, may be equated simply to the act of engaging in a conversation.<sup>31</sup> *Perlocutionary acts*, defined as the acts carried out *through* saying something--the consequences intended or otherwise--Austin notes as specifically *not* intuitively part of the literal meaning of the words uttered--a definition that mirrors Grice's definition of conversational implicature.<sup>32, 33</sup> *Illocutionary acts* denote the conventionally recognized use of certain types of utterances.<sup>34</sup> While the nature of the illocutionary act is to derive conventional understandings, much as Grice defines conventional implicature, there is a distinction in the nuance of operational application of these two analytic terms. While Grice identifies conventional implicature as having to do with the literal and natural meanings associated with one's words, the illocutionary act plays into yet another facet of speech that may be further applicable to Grice's analysis of conversation--the conventional presuppositions we hold around not simply the words themselves, but rather particular types of utterances and their natural functions.<sup>35</sup>

For example, if two individuals were engaged in conversation, and one asked: "do you like my new shirt?" Gricean logic would understand the conventional meaning of the utterance to be about the article of clothing the utterer was wearing at the specific time of the utterance, and the conversational implicature might be the expectation of a compliment, or a sentiment of value for the other's opinion. Austin's operational illocutionary act analysis would focus on the

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<sup>30</sup> Steven C. Levinson, "Speech Act Theory: the State of the Art 1," *Language Teaching*, 13 no. 1-2, (University of Cambridge, 1980), 5-6.

<sup>31</sup> Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, 5.

<sup>32</sup> Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, 101-102.

<sup>33</sup> John R. Searle, Ferenc Kiefer, Manfred Bierwisch, *Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics*, Vol. 10, (Dordrecht, Holland, Boston, U.S.A., London, England: D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1980), 38-39.

<sup>34</sup> Austin, *How to Do Things With Words*, 149.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

performativity of the *type* of utterance, in this case an inquisition. He would posit, then, that the conventional understanding of an inquisition is a merit for a direct reply which gives an opinion or otherwise responds to the sentiments put forth by the utterer of the inquisition.<sup>36</sup> This distinction is perhaps more effective in analyzing a conversation, as it directly invests not only in the meanings a consumer of the utterance may derive from the speech act (as is the focal point of Grice's implicatures), but the implicit, yet universal understanding of how different types of utterances are put forth and responded to, and how intent informs and drives conversation both on the end of the producer and receiver.

The flaw in Grice's work is limiting his notion of conventional meaning to the content of the sentence and the meaning derived from the words which comprise it. Speech act theory offers greater effectiveness in analyzing the cooperation and interaction between conversants as it examines conventionalities in universally applicable presumptions surrounding types of utterances, rather than the contents of an utterance in contextual isolation. As such, this theory is more applicable to understanding both the intent of the speaker beyond the specific verbatim context of the conversation. On the other hand, to only focus on the type of utterance and the universally-agreed-upon intent which arises from that type of utterance fails to recognize the intricacies and meanings of utterances derived through the implicature of the particular utterance's word content. As every conversation is unique (it is unheard of to organically recreate a conversation verbatim, not to mention with the same unspoken components), this failure to grasp at particularity and situational specificity risks a major faux pas in scholarly conversation around conversation. It is necessary, then, to consider both the implicature of a

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<sup>36</sup> Levinson, "Speech Act Theory: the State of the Art 1," *Language Teaching*, 13 no.1-2, 5-6.

conversational contribution and the more generalized implications of the type of utterance being performed.

If we then identify the illocutionary act of an utterance to be the “macro” implicature derived from the type of utterance uttered and Grice’s implicatures as the “micro” values of meaning--both conventional and conversational--an entirely more holistic understanding of conversational contribution and the speech act of that contribution overlaying one mechanism of analysis over the other. In the previously stated example of a conversational contribution one might break down an analysis into addressing the following questions:

1. What is the type of utterance being uttered, and what natural presuppositions does this type of utterance invoke?
2. What is the specific natural meaning of the utterance and particular words in the utterance?
3. What other conversational meanings are present as a product of the other moves made by the utterer and corresponding assumptions and presumptions of the hearer in the specific conversational context (including but not limited to that generated by tone, expression, body language, manner, etc...)?

Such an analysis accounts for both the natural and conversationally generated implicatures Grice uses to analyze a specific conversational contribution, while also explicitly taking into account broader language conventions surrounding categorized types of utterances, understood universally.

## Gricean Thought and Interactive Frame Theory

In continuing to rethink Grice's theoretical frameworks of language and conversation, I now turn my attention away from speech act theory and the field of philosophy itself. Reaching past the borders of a single field of study creates space to bridge perspectives and complexify understandings beyond the scope offered by those engaging within a single, isolated field. Outside of philosophical understandings of language and conversation, scholars from a number of fields have come to understand discourse through frameworks of understanding and interaction. Such understandings of frames may be categorized twice fold: interactive frames of interpretation, as used primarily by sociologists and anthropologists, encompass all that informs the interpretation of a given interaction.<sup>37</sup> These, which Tannen and Wallat classify as *frames* outline the protocols, procedures, and norms that surround any specific discourse or discourse community. Frames, in this sense, lay the contextual backdrop to analyzing all interactions. Participants in an interaction, and by extension a conversation, engage with the material which surrounds that interaction in order to interpret interpersonal interplay, reception, intention and direction, and act accordingly. This interpretation and engagement emerges out of the behavioral and perceived context constituted by verbal and nonverbal cues and is therefore understood as *dynamic*.<sup>38</sup>

The second category of frames might be understood as structures of knowledge, used primarily in work with artificial intelligence, cognitive psychology, and linguistic semantics.<sup>39</sup>

This category of frames is classified by Tannen and Wallat as *knowledge schemas*. Schemas

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<sup>37</sup> Tannen and Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," 206.

<sup>38</sup> Tannen and Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," 207.

<sup>39</sup> Tannen and Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," 206.

encompass the cognitive processes, behaviors, and expectations of the participants of a conversation. While knowledge schemas have previously been considered as static, rooted in one's pre-existing meanings and expectations built over time, this notion has evolved in more contemporary understandings of schemas which realize all structures of expectation and perception to be dynamic--constantly checked, challenged, and revised through interactions over time.<sup>40, 41, 42</sup> Effectively, schemas refer to malleable patterns of expectation of objects, conditions, and subjects and the assumptions they inform.<sup>43</sup>

Tannen and Wallat conduct a discourse analysis of a videotaped interaction between the mother of a child with cerebral palsy and a pediatrician. They observe and explain the conversation through the lens of interactive frames and knowledge schemas and form new conclusions about the engagement between frames and schemas as understood in sociolinguistic anthropology. Their findings illuminate a process of shifting frames as initiated by a mismatch in knowledge schemas.<sup>44</sup> Participants in an interaction identify frames through the (often subconscious) evaluation of cues, linguistic and paralinguistic, which inform how they participate.<sup>45</sup> These cues may include tone, facial expression, and word choice, going beyond the information provided in the words uttered or type of utterance alone. When participants in an interaction experience a misalignment of schemas, such as when the pediatrician engages from a knowledge of medical diagnosis while the mother engages from an expectation of parental

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<sup>40</sup> Tannen and Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," 207.

<sup>41</sup> F.C. Bartlett, *Remembering*, (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1932).

<sup>42</sup> Charles O. Frank, "Plying Frames Can be Dangerous: Some Reflections on Methodology in Cognitive Anthropology," *The Quarterly Newsletter of the Institute for Comparative Human Cognition*, no.1 (1977): 1-7.

<sup>43</sup> Tannen and Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," 215.

<sup>44</sup> Tannen and Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," 207.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid



concern and care, the mismatching of the participants' schemas may prompt a shifting of interactive frames. When the mother's and pediatrician's knowledge schemas deviate, the mother asks questions, prompting the pediatrician to switch frames and approach the conversation through the frame indicated by the mother's questioning.<sup>46</sup> Individuals are constantly drawing on their knowledge schemas to inform their comprehension of utterances, and when a gap in comprehension is identified, one participant or the other responds by shifting frames to bridge the gap.

It is these new understandings of the dynamics of interactive frames that concern my work now. Tannen herself alluded to the broader applicability of interactive framing as a lens to "understanding how communication works [...] in other contexts as well."<sup>47</sup> Just as Tannen and Wallat extended the applicability of frames into the worlds of sociology, anthropology, and linguistics, I see in their work theoretical underpinnings of linguistic understanding that begs to venture into new territory--that of the philosopher's mind.

The alignment of frames fits effortlessly into Gricean understandings of the logics of a "successful conversation." Gricean thought is, after all, devoted to the dynamics of conversation. Grice's philosophical study of language diverged from the study of pure semantics into pragmatics, just as sociolinguistic anthropologists' understanding of frames diverged from static structures of expectation to dynamic structures of engagement. In honoring this pattern of trajectory from monochrome to color, interweaving Grice's work with a new analytic thread of thought, frame theory, brings understandings of conversation into a multidimensional, interdisciplinary form.

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<sup>46</sup> Tannen and Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," 208, 211-215.

<sup>47</sup> Tannen and Wallat, "Interactive Frames and Knowledge Schemas in Interaction: Examples from a Medical Examination/Interview," 205.

That is to say, what might happen when the Gricean Cooperative Principle comes in contact with frame theory? If the CP symbolizes the ultimate success of a conversation, one might base this success on the degree to which the participants of a conversation are able to identify and react to each other's conversational necessities and/or desires. This ability to reach "cooperation" can be assessed by the interactive dexterity of the conversation's participants--the footing, the degree of alignment participants take upon themselves and others.<sup>48</sup>

Ideally, when people come into conversation with each other they engage in a primary alignment of frames--adapting and aligning themselves, collaborating to set a mutually agreed upon goal. This goal, perhaps unvoiced, is the principle of cooperation which governs the success of the conversation. The more familiar both conversants are with the particular frame they are engaging with and within, the more fluid they are in interpreting, interacting and communicating with each other. Interactive dexterity proves powerful for understanding the dynamics behind the cooperation principle much more fluidly than Grice's checklist approach of ascription to various maxims. Interactive dexterity within frames may be placed as a sort of underpinning to Gricean maxims, in fact. If approached as an in-between layer of complexity, the conversants footing within an interactive frame may account for how the conversants "check off the boxes" with their conversational contributions.

It is important to remember at this point the shift in understanding of knowledge schemas from static to dynamic. There is a difference between having an intellectual understanding of a frame versus an understanding made up of experientially informed expectations that grow and are *flexible*, adapting to fit the specifics of the current situation. While Gricean thought tends specifically to the pragmatics of conversation--as opposed to static semantics--it comes nowhere

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<sup>48</sup> Goffman, *Forms of Talk*.

near analyzing conversation as dynamically as frame theory. Grice's work revolves around principles and building blocks while frame theory accounts for the organics of conversation and its flow from one moment to another. When people come together they use not just their previous knowledge, but also their interpretations of the present moment to effectively work with each other. This is the intersection of dynamics and philosophy of conversation. It is one thing to outline cooperation as the central principle built upon a foundation of necessary materials, but another to account for its nuances and the complexities of crafting and maintaining it.

The previous example of a conversation between two individuals--in which one individual becomes uncomfortable and changes the subject by asking an unrelated question about the weather--demonstrates what in Gricean terms constitutes the failure to fulfill a conversation maxim. Through the flouting of the relevance maxim, the individual shifts the meaning of the question from its face-value meaning to a suggestion to change topics. Speech act theory expands on the performativity of the type of utterance itself. Frame theory is used, then, as a method of understanding the interactive dynamics of the conversant and their contribution. Using an unrelated question, flouting a maxim, demonstrates the intentional misalignment of frames by the utterer. The blatant deviation from the previous topic of conversation (the first interactive frame) illustrates intentionality, suggesting that the individual is flouting the relation maxim. Accounting for the individual's interactive dexterity, this move may be understood as the intentional misalignment of frames and the equally intentional indiscreet call for the other individual to respond by changing the topic of conversation. In responding to the question about the weather, the conversants effectively realign themselves within a new interactive frame. The success of the realignment of frames satisfies the Cooperative Principle and demonstrates the dynamic property of the principle as it changes moment to moment.

Frame theory may also be applied within the Gricean notion of implicature. Knowledge schemas exist within the scope of conversational implicature, as they consist of the expectations and understandings of the individual in a specific contextual moment as derived from their previous exposure to what they evaluate as comparable previous moments. Interactive frames and the knowledge schemas of those held within them are traceable through a chain of time. This, effectively, places them within the sphere of conversational implicature. This interweaving of philosophical and sociocultural linguistic theory expands the original scope of conversational implicature, for it extends meaning past specific traceable knowledge units--the conversational contributions in Gricean terms, or the utterance in speech act theory--as schemas encompass both knowledge and presumptions which are both traceable and *cumulative*. In this sense interactive frames have corresponding schemas which operate as a collection of understandings which, gathered over time, form present expectations. In turn, these expectations inform the individual's conversational dexterity through engagement with the current interactive frame. In viewing conversations through frames and knowledge schemas, a conversation becomes dynamic in its contextual setting and its participation.

Knowledge schemas may be understood as vessels which hold Gricean understandings of implicature as conversational contributions, illocutionary acts defined in speech act theory, and other contextual and conversational meanings evaluated and acted upon through previous experience. Schemas incorporate both the macro understandings that often drift into the subconscious through habituation and normalization, as well as the particularities of the unique situation. Frames and schemas provide an interdisciplinary conversational analysis and illuminate the inner workings behind the interactions between conversants. As Grice suggests, the degree of cohesion which individuals engage with each other depends on their fulfillment of

the maxims of cooperation. Additionally, cooperation may be understood dynamically through the flow of conversation, revolving around the individuals' knowledge schemas within the conversational context which inform their ability to engage successfully.

### Conclusions

At the intersection of H.P. Grice's philosophical "Logic and Conversation" and philosophical speech act theory lies first the convergence of performativity and implicature. Grice focuses on the implicature of the content of conversational contributions, discussing the meanings they convey. Illocutionary acts, as defined under speech act theory, brings focus to the broader normalized information conveyed through the *type* of utterance, adding another layer of analysis to the question of finding meaning in a conversational contribution. Furthermore, the speech acts--which parallel Grice's concept of conversational contributions--are understood to have *performative* value. Examining the meaning of implicature of conversational contributions through a lens of performativity highlights the information conveyed through the action of contributing the material content of the utterance as well as the format in which it is conveyed (i.e. an inquisition or an exclamation). The intricacies of meaning that may be extracted from a conversational contribution may be considered a sort of micro level analysis, while broader structures of utterance may be considered a macro level of analysis. Finally, one must account for the other contextual meanings present within the conversation and any other performative information produced by the utterer and potentially interpreted by the receiver, such as but not limited to tone, facial expression, and physical presentation.

While examining conversation through a lens of speech act theory illuminates the performative value of conversational contributions, interactive frame theory adds yet another layer of understanding to Grice's philosophical work with conversation. Interactive frames encompass the contextual foundation of a conversation--the protocols, procedures, and norms that surround a particular discourse or discourse community. Knowledge schemas (structures of knowledge and expectation) emerge in correspondence to specific interactive frames. Most recent iterations of sociocultural and anthropological frame theory invest in an understanding of all interactive frames and knowledge schemas as *dynamic* as they are privy to constant revision overtime. An understanding of dynamics applied to Gricean implicature and performativity value necessitates an attention to meanings as cumulative products of time and repetition. In recognizing the cumulative value of implicature it becomes apparent that in addition to holding performative value, implicature is malleable and particularized to the conversational context and the individual's unique lineage of personal experiences and knowledge of socially normalized expectations.

When applied to Gricean logics of conversation, the Cooperation Principle may be evaluated through the alignment of interactive frames between participants within a conversation. Rather than evaluating the success of a conversation through a basic fulfilment of specific conversational criteria, cooperation may be understood as the dynamic action participants engage with collaboratively to align and realign the frames within which they are interacting. The cooperation value of a single moment within a conversation may be analyzed through the alignment of frames based on the degree to which participants abide with the conversational maxims. However, in understanding conversations as dynamic in their trajectory,

the cooperative value of a conversation more wholly may be seen as the participant's adaptation to changing frames of discourse. The ability to redirect frames and the corresponding action of realigning frames becomes a unit on which to measure success of cooperation. The ability to navigate the dynamics of frames points to the interactive or conversational *dexterity* of the participants. Along these lines, the success or failure to cooperate may have less to do with rational or a quasi-contractual agreement and more to do with the conversational agility of the individuals engaging within the specific interactive frame. The conversational footing of the participants of a conversation is the product of their dynamic knowledge schemas produced through patterns of exposure to previous, comparable frames.

These findings together form a new and expansive vocabulary of conversational analysis, rooted interdisciplinarily in philosophy of language and linguistic sociology and anthropology. In practice, this intersection generates a reinvented epistemology that may be used in analyzing discourses in segmentation and in their entirety. An analysis of conversational moments, the contributions participants make and receive step by step, involves reviewing the following three lines of inquiry:

1. What is the type of utterance being uttered, and what natural presuppositions does this type of utterance invoke,
2. What is the specific natural meaning of the utterance and particular words in the utterance, and
3. What other conversational meanings are present as a product of the other moves made by the utterer and corresponding assumptions and presumptions of the hearer in the specific conversational context (including but not limited to that generated by tone, expression, body language, manner, etc...)?

These questions are useful to examine the performative value and implicature generated and received within a particular conversational moment. These questions should be investigated with an attention to the dynamics of a conversation as it unfolds more entirely. Cooperation may be valued step by step, but it must also be understood in the dynamics of its progression. Interactive frames may be used as a methodology to examine the collaborative dexterity of participants of a conversation. By identifying conversational shifts in frames, one is able to evaluate the success of cooperation between individuals. Furthermore, in identifying the dynamics of individuals' knowledge schemas one is able to evaluate conversational contributions as a facet of individuals' conversational dexterity, rather than in accordance with a theoretical, underlying conversational contract.

This epistemology may also serve a greater breadth of application purposes. While this work has been generated from fields centered around language and discourse, its essence appeals to interpersonal interaction as a whole. Interpersonal interaction reaches far beyond verbal discourse alone. This structure of analysis has the potential to be applied to nonverbal types of interaction as well, such as but not limited to partner dancing or collaborative music and arts. These are, after all, different frames of interaction.

These new theoretical understandings of interaction and analysis may also be applied to the study of specific social engagements with language. For instance, this framework of dynamics and implicature could generate new understandings of how individuals socially engage with gender as it is inscribed into language used in conversation. One could examine the dynamics of race and the conversations individuals have surrounding race in this particular cumulative sociopolitical moment and through the dynamics of time. Because this framework of analysis is interdisciplinary in its creation, its accessibility also extends farther still.



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