

Demystifying Students' Observance and Violation of Gricean Maxims in Online ESL Classes

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Abstract

The Gricean maxim construct is still of interest to researchers today. According to Bakoko & Pratiwi (2021), the Cooperative Principle is one of the central principles guiding people's language learning and achieving good results. For language teachers, it is important to understand the way students communicate and the problems that they encounter. In this paper, the researchers looked into conversations between teachers and students in online ESL classes and how students observe and violate the Gricean principle maxims, and the implicatures that can be drawn from the utterances. Using qualitative research design, the researchers transcribed the conversations found in five recorded synchronous discussion in ESL classes in a higher education institution. The transcribed conversations were then identified as to observance or violation of Grice's maxims. The findings reveal that in exchanging thoughts in conversations, the participants have violated any of the Gricean Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relevance, and Manner. The maxim of Manner was the most observed among the four maxims in the synchronous ESL discussions. The maxim of Quantity was the most violated among the four maxims; the maxim of Quality garnered no violation out of the 48 conversations in the synchronous ESL discussions. The maxim of Quality registered no violation out of the 48 conversations in the synchronous ESL discussions. The researchers then recommend that implicatures generated resulting in the violations may be considered to improve pedagogical activities.

Keywords: Gricean Maxims, Online ESL Classes, teachers, students