

Gricean Maxims and Writing Center Tutorial Interactions

Eleftheriou, M, Spyropoulou, K. and Opeyemi, O.
Department of English, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

The authors would like to acknowledge the American University of Sharjah Faculty Research Grant 2020 entitled “Using Grice’s Maxims to Improve Written Argumentation” with Principal Investigator Dr. Roger Nunn.

Abstract

The aim of this study is 1) to analyze tutorial interactions in a university writing center in a University in the UAE in order to determine if and how well the writing center tutors are able to adhere to the Gricean maxims (Grice, 1975) and 2) to determine how well tutors-in-training are able to assess tutorial effectiveness by using the Gricean maxims as a model. We used a descriptive qualitative study design. Participants were tutors at the university writing center, their tutees and tutors-in-training. Qualitative data was derived from observations of tutorial interactions between tutors and their tutees and the reflective writings of the tutors-in-training about these particular tutorial interactions. We observed four one-hour tutorial sessions and analyzed the corresponding reflective essays from the tutors-in-training about these tutorial sessions. This paper will discuss the extent to which the application of the Gricean maxims is related to effectiveness in tutorial interactions. It will describe how we introduced the maxims into the training course, how we taught tutors-in-training to use them, and then it will analyze any correlation between judicious use of maxims and usefulness of tutorials.

Keywords: Gricean maxims, Cooperative Principle, writing center tutorials, peer-tutorial interactions

Introduction

Good conversations are essential for effective writing center tutorials. During tutorial training, tutors practice questioning techniques, and they draw upon a variety of communication models in order to develop the habits and skills necessary for productive and relevant conversations. Writing Center theorists such as Rafoth (2010) and Brufee (1993) claim that the primary purpose in the Writing Center is to engage writers in relevant conversations about the writing process.

According to Grice (1975), conversation is based on a shared principle of cooperation. The cooperative principle was proposed by Grice to describe the requirements for language to be understood: “Make your contribution such as it is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (p. 47). The cooperative principle describes how effective communication in conversation can be achieved in a variety of different social circumstances and situations. Grice (1975) distinguishes four specific maxims fundamental to the “cooperative principle”:

1. Quantity. Speaker’s contribution is as informative as required.
2. Quality. Speaker tells the truth or provides adequate evidence for his/her statement.
3. Relation. Speaker’s response is relevant to the topic of conversation.
4. Manner. Speaker speaks straightforwardly and clearly and avoids ambiguity and obscurity.

Speakers can deal with the maxims in several ways: they can adhere to them, but there are various forms of non-adherence, such as flouting, violating, opting out and infringing (Grice, 1975). According to Dewi (2021), when flouting a maxim, the speaker does not intend to mislead the hearer but wants the hearer to look for the conversational implicature, that is, the meaning of the utterance not directly stated in the words uttered. In contrast to flouting a maxim, when violating a maxim, in Dewi’s terms, the speaker intends to mislead the interlocutor. A speaker intentionally “violates” a maxim when the speaker knows that the hearer will only understand the surface meaning of the words and so will be misinformed. The speaker deliberately supplies insufficient information, says something that is insincere, irrelevant or ambiguous and the hearer wrongly assumes that the speaker is cooperating. A speaker “opts out” of a maxim when the speaker openly refuses to convey information to the hearer. A speaker “infringes” a maxim when the speaker

unintentionally deceives or fails to convey information to the hearer. Infringing occurs when the speaker does not know the culture, has not mastered the language, or is not sufficiently aware of the interlocutor's level of understanding, and so is incapable of conveying information clearly. In classroom or tutorial discourse, a teacher or tutor would not aim to violate or infringe a maxim; however, they could deliberately flout or opt out of a maxim as a strategy to motivate their students.

Researchers have made a case for the introduction of Gricean maxims in language teaching. Dewi (2021) suggests using maxims in teacher-student conversations to minimize misunderstandings between them. His study demonstrates that misunderstandings occurred during the pandemic in teacher-student online conversations in an EFL class. He attributed these misunderstandings to the information conveyed in an unclear and ambiguous way by the teachers. The lack of clarity was related to the implied meaning in the conversation, the conversational implicature. In the analysis of this study, he found that there was frequently non-adherence to all of Grice's maxims. Dewi concluded that to minimize these misunderstandings, knowledge of the conversational implicature and adherence to the Gricean maxims could be helpful. Nunn (2006) argues that the maxims can function as "guiding principles" (p. 7) that can be used by teachers intentionally and actively. They are descriptive rather than prescriptive, but "could form a useful checklist for much of what can go wrong in classroom communication" (p.7). Teachers who use these maxims may become more self-aware and more capable of critically observing their own teaching practices: "All teachers can benefit from an external means of re-assessing something that is such an essential component of their daily practice (p.11). The maxims could disrupt prevailing assumptions about teaching and learning styles that may have become habitual or routine. Murray (2009) asserts that teachers in the English language classroom should develop students' pragmatic competence to help them better appreciate and understand how form and context interact to create meaning. Gricean maxims can function as "a useful guide to etiquette in communication and the socially appropriate use of language" (p. 296). Murray argues that by focusing on Grice's maxims and thereby raising awareness of the general principles, teachers can focus their students' attention on issues related to dynamic and effective communication. This process taught effectively and used skillfully could raise awareness of the interactive and reciprocal nature of speaking and writing.

Although tutorial conversations are not the same as conversational dialogue, Person et al. (1995) argue that they are closer to conversational dialogue than classroom discourse. They suggest that tutorial conversations exist in the middle of a continuum “with interactive, normal discourse at one end and less interactive discourse at the other (classroom lectures and speeches)” (p.184). In their study examining peer-tutoring discourse, they concluded that tutors rely on implicit principles of ordinary conversation. The Gricean maxims could provide a model that emphasizes the qualities necessary for dynamic, purposeful tutor-tutee conversation that is focused and helpful. The possibilities inherent in these maxims captured our interest and prompted us to introduce the underlying principles of Gricean pragmatics in the writing center peer-tutor training course. This paper will discuss the extent to which the application of the Gricean maxims is related to effectiveness in tutorial interactions. It will describe how we introduced the maxims into the training course, how we taught tutors-in-training to use them, and then it will analyze any correlation between judicious use of maxims and usefulness of tutorials.

Context

The American University of Sharjah, located in the United Arab Emirates, receives hundreds of foreign students annually. According to the 2021 Institutional Research University Board, the student body consists of 26% Emirati students, 41% students from the rest of the Arab world including Jordan, Palestine, Egypt, and Syria, and the remainder are from countries including Iran, India, and Pakistan. The university curriculum is modeled on the curriculum of American universities; it has received American accreditation, and the language of instruction is entirely English. The university enrolls approximately 5,000 students per semester (5,289 for Fall 2021). It offers 28 majors and 45 minors at the undergraduate level, 16 master degree programs and three PhD programs. Most of the students are primarily multilingual. Arabic, Hindi, and Urdu among others are the most represented languages, but a large number of students are first language speakers of English.

As part of an effort to address writing issues, the university established a writing center with a peer-tutoring program in the 2004/2005 academic year. Students are strongly encouraged by their instructors to visit the Writing Center where they receive individualized instruction. During the

tutoring sessions, tutees and tutors work on global concerns such as improving content, organization, and tone and/or local concerns such as clarifying confusing or improperly constructed sentences, and correcting punctuation, grammar, and mechanics. The Writing Center conducts approximately 3500 appointments a year, and has a staff of 35 undergraduate tutors.

The Tutor Training Course

Peer tutors are recruited from the composition courses to work in the Writing Center. In 2005, a training course was introduced and became mandatory for all tutors. This course provides potential tutors with both theoretical and practical knowledge and experience to enable them to work in the Writing Center.

When planning writing center tutor education, writing center directors and professionals introduce models and practices as a way to prepare tutors for informed practice. In the semester-long, credit-bearing training course, the instructor draws on a number of models, readings and theories to train tutors for their position. Ideally, the tutors will use the theories they learn in the class to ground their practice during tutorials. Many of the theories focus on using language that tutors can deploy in conversations with their tutees. Tutors-in-training discuss effective questioning techniques to invite a range of responses from students: open-ended questions, Socratic questioning, redirection and prompting. They talk about silence and wait time. Tutors are trained not only to wait through the silence but also to talk about silence and questions, to give students time for sorting out their ideas in writing, and to offer a range of possible answers. Instead of supplying one answer and ending discussion, tutors discuss various possibilities with students and assess the pros and cons of each answer. They review Gibb's communication model (1961) that encourages supportive language during conversations and how to apply it during tutorials.

The cooperative principle with its four maxims could serve as an additional guide for tutors so that they can provide genuine, adequate, relevant, and clear information to their tutees. Used effectively, the cooperative principle can enhance and highlight important aspects of the tutorial process: it can help to minimize misunderstandings as it provides opportunities for tutors to hone their evolving teaching skills and to reflect on them.

Reflective Assignments

Reflection is a central component in the training course. The writing-tutors-in-training are required 1) to participate in a session as a tutee to discuss one of their assignments and 2) to observe two sessions at the Writing Center. They write reflections about tutorial sessions using Gibb's reflective cycle (1988). By going through Gibbs' six steps, they are able to engage in a "process by which a single tutoring event and/or several tutoring events are reviewed and understood as a part of practice theorized" (Yancey, 1998, p.91). For one of the reflective steps, analysis, tutors-in-training must draw on the literature, models and theories they have discussed in the course to help them understand the tutor-tutee dialogue and interaction. Evers (2020) claims that when "tutors engage in authentic and honest self-observation, reflection, and ultimately metacognition ...they demonstrate the requisite skill to be effective teachers of writing" (para. 3). During their reflective assignments, the tutors-in-training were asked to draw on models they had discussed in the class when describing the tutorial interactions, they observed between tutor and tutee.

Introducing Grice's Maxims in the Training Course

We introduced Grice's four maxims in the peer-tutoring class of 14 students over the course of two in-class workshops. The first workshop focused on presenting the conceptual differences between the maxims and on relevant examples of tutorial dialogue. We presented students with tutoring scenarios so that they could visualize the use of the maxims by a tutor during a session. During the second workshop, we asked the students to reflect on tutorial dialogue examples (Appendix A) and to comment on the efficacy of each in relation to Grice's maxims. We asked them to identify the four maxims and the ways in which tutors may have adhered to them, flouted them or opted out during the interaction. In the discussion that followed, we asked students to reflect on the effect of the non-adherence to or flouting of the maxim.

Methodology

Participants

We recruited twelve participants from the Writing Center and the tutor-training course. Tutors-in-training observed and reflected on online tutorial conversations in the AUS Writing Center. The students and tutors involved in the tutorial conversations granted permission for their tutorials to be observed for research purposes. The tutors-in-training granted permission for their essay

reflections on the tutorial sessions to be read. We selected five essay reflections for the study. All five tutors-in-training were juniors and were recommended by their writing professors to enroll in the peer-tutor training course. Two of the tutors-in-training had attended an Arabic high school and self-reported English as a second language students. Three of the tutors-in-training had attended English high schools and self-reported as being bilingual (Arabic and English).

Applying Grice's Maxims in the First Reflective Essay

Following the introduction of the maxims, the tutors-in-training participated in a one-hour tutorial at the AUS Writing Center to discuss one of their assignments with the peer-tutors. As part of their assessment, they were required to 1) record the tutorial and 2) write their first reflective essay about this visit to the writing center seeking support with their assignment. In this reflective essay, they discussed the tutor's lead-in to the discussion, the tutor's responses during the conversation, their discussion with their tutor and then provided suggestions about how the session could have been improved. They were required to draw on any theories, readings or models they had learned in the course. It was interesting to note that 12 out of 14 tutors-in-training used Grice's maxims when reflecting on their tutorials. We randomly selected one reflective essay to assess how well the students had understood Grice's maxims and to determine whether further instruction was needed. The three researchers watched the recording of one tutorial and read the student's reflection about this tutorial.

The student's performance in this assignment enabled the instructor to realize that further clarification on the usage of the maxims was needed. More specifically, the student displayed a general understanding of the maxims' principles but had difficulty distinguishing between them in conversation. Although she sometimes accurately identified and correctly applied the maxims; in other instances, she wrongly identified their applications. For example, the student claimed that her tutor used the maxim of manner appropriately because "when [her tutor] corrected [her] work, she did it in a respectful way. Additionally, the tutor always explained why certain edits were made." The student's words that the "tutor explained why" adheres to the maxim of manner as it improves clarity and therefore understanding. However, the maxim of manner deals with the supermaxim of being perspicuous and the submaxims of avoidance of prolixity, ambiguous and obscure expressions as well as being orderly; therefore, the tutor's respectful demeanor during

feedback was not an accurate instance of the maxim of manner. A third workshop was arranged for the following week, and the students worked on improving their understanding of the differences between the maxims as well as their occasional overlaps. An “Effective Tutorial Guide” consisting of examples of the application, flouting and opting out of the four maxims of quantity, quality, manner, and relation was developed to assist the students in their tutorial observations (Appendix B). Similarly, a “Not-So-Effective Tutorial Guide” with non-adherence to the maxims was developed to raise their awareness of possible maxim non-adherence in a session (Appendix C). The instructor of the course spent approximately two and a half hours discussing the application of the maxims to tutorials.

Data Collection

For the second reflective assignment, the tutors-in-training were required to observe a live one-hour tutorial session and to write a reflective report, once again using Gibb’s reflective cycle during which they assessed the effectiveness of the strategies other peer-tutors had been using. The live tutorials were recorded. We noted that, once again, 12 out of 14 of the tutors-in-training incorporated the maxims when reflecting on the sessions they observed. We randomly selected four tutorial recordings and their accompanying observation reflection essays to analyze for the study.

Analysis

Three researchers watched each recorded tutorial separately and then analyzed the accompanying reflection written by the tutors-in-training. One researcher is an assistant professor with over 15 years of experience running a writing center. The second researcher is a MATESOL graduate student who has over three years of writing center tutoring experience, and the third researcher is a MATESOL graduate student with ten years of teaching experience and extensive experience with the application of Grice’s maxims to academic writing.

To ensure inter-coder reliability, all three researchers viewed the tutorials and took extensive notes on all their elements, such as the communication between tutor and tutee, the dynamics between tutor and tutee, the effectiveness/non-effectiveness of the tutorial strategies, the reactions of the tutees, and the overall effectiveness of the tutorial. The researchers also reviewed the tutorials with

the purpose of identifying instances of adherence to, violation of, flouting of, opting out or infringing of Grice's maxims.

The three researchers then conducted a thematic analysis of each accompanying reflection and compared their assessment of the tutorial to that of the reflectors' (tutors-in-training) assessment. Each researcher wrote a report about their findings addressing 1) the effectiveness of the session, 2) the adherence of the maxims by the university writing center tutors and 3) the ability of the tutor-in-training to judiciously apply the Gricean maxims to the tutorial conversations.

One of the researchers read each report and summarized the researchers' perceptions of tutorial effectiveness and the ability of the tutors-in-training to apply the maxims accurately. There were some slight discrepancies in the researchers' observations of the effectiveness of the sessions and no discrepancies in their analyses of the reflections written by the tutors-in-training.

Findings

This section will discuss the researchers' assessment of four tutorial sessions, the tutors' application of Gricean maxims in the tutorial conversations and the tutors-in-trainings' ability to use Grice in their discussion of their tutorial observation reflections.

First tutor-tutee pair: Gayatri and Saba

Gricean Maxims

All the researchers agreed that this session was effective. The tutor adhered to the maxims throughout the conversation: every contribution in the conversation satisfied Grice's maxims of relation, manner, quantity and quality. The tutee was concerned about citations, and the tutor provided correct and thorough guidance and feedback on APA citations and good academic writing style to the tutee. These satisfied the maxim of quality and that of relation. The tutor also provided evidence in the form of accurate, clear support for her suggested changes to the document, thereby satisfying the maxim of quality. For example, she pointed to different instances in the paper where the tutee had repeated ideas. Additionally, the tutor advised the tutee to remove irrelevant

information: for instance, the tutor pointed out to the tutee that mentioning a person's sexual orientation in the essay was not necessary or relevant to the topic. This satisfied both the maxim of quantity and relation; not giving more information than required satisfied the maxim of quantity while editing out irrelevant information to the subject matter fulfilled the maxim of relation.

The tutor addressed the tutee's concerns, which was to make the language in her essay more academic, and the researchers noted that the tutor stayed on task by helping the tutee throughout the session by pointing out instances related to the informality of her language, thus adhering to the maxim of relation.

While the session was effective and the tutor adhered to Grice's maxims in all her contributions, the three researchers noted that the session was not student-centered. The tutor mainly employed a directive approach while the student passively received advice from the tutor: "You could start off with this sentence, "No need for repetition" and "Just match it to the one we have up there." The tutor provided explanations for her suggestions, and offered most of the suggestions as modals (using Gibb's communicative model language of possibility), but the tutor did not encourage participation from the tutee throughout the session.

Analysis of Tutor-in-training's Reflection

The analysis of the tutor-in-training's reflection about this tutorial corresponds with the researchers' analysis. In her reflection, the tutor-in-training reported that the tutor adhered to Grice's maxims throughout the tutorial, particularly the maxim of relation. She supported her assertion by saying, "Throughout the session, the tutor was able to honor the maxim of relation by asking questions that are directly related to the [tutee's] main concern with the paper." The tutor-in-training was able to identify that the tutor responded to the tutee's concerns about being too conversational in tone, and all of her advice and edits throughout the tutorial were related to this concern, which made the session "student centered" in terms of content. The tutor-in-training also used the maxim of quality correctly and supported it by saying, "One of the tutor's suggestions was to remove some sentences from one paragraph to avoid repetition. These suggestions also showcased that the tutor was honoring the maxim of quality and quantity because the tutor explained why the edits were made." This tutor-in-training demonstrated that she could apply the

maxims of relation, quantity and quality judiciously. She did not refer to the maxim of manner in her reflection.

The reflection also corresponded with the researchers' assessment by noting that this was a tutor-directed session. Although the session was focused on the tutee's concerns, the tutor-in-training noted, "The tutee is a passive participant in the tutorial." She described the tutor's approach as "controlling" even though the edits suggested by the tutor were well-received by the tutee. The tutor-in-training's words sum up the effectiveness of the tutorial: "The tutee left the session with the feedback she wished to receive. In that case, the tutor did a good job of making the student's paper better after the tutoring session. However, I wonder if a less directive approach would have given different or better results. Having the paper's content, organization, and structure improved is great but I think the tutee learned a lot less from the session because [she was] not an active participant."

Second Tutor-Tutee pair: Badr and Mahmoud

Gricean Maxims

All the researchers agreed that this session was effective and that the tutor adhered to Gricean maxims except for one instance. Initially, the tutor asked many clarification questions ("What are you critiquing exactly?", "What is the title?", "Can you tell me more?") in order to understand the assignment guidelines and how he could better provide help and advice. In this way, the tutor made sure to adhere to the maxim of quality by asking for enough context to give accurate advice and information. The tutor also paid attention to more pressing issues than grammar and utilized the maxim of relation by stating information relevant to the issue the tutee was facing and acknowledging his concerns. As far as the maxim of manner was concerned, the tutor and the tutee worked extensively through the session on making the writing clearer and more focused. The tutor spent just enough time addressing the issue, listening to the student, and providing support, adhering to the maxim of quantity as well. The tutor honored the maxim of quality offering advice and providing explanations and support for the revisions he suggested. He also honored the maxim of quantity by keeping his explanations brief and the maxim of relation by staying focused on the key issues (repetition and clarity of ideas). The tutor flouted the maxim of manner by not providing

sufficient information or opted out of the conversation in several instances to encourage the tutee to participate in the session. For example, the tutee noticed a repetitive section in the paper and asked the tutor about how to remove the repetition. The tutor then asked, “How do you think we can fix this? A possible fix?”

Two of the researchers identified an instance where the tutor did not observe the maxims of relation, manner and quantity in one part of the tutorial interaction. The tutor and the student engaged in a circuitous and convoluted conversation. The tutor was confused by the word “admission” and took it to mean “admittance” when in fact, the tutee intended to say “confession.” The tutor did not adhere to the maxim of relation as the conversation did not address the student’s concerns. Furthermore, the obscurity in communication did not correspond to the maxim of manner because the information the tutor provided was beyond what was required. It turned out to be irrelevant and did not adhere to both maxims of quantity and relation. One of the researchers, however, wrote that the problematic interaction was not a failure on the tutor’s part, because the misunderstanding was not due to the tutor’s use of the language of superiority that could be interpreted as non-adherence of the maxims of relation, manner, and quantity. In other words, the tutor did not jump to conclusions about the tutee’s writing but was simply confused, so in this case, he infringed the quality of relation and manner and quantity. It was a good faith failure to communicate.

Moreover, the researchers agreed that the tutor and student worked collaboratively during this session. The tutor used the questioning strategy throughout the session to engage the tutee and to lead him to his own conclusions. The questions helped the student identify his main errors, and guided him in the revision process. The tutor made sure that the tutee was leading his own session by not dominating the ideas and by helping the tutee through questions and recommendations to make a change on his own (the language of equality). The tutor employed supportive language throughout the tutorial and used “I” language such as “I feel like there’s a lot of repetition in this sentence” rather than “you” evaluative language. He also hedged by uttering phrases such as “Yeah, you could keep it this way” and inclusive “we” language such as “Maybe we could” to include the student in the revision process. There was laughter during the session (this was used to soften criticisms such as the repetition issue), and there was a clear effort to address the student’s

emotions when the tutor asked the student how he felt about parts of his writing. The student felt comfortable during the session and did not hesitate to ask, “What do you mean?” when he was confused.

Analysis of Tutor-in-training’s Reflection

The assessment written by the tutor-in-training clearly identified the tutor’s applications of Grice’s maxims during the tutorial. The tutor-in-training mentioned that the tutor adhered to Grice’s maxim of quality and quantity “by answering the questions truthfully and clearly.” This assessment matches the researchers’ assessment of the tutorial as an effective one. The tutor-in-training correctly identified the maxim of quality as well when they explained that the tutor applied the maxim of quality and manner “when the tutee asked about the use of reporting verbs and the tutor replied with clear true information.” Additionally, like two of the researchers above, the tutor-in-training noted the non-adherence of the maxims of relation, manner and quantity during a conversation where both parties misunderstood one another. The tutor-in-training wrote, “On the other hand, I believe that they both [did not observe] the maxim of quantity sometimes which led to having futile conversations...This happened because the tutor did not fully communicate what he was thinking about the idea and whether he understood it or not.”

The tutor-in-training understood Grice’s maxims clearly and how to correctly identify their applications. They understood that clarity is hinged on the maxim of manner while the maxim of quality is hinged on truth. They were also able to correctly identify non-adherence to the maxim of quantity when the tutor gave more information than required regarding a word choice.

Third Tutor-Tutee Pair: Nadine and Khalid

Gricean Maxims

All the researchers agreed that, while this session did address some of the students’ concerns, it was less effective than the tutorials discussed above. The tutor did not adhere to Grice’s maxims on a number of occasions in this tutorial. In one instance, the tutee was uncertain about whether to capitalize the word “and” in an abbreviation. In the video, she hesitated, and it appeared as though she was not certain about whether the “and” should be capitalized but then speculated that most

likely it is. Unfortunately, she did not confirm this information to ensure the advice she was giving is correct and truthful thus violating the maxim of quality.

In another instance, the tutee requested guidance for IEEE guidelines, but the tutor responded that she did not have any experience with this citation method. Although the tutor adhered to the maxim of quality by being truthful about her lack of knowledge, there was ample time left in the tutorial to look up the guidelines and to assist the tutee with his query. In this case, the student's main concern mentioned at the beginning of the tutorial was not addressed, and thus it could be argued that the tutor did not observe the maxim of relation.

On the other hand, there were positive aspects to this tutorial. The tutor in this session tried to build rapport with her tutee and avoided appropriating his work by ensuring that she explained her suggested changes and revisions. She also made certain to have his approval when she did suggest a change. For instance, she suggested adding an article and asked, "Do you feel that it's more clear now?" She also asked open-ended questions such as "Can you just explain this last sentence?" which encouraged the tutee to make connections on his own. She also flouted the maxims at times to motivate her tutee to participate. For example, the tutor opted out of the maxim of relation to encourage the tutee to interact effectively by asking the question: "Can you just explain this last sentence?" This enabled the tutee to spot the mistake on his own, and the tutor further guided him by asking the question: "Do you see the confusion here?" The tutee then highlighted the sentence and said he would work on it on his own.

Unfortunately, her behavior was not consistent. There were a number of instances when the tutor was directive when there was no need to be because the tutee was capable of making his own revisions. At one point, she correctly mentioned that sentences should not start with "this" and provided an explanation for why it should be avoided. However, rather than allowing the tutee to revise the sentence by himself, she revised the sentence for him. There are other instances as well where she could have allowed this master's-level tutee to do his own editing. For example, the tutor told the tutee that one of his sentences was too long and proceeded to tell him how to separate it: "Maybe you can separate this sentence here and just end it here." In instances like this, flouting the maxims or opting out could have been an effective tutorial technique.

Analysis of Tutor-in-training's Reflection

The tutor-in-training was able to identify clearly and correctly where and when the tutor applied each of the maxims mentioned. However, the tutor-in-training was not aware of the boundaries of each of these maxims.

The tutor-in-training wrote, “[E]ven though she would point out mistakes or things that could be changed, she would always follow it up with an explanation. By doing so, she used Grice’s maxims of quality, quantity, manner and relation. For instance, she pointed out that it was best not to use sentences beginning with “this can...” as it may be unclear what “this” refers to.

The above expression is general without any substantial evidence to back up the claim, which in itself does not adhere to Grice’s maxims of quality. The assertion “By doing so, she used Grice’s maxims of quality, quantity, manner and relation” is inaccurate because following up an error with an explanation does not automatically result in correct applications of all of Grice’s maxims. Questions like “Was the explanation relevant to the correctly identified mistake? Was it sufficient without any redundancies? Was the explanation true? Was the information relayed without ambiguities or obscurities?” If the explanations satisfied all these questions then the assertion would be accurate. The lack of clarity in the general statement also subtly does not adhere to Grice’s maxim of manner, as the tutor-in-training did not clarify her statement to explain how the identification and explanation of mistakes satisfied all four of Grice’s maxims.

The tutor-in-training identified the maxims of relation and manner accurately when she said, “She also adhered to Grice’s maxim of relation by answering his question with a relevant answer... and maxim of manner by stating it precisely and with clarity. The tutor-in-training also correctly identified the maxim of quantity based on the correct criterion when she said, “She also adhered to Grice’s maxim of quantity as she was brief and to the point while giving out sufficient information.” However, immediately after this statement, she wrote, “Rather than just correcting the errors for this paper, the tutor’s explanation gave the tutee a deeper understanding of linguistics and grammar.” This may suggest that the observer may have added an additional and incorrect criterion to the correct criteria for identifying Grice’s maxim of quantity. “A deeper understanding of linguistics and grammar” is not one of the ways to identify Grice’s maxim of quantity.

Like the researchers, the tutor-in-training reported that the peer tutor could have addressed the student's concerns about referencing IEEE and noted that "there was still 30 minutes left in the session and so she had ample time to look it up with the tutee."

The tutor-in-training noted that tutor tried to engage the tutee and include him in the conversation by using Gibb's language of equality, asking the tutee to explain his discipline-specific jargon, and by asking open-ended questions to understand what point the tutee was trying to get across in the session. However, like the researchers, the tutor-in-training was critical of the tutor for being directive and controlling at times such as during instances where she explained how to correct an error rather than providing the tutee the opportunity to do so.

Fourth Tutor-Tutee Pair: James and Bedar

Gricean Maxims

All of the researchers agreed that this session was effective and that the student's concerns were addressed. The tutor adhered to the Gricean maxims, but one of the researchers reported that he did not observe the maxims in one instance.

All of the researchers agreed that the tutor adhered to the maxims of quality, quantity, relation and manner for the most part throughout the tutorial. His questions and responses were all related to the student's initial concerns: improving grammatical issues, fixing citations, addressing clarity concerns, and spotting typos. The majority of his responses were supported with evidence and were brief and clear thus satisfying the maxim of manner. The tutor adhered to the maxim of quality by stating only truthful information as he looked up the answer and provided sufficient, correct, and accurate information regarding an in-text citation query when he responded: "I'm not a hundred percent sure, I'll have to check". He also used the maxim of quality when mentioned that one of her claims was too bold: "Most social media influencers use their platforms to spread false information." The tutee pointed out that she had provided an example to support her claim, but he explained that one example cannot support such a strong claim. Additionally, he used the maxim of quantity by sharing just enough information so that the student could confidently say

she knew what was being asked of her, and evidently show she had understood the feedback and how to proceed by making changes on her own. Lastly, the tutor used the maxim of relation by giving relevant and specific answers to specific questions. The tutor made sure his answers were as specific as possible, by asking follow-up questions on the issue and making sure that his answers had satisfied the student.

However, one of the researchers noted that the tutor did not always observe the maxim of quality in the tutorial: In one instance, the tutor made an assumption about why the tutee added quotation marks to the phrase “under the influence” without asking her about her reason for adding emphasis to this phrase. He advised her to remove the quotation marks, and in this way, did not adhere to the maxim of quality as the tutor should have asked the student her reason for the use of quotations. The tutee might have had a valid reason for including quotation marks, and the tutor might have provided flawed advice.

The tutor asked effective questions to find out the tutee’s concerns and to engage her in the tutorial. He used mostly supportive and descriptive language such as “It would be beneficial to the reader to know what that is” rather than just telling her to include a definition. He encouraged the tutee to read aloud and also explained the philosophy behind the technique. Additionally, he allowed the tutee time to answer her own questions and to edit her work when reading aloud. The tutee was actively making changes and evidently leading the session throughout, as a result of the tutor’s active use of the language of facilitation and assistance instead of the language of manipulation or control.

It is interesting to note that the tutor opted out of the maxim of quality and quantity on many occasions as a strategy to encourage the tutee to participate in the session. For instance, the tutee asked for the tutor’s opinion on her paragraph, but the tutor responded, “What do *you* think?” This response does not adhere to the maxim of quality because given the context, the tutor should have responded with possible solutions to or opinions regarding the paragraph; instead, he deliberately asked her the same question to encourage her critical thinking. Initially, the tutee was taken aback by his question, but after a minute, it became clear that his question prompted reflection because she realized that her paragraph could be improved by including statistics.

Analysis of Tutor-in-Training's Reflection

The analysis of the tutor-in-training's reflection of this tutorial corresponds with the researchers' analysis. The tutor-in-training reported that that the session was focused and flowed seamlessly.

The tutor-in-training applied Grice's maxims appropriately for the most part. She stated, "The tutor did a good job following Grice's maxims. When answering the tutee's questions about citations and aspects about her content, the tutor answered with enough information, respecting the maxim of quantity." This example demonstrates an understanding of the maxim of quantity. The tutor-in-training was also able to identify when the tutor adhered to the maxim of quality. Like the researchers, she used as an example the instance where the tutor was uncertain about a citation rule: "One of the citations was confusing, and the tutor worked with the tutee to find the correct method instead of [not-adhering to] the maxim of quality by projecting false certainty." Furthermore, the tutor-in-training also identified when the tutor opted out of the maxims by bringing up the "redirection technique" the tutor used during the tutorial. The tutor-in-training, however, misunderstood the function of the maxim of manner because she used it to discuss her tutor's behavior and personality traits: "The tutor's body language and communication skills yielded no [infractions] of the maxim of manner; even when the tutor wished to discuss the factual validity of some sentences, he brought it up calmly and objectively." It is interesting to note that in reviewing all of the reflections, we noticed that a number of tutors-in-training used the maxim of manner to refer to the tutor's disposition and personality. It is apparent that they would like to discuss the affective aspect of the tutorial, but the Gricean maxims do not provide the language necessary for this type of discussion.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that tutorial effectiveness corresponds with tutor adherence to Gricean maxims and that incorporating them in the tutor-training curriculum could be an effective training model for tutors-in-training to discuss.

There are some aspects of successful tutorial interactions, however, that cannot be captured by Grice's maxims. In Gaytri and Saba's tutorial, for instance, the researchers agreed that the tutorial was effective because the tutor adhered to the maxims by giving accurate, clear and relevant instruction. However, the researchers also noted that the tutor did not create opportunities for the tutee to participate in the session. Saba was a reserved tutee who lacked confidence because she had received a low grade in her paper. In this tutorial, she wanted assistance to rewrite a paper and was anxious about meeting her professor's expectations. Gaytri did not consider her personality and low confidence levels when approaching the conversation, and consequently, was domineering in the conversation. Similarly, in Nadine and Khalid's session, Nadine did not take into account the proficiency level of this masters-level tutee and his ability to participate in the session as an equal. Tutors are advised to take into account many factors when making decisions about how to approach a tutorial conversation: individual preferences, agency, language proficiency, personality factors, student expectations, familiarity with the writing center approach, and cultural factors.

Although Grice himself acknowledges the existence of other maxims such as "be polite" (see Leech, 1983) and also refers to "the context, linguistic and otherwise, of the utterance" (1989, p.31), some of Grice's critics, such as Ladegaard (2009), suggest that Grice's theory is asocial. Ladegaard believes that Grice's theory does not consider social contexts, and only considers the speaker-listener interaction in an ideal context, and then applies it universally. He compares it to Chomsky's "ideal speaker-listener in a completely homogeneous speech- community" (1965 as cited in Laardsgaar, p. 663), and claims it is not useful to explain people's communication in relation to complex social issues. Ladegaard claims that the cooperative principle is "rigid and inflexible and does not take into account that human communication is as rich, varied and multifaceted as human nature" (p.664).

Ladegaard's criticism may explain the inability of the maxims to account for the affective nature of tutor-tutee interactions. The tutors-in-training, in attempting to speak about the tutor's tone of voice or delivery of speech, misapplied the maxim of manner. Grice's maxims do not account for complexities related to the speakers' status, role, or cultural background. Levinson (as cited in Ladegaard, 2009) argues that the "whole range of linguistic and paralinguistic cues are critical "for understanding interpretation and meaning in any conversation" (p.650). He says that linguistic cooperation should be interpreted in a much broader perspective by considering turn-taking

mechanisms, voice modifications, the use of silence and minimal response, as well as (lack of) speech accommodation. In our tutor-training course, we discuss these features of discourse when analyzing successful tutorial scenarios. We discuss building rapport, using inflection in the voice (particularly in online tutorials) and silence and wait time. By using these features of discourse along with Gricean maxims, we can approach the “broader pragmatic perspective” described by Levinson.

Davies (1997, as cited in Davies, 2000), however, argues that the cooperative principle is not ‘cooperative’ in the way that most people understand it. She claims that it enables the speaker to make the task of the hearer challenging and that speakers “can convey their intentions by a limitless number of utterances; it is up to the hearer to calculate the utterer’s intention” (p.3). This argument implies that the cooperative principle does not require a speaker to make the interpretation of an utterance straightforward; in fact, it can make the task more complex, requiring the hearer to do work to fill in omitted information or interpret non-literal utterances. It is important to note that Grice’s cooperative principle considers not just adherence, but also flouting, and the resultant implicature, to be cooperative and productive forms of communication. Research (Safitri et al., 2014) has shown that flouting of the maxims can be used by teachers and students in their interactions during the teaching and learning process. Perhaps in this way, when the tutors flout the maxims, they are able to prompt the tutee’s reflective and critical thinking. For example, as outlined in the “Effective Tutorial Guide” (Appendix B), a tutor could flout the maxim of quantity by not giving a direct answer to a question in an attempt to motivate the student to speak. Flouting of the maxims could be taught to tutors as another technique to encourage their tutees to reflect, revise and expand their own writing skills.

Implications

By including Gricean maxims in the tutor-training curriculum, we offer tutors-in-training another model that can lead to effective communication with their tutees. As researchers have pointed out (Nunn, 2006; Murray, 2009), the Gricean maxims can act as a guide to raise critical self-awareness relating to how teachers communicate with their students and what makes conversations work. The cooperative principle, and its four maxims involving implicatures, could function as a catalyst

to initiate reflective thinking and to promote deeper understanding of the complex interrelationships among teachers or tutors and their students in the context of individuality, personality, creativity and cultural diversity.

Conclusion

In this small-scale study, we discovered that tutorial effectiveness corresponds with tutor adherence to Gricean maxims. Tutors-in-training were generally able to assess tutorial effectiveness accurately in their reflections by using the maxims and other aspects and models of linguistic discourse. Limitations to the study include factors such as the small sample size and the lack of follow-up of the tutors-in-training to determine whether they employed Gricean maxims in their own tutorials. Interviewing the tutors-in-training about their perceptions of the usefulness of the Gricean maxims in conducting their sessions could yield further valuable information.

Grice appears to be a useful tool to guide tutors to providing effective tutorials and is therefore a potentially useful addition to tutor training. It does not, however, model or capture every aspect of effective tutor practice, and it will be most useful as one tool among many that should be made available to tutors in their training. This raises additional questions for further research. How should Grice be integrated with other guides or metrics of tutor-tutee interaction? How should it be prioritized; for instance, is it important for a tutor to adhere to the maxim of quantity or should a tutor remain facilitative and non-directive? It may be useful to identify situations where different tools or metrics might conflict. If a tutee directly asks a tutor to identify the thesis or key conclusion in their paper, should the tutor cooperate with the student's request or opt out and preserve student agency over their paper? These issues, and others raise many questions as Grice's cooperative principle, and its maxims continue to resonate in linguistic and pedagogical discourse.

References

- Bruffee, K.A. (1993) 'Peer tutoring and the conversation of mankind', in C Murphy & J Law (eds), *Landmark essays on writing centers*, Hermagoras Publishing, Davis, CA, pp. 87-89.
- Davies, B. (2000). Grice's cooperative principle: Getting the meaning across.
https://www.latl.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/49/2019/05/Davies_2000.pdf
- Dewi, N. (2021) Conversational implicature based on maxim variation in EFL teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 612.
- Evers, G. (2020). *Training Tutor-Learners in Contemplation: Reflection in the Writing Center*.
<https://www.improvewithmetacognition.com/training-tutor-learners/>
- Gibbs G. (1988). *Learning by doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. Further Education Unit*. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford.
<https://thoughtsmostlyaboutlearning.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/learning-by-doing-graham-gibbs.pdf>
- Gibb, J. (1961). Defensive communication. *Journal of Communication*, 11, 141–148..
- Grice, (1975). Logic and conversation. In C. and JL Morgan *Syntax and Semantics* Vol. 3: Speech Act. New York: Academy Press. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/lis/studypacks/Grice-Logic.pdf>
- Ladegaard, H. (2009). Pragmatic cooperation revisited: Resistance and non-cooperation as a discursive strategy in asymmetrical discourses. *Journal of Pragmatics*. 41. 649-666.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S037821660800235X10.1016/j.pragma.2008.09.021>.
- Leech, G. (1983). *Principles of pragmatics*. London and New York: Longman.
- Murray, N. (2009). Pragmatics, awareness raising, and the cooperative principle. *ELT Journal*, 64(3). 293–301. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccp056>
- Nunn, R. (2006). The pragmatics of cooperation and relevance for teaching and learning. *The Linguistics Journal*. 1. 5-16

- Person, N, Kreuz, R.J, Zwaan, R.A and Graesser, A.C (1995). Pragmatics and pedagogy: Conversational rules and politeness strategies may inhibit effective tutoring. *Cognition and Instruction*. 13(2). 161-188
- Rafoth, B. (2010). Why visit your campus writing center? *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writing*, Parlor Press. <https://wac.colostate.edu/books/writingspaces1/rafoth--why-visit-your-campus-writing-center.pdf/>
- Safriti, L. M., Seken, I. K., & Putra, I. N. A. J. (2014). Observance and non-observance of Gricean maxims in instructional context: an analysis of EFL classroom interaction. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Indonesia*, 2(1).
- Yancey, K. B. (1998). *Reflection in the Writing Classroom*. University Press of Colorado. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt46nsh0>

Appendix A

Gricean Maxims

Tutorial Analysis Exercise

(Includes adherence to, non-adherence to and flouting of the four maxims of quality, quantity, manner, and relation)

F: Hi there!

O: Hi!

K: I'm Fathima, nice to meet you.

O: I am Omar.

F: Welcome to your session, Omar. How is everything going?

O: Yeah, not bad. I've been struggling a bit with this essay, and I'd appreciate your feedback.

F: Sure. It's alright to be a bit overwhelmed—we all are at times. It's a good thing you came to the Writing Center so that we can help you and make you feel even better about your writing. So, what would you like to look at today, Omar?

O: I have this Rogerian essay and I've been struggling a bit with the format... I'll share the google doc with you so that we can take a look.

F: Sounds good. Alright, I see your essay is on teenagers and social media. Do you know how you want to go about this topic?

O: Well, yeah, I was thinking about presenting two viewpoints...one against the use of social media and teenagers and one in favor.

F: Okay. And which one is going to be your proposition view?

O: What does that mean?

F: Well, by the proposition view we mean your view as a writer. It is basically what you are arguing for.

O: Oh, I see. I'd like to argue that social media is beneficial for teenagers.

F: Sounds good. And I'm imagining the opposition's view will be that social media is harmful for teenagers, am I right?

O: Yes, that's it.

F: Alright. So, are you familiar with the structure of a Rogerian essay?

O: I only know I am supposed to start with the opposing view.

F: Yes, that is correct. Here, let me share with you a handout on the Rogerian essay and its structure... Of course you need an introduction to begin and then the opposing side would come first, followed by your point of view. Then you would discuss both sides together in the next section and finally write your conclusion. You can also take a look at a sample Rogerian essay [here](#). How does it look at a first glance?

O: I understand the structure now... but do I have to begin with the opposing view? Can't I start with my viewpoint? I feel like I have more things to say.

F: It is good that you have more things to say about your point of view because this side you'd be arguing for in the end, but we need to start with the opposing side to establish a common ground.

Think about it for a moment.... What is something that you disagree with?

O: As in, like, a topic?

F: Yeah, or an opinion.

O: Well, I disagree on the topic of evolution over creation... I believe in creation instead.

F: Right. That's a good example, thanks for sharing. So, if someone wanted to write an essay on why they believe in evolution and they began their writing with why believing in creation is reasonable, wouldn't you like to read it?

O: I guess I would... Oh, I see what you mean. It's a way to make the reader agree with you, somehow?

F: Yes, exactly. So, by starting with what the reader generally believes in, and by stating their point of view first, we make things easier for the reader to listen to what else we have to say, and perhaps by the end convince them of our point of view.

O: Okay, I get it. So, is it okay if I say that social media is harmful for teenagers in this paragraph?

F: Don't you think you need to prove that instead of just saying it?

O: Okay. So... how long should it be?

F: It depends on your assignment. It could be one paragraph, or two, or a section.

O: Okay.

F: So, what have you thought of mentioning in the opposing section?

O: Here, I've written about how social media is harmful for teenagers: "When we think of social media we think of teenagers and vice versa. Teenagers are known for spending countless hours daily on social media platforms, and as a result, researchers have found that teenagers have increased feelings of loneliness and a tendency to isolate." What do you think?

F: What do you think about it so far? Is there anything you like or don't like?

O: Well, I think the transition might be a bit too abrupt in introducing what the researchers say... I don't know.

K: Yes, I think so too. You try to connect these two with “as a result”, but does it really work this way? Does the fact that teenagers are known for spending countless hours in front of a screen result in what the researchers say?

O: No, you’re right. I need to phrase that sentence even better.

F: Yep, good observation.

O: Can you tell me what I could say instead?

F: Think about rephrasing that sentence to achieve the cause-and-effect relationship you want. You could say that teens are known for spending countless hours daily on social media platforms, and then add a full-stop. Then you can say something like, “researchers studying teenagers’ social media usage have found that it impacts them negatively...” and then keep the rest as is: “as teenagers have increased feelings of loneliness and a tendency to isolate.” How does that sound?

O: Oh, that’s better. Can you tell me what to write afterward?

F: Well, what do you think would be a nice way to continue from here?

O: I think I need to explain a bit what the researchers mean and add examples.

F: Yes, and then you’d have to cite them in APA. This reminds me, I saw you have not added page numbers and you need to work on your cover page too... Just a note to not forget before you submit your essay... Oh, and make sure your paragraphs are indented and in Times New Roman 12, double spaced. But yeah, back to this paragraph. You definitely need to add evidence to support your point.

O: Alright, I’ll do that.... Take a look here... Am I using the semicolon correctly? Can you check?

F: Let me see... I think it should be fine.

O: I have another one in this paragraph.

F: Hm... let me see... Just add a comma here, no need for a semicolon.

O: Why though?

F: This is what the grammar says haha.

O: Okay... Oh! I had another question... What is a concluding sentence?

F: Good question. A concluding sentence does exactly what its name suggests... it concludes our paragraph. It summarizes everything you've said before so that you can move on to the next point in the next paragraph. It basically reaffirms what your topic sentence at the beginning of the paragraph said.

O: Thanks, it makes sense.

F: You're welcome.

O: Can I also ask about the quotations? I'll have to quote some researchers like we said, and I don't know how to do that.

F: No need to worry. Let me share a handout with you. There it is, take a look. It says that you need to remember to always introduce your quotation first, by saying something like "according to the author" and use the author's name. Then you add the quotation and cite it, and afterward, you should comment on the quotation by showing the reader why you are using it and how it contributes to your discussion.

O: Oh, alright, thanks. This is very helpful. And how many quotations do I need?

F: For each paragraph you mean?

O: Yeah.

F: Two or three, I guess... I am not sure, that's what I think though. It's better if you ask your professor to make sure.

O: I also wanted to ask about the logos, ethos, pathos that I've heard about in class... what are these?

F: You don't really need those for a Rogerian essay so you're good.

O: Okay.

F: Your writing is good so far, just work a bit more on your body paragraphs and we can look at the essay again together. Do you have an idea of how to proceed now?

O: Yes, I think so.

F: Good. Is there anything else you'd like to ask before we finish our session?

O: No, I think that's it. Thank you so much.

F: Okay then. Thanks for coming Omar. All the best and see you next time.

O: See you.

Appendix B

An Effective Tutorial According to Gibbs' Communication Model & Grice's Maxims

1) Tutor begins the session by welcoming the student, asking how their day/ week/ course progress is going

- Tutor displays empathy and concern for the student, and shows he/she is there not just to get the session over with, but cares about getting to know the student.

- Tutor also displays empathy by using empathetic language:

“I don't blame you for being upset and frustrated about your proposal grade. I empathize because I had the same issue in ENG 204. Do you want to talk about it more? Now that you know Professor X's expectations, how do you think we can improve this paper?”

2) Tutor addresses the tutee's concerns:

- “I understand why you might not get this/ feel overwhelmed. We all are at times/ it's alright to feel this way. It's good you came to the writing center for feedback, boosting your confidence [...]”

- ❖ Maxim of manner: a straightforward address of their concerns

- ❖ Maxim of quality: stating truthful information (if appropriate, share an experience)

- ❖ Maxim of quantity: depending on how serious the issue is, spend some time addressing it/ listening to the student/ providing support. Give as much information/ support as needed

- ❖ Maxim of relation: relevant to the issue they are facing--acknowledge it

3) Tutor uses language of description:

- “I see a comma error in this sentence, but I can show you how to easily correct it. See how these two main clauses are connected with just a comma? How could the sentence be revised?”

- ❖ Tutor describes the problem to the tutee, and asks them how they would revise it before providing any suggestions.

4) Tutor responds to specific questions:

- “What does the ‘preposition view’ mean?”

“By ‘preposition view’ we mean your view as a writer. Basically what you are arguing for”

- “What is a thesis statement?”

“A thesis statement tells the reader what your paper will be about [...]”

- ❖ Maxim of manner: brief and not obscure (depending on the question)
- ❖ Maxim of quality: truthful information
- ❖ Maxim of quantity: just enough information for the tutee to confidently say they know what is being asked of them, and they know how to proceed
- ❖ Maxim of relation: give relevant and specific answers to specific questions. Try to be as specific as possible, and make sure you have given sufficient and specific answers by asking follow-up questions on the issue. Make sure your answer has satisfied the student

5) Tutor uses language of assistance:

- “The word ‘eventuate’ is hard for me to understand in this context. Let’s look up the word and make sure it’s the one you want to use.”
- ❖ Tutor guides the student in realizing why something is wrong, or why it does not work in a specific context. Thus, the tutor does not take ownership of the tutee’s ideas and language.

6) Tutor uses language of facilitation:

- “It would have been better if we had more time to work on your essay, but it’s good that you decided to come to the Writing Center. Let’s work on something specific together, alright?”
- ❖ Tutor acknowledges the problem without creating negative feelings, and creates space for problem-solving.

7) Tutor looks up an answer/ asks others to make sure/ uses handouts:

- Tutor displays use of the
- ❖ Maxim of manner: by avoiding obscurity
- ❖ Maxim of quality: by making sure to always give the best and most truthful information
- ❖ Maxim of quantity: by being informative without withholding information (depending on the tutee’s questions, needs & writing level)
- ❖ Maxim of relation: find the answer to the exact question of the student (student might ask how to cite a TED Talk or You Tube video. FIND and SHOW them the answer, as well as how to find answers to such questions by themselves in the future)

8) Tutor uses language of equality:

- “Can you tell me your position in the essay? [...] Ah, OK, you’re arguing against transracial adoption. Can you tell me what ideas you will use to support your position? Have you thought of any opposing viewpoints for your position?”

- ❖ Tutor lets the student dominate the ideas in the session, and asks questions that would help the student with their own reasoning and thinking process.

9) Tutor uses language of possibility:

- “There are also several drawbacks to the position you are mentioning. Have you thought about including them in a section of your paper?”

- “You could also split this paragraph into two for better focus and cohesion, what do you think? [...] Where do you think it would be most appropriate to split the paragraph?”

- ❖ Tutor encourages students to think critically

10) Tutor flouts the maxim of relation in order to avoid answering a question he/she shouldn’t be:

- “Will I receive an A in this paper?”

“I don’t know, but, what worries you and makes you think you might not do well in this assignment?”

OR

11) “Opts out” of the maxim of relation to avoid answering a question:

- “Will I receive an A in this paper?”

“I’m not able to answer this question”

- When the tutee is commenting on the professor:

“I have not had any previous experience with him/her, / I have not taken a course with this professor before, but all professors want to help so I am sure they would appreciate it if you talked to them about this problem”

12) Flouts the maxim of manner by asking a question instead of giving a direct answer/ being straightforward:

- To make the student think for themselves:

“What do you think is wrong with this sentence?”

- If the student has the tendency to move from one issue to the other, confusing themselves:

“Let us look at your thesis statement first, and then we can also work at your topic sentences”

Try and focus on one pressing issue at a time

Appendix C

A Not-So-Effective Tutorial

According to Gibbs' Communication Model & Grice's Maxims

- 1) Tutor does not show empathy or concern about how the student is doing/ feeling.
 - “I see that you’re upset about your research proposal grade, but let’s focus on this draft now. To get a better grade next time, you’ll have to be more careful about how you organize your ideas.”
 - ❖ Tutor uses language of indifference that creates negative feelings throughout the session. This could have a negative effect on the engagement and participation of the student in the session. It closes the door to communication.
- 2) Tutor uses language of control:
 - “Instead of using the word ‘eventuate,’ in this answer, use ‘transpired.’ It works better and eventuate is just confusing.”
 - ❖ Tutor claims ownership of ideas and the discussion. They could provide a suggestion instead.
- 3) Tutor is obscure when explaining something:
 - Non-adherence to the maxim of manner

Use words the tutee can understand instead. Be perspicuous.
- 4) Tutor uses language of evaluation:
 - “Look at this sentence. Your grammar is wrong here. You connected these two sentences with a comma, making a comma splice error.”
 - ❖ Tutor uses destructive language that makes it harder for the tutee to accept and benefit from feedback.
- 5) Tutor uses language of manipulation:
 - “Your essay is due in two hours? Oh wow. There’s not much I can do to help you at this point!”
 - ❖ Tutor creates negative feelings and does not provide the possibility for a solution to the problem.

6) Tutor comments on other things such as APA, grammar, etc. when working on e.g. a topic sentence:

- Non-adherence to the maxim of relation and manner--lack of order

7) Tutor says something without giving enough explanation/ evidence:

- Non-adherence to the maxim of quality--untruthful information & lacks evidence
- Non-adherence to the maxim of quantity--too little information which doesn't help the student gain knowledge and independence

8) Tutor is burdening the tutee with information:

- Non-adherence to the maxim of quantity-- TOO MUCH information is hard to process and creates confusion

9) Tutor leaves something important unanswered:

- Non-adherence to the maxim of quantity-- withholding information

Answer all the relevant questions in the allotted time

10) Tutor says something they are not sure about:

- Non-adherence to the maxim of quality--uncertainty

11) Tutor uses language of superiority:

- “I see here that you’re arguing against the practice of transracial adoption. Are you sure you want to argue that? There aren’t that many arguments to support your position. Let me tell you all the opposing viewpoints, and I’m pretty sure you’ll change your mind.”

❖ Tutor dominates the ideas, jumps into conclusions, and does not let the tutee explain their reasoning or organize their point of view. Perhaps the tutee even explains the opposing viewpoints in a later section in the paper.

12) Tutor uses language of certainty:

- “You shouldn’t be taking so long to explain your position in your thesis statement. You could easily summarize this in one sentence. I can assure you your professor will not be happy that it took three sentences to write your thesis.”

❖ Tutor is dogmatic and does not encourage critical thinking.