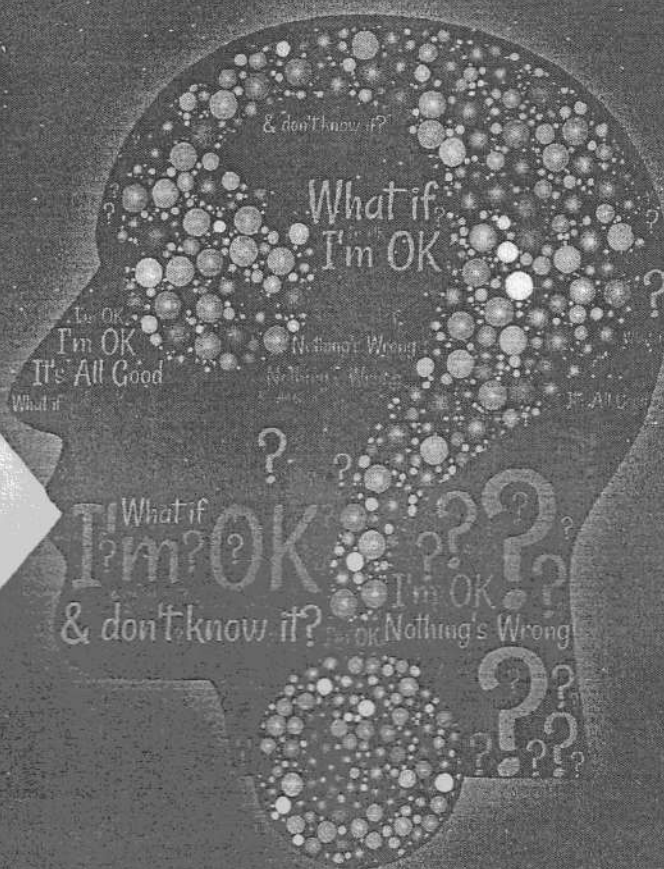


MAH/MUL/03051/2012  
ISSN-2319 9318

Issue-18, Vol-01, April to June 2017

# **vidyawarta**®

International Multilingual Research Journal



Editor  
Dr. Bapu G. Gholap



[vidyawarta.com](http://vidyawarta.com)

13) QUALITY OF LIFE OF HEARING IMPAIRED IN TAMIL NADU

Dr. K Sambath Rani-Dr. T. Geetha, Coimbatore

|| 54

14) MUSIC THERAPY OF THE BIBLE

Dr. D. Samuel Jayakumar, Coimbatore

|| 58

15) CAPITAL ADEQUACY RATIO & BANK PROFITABILITY OF SELECTED OPSBS & NPSBS

Dr. Rupali A. Shah-Miss Khadija N. Ruwala, Surat

|| 63

16) The Tradition of Preservation and Compilation of the Holy Qur'an;.....

Dr. M. Nurul Amin Sheikh, Dhubri Assam,

|| 69

17) A Study of Harold Pinter's The Dumb Waiter in the light of Co-operative Principle

Vijaykumar Ishwarlal Sonawane-Dr. Prasad Anantrao Joshi

|| 73

18) बेठमोगरा येथील मठाची ऐतिहासिक परंपरा

गुंजकर सोमनाथ लक्ष्मण, पूर्णा

|| 80

19) जल पुनर्भरण : काळाची गरज

प्रा. जोशी राजकुमार लक्ष्मीकांत, परळी-वै.

|| 83

20) महाराष्ट्रातील कृषी विज्ञान केंद्राचे कृषी विकासातील योगदान

बर्वे रामेश्वर गंगाधर, औरंगाबाद

|| 87

21) स्वातंत्र्यपूर्व काळातील दलित नियतकालिकांचे योगदान

डॉ. गायत्री सोपान गाडेकर, अंबाजोगाई.

|| 90

22) चंद्रपूर जिल्ह्यातील भूमी उपयोजनाची गतिशिलता—एक भौगोलिक अभ्यास

प्रा. विलास काळे, चंद्रपूर

|| 94

23) विदर्भातील सहकार क्षेत्रातील संस्थांना आलेल्या मरगळीस व उद्योगांच्या अधोगतीस जबाबदार कोण?

प्रा. माणिकराव एम. कवरके, जि. अकोला

|| 99

24) नटसम्राट: एक श्रेष्ठ नाट्यकृती

प्रा. डॉ. रवीन्द्रनाथ महादेवराव केवट, बल्लारपूर, जि. चंद्रपूर

|| 102



## A Study of Harold Pinter's The Dumb Waiter in the light of Co-operative Principle

Vijaykumar Ishwarlal Sonawane

Assistant Professor, Dept of English,  
M.V.P. Samaj's Arts, Science & Commerce College,  
Ozar (MIG), Nashik

Dr. Prasad Anantrao Joshi

Head, Department of English  
M.J.P. College, Mukhed, Nanded

\*\*\*\*\*

### I. Abstract

Pragmatics, which investigates meaning beyond lines, contains a number of terms like Co-operative Principle, Politeness Principle, Speech Acts, Presupposition, Implicature, Deixis etc. H. P. Grice defines CP as, Make your contribution such as required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. According to Grice, CP refers to how people interact with each other and it aims at normal behaviour of speakers through effective and efficient use of language in conversation to cooperative ends. For this Grice identified four maxims: The Maxim of Quality, The Maxim of Quantity, The Maxim of Relation and The Maxim of Manner, which are called as the maxims of conversation too, underlying the effective use of language. Hence, conversational pieces in *The Dumb Waiter* can be best interpreted with the application of CP for better comprehension of absurd communicative activities. Therefore, present study attempts to analyze Harold Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* in the light of Grice's CP.

### II. Introduction

Pragmatics, which investigates meaning beyond lines, contains a number of terms like Co-operative Principle, Politeness Principle, Speech Acts, Presupposition, Implicature, Deixis etc. An attempt has been made to throw light on significance of application of CP theory to Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter*. This will highlight inherent relation between Pragmatics and Literature. Language is regarded as a social institution which is a tool of communication. Certain principles govern human communication and CP is one of it. Through the medium of these principles, harmonious relations can be established, nurtured as well as sustained. People expect cooperativeness when they are in normal circumstances. Therefore, it is believed that authentic and comprehensive interpretation of an absurd drama can be done by application of CP.

H. P. Grice, a distinguished British Philosopher, coined the term CP in his 'William James Lecture Series' at Harvard University in 1967 (Grice 1975: 25) where he rarely mentions it as one of the prominent entities in Pragmatics. CP takes into consideration cooperativeness of interlocutors during communication. Maxims of CP are the constituent elements of CP theory which proves helpful for effective and fruitful communication. It even expands scope for conversational analysis in drama which is a dialogic discourse. Hence, conversational pieces in *The Dumb Waiter* can be best interpreted with the application of CP for better comprehension of absurd communicative activities. Therefore, present study attempts to analyze Harold Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* in the light of Grice's CP. Language gains its meaning in social environment and contexts as it is a social acquisition. Thus, it transfers information and serves the purpose of communication. The scenario of mankind has been transformed to modern age from the prehistoric state with the tool of language. Thus, Language has become

a weapon in the hands of human beings which has advanced him in various spheres of life. Prime motto of language use in the life of human beings is communication which can be oral as well as written. Literature has acquired a moulded shape with the gradual development of language. It's an interesting task to read literature and study language with an application of a pragmatic approach to a literary work.

### III. Keywords with their meanings

CP : Co-operative Principle

Implicature : the act of showing that someone is involved in a crime or partly responsible for something bad

### IV. Aims and Objectives of the Study

The study of literature can become more comprehensible when it is studied with the help of Pragmatics. Concerning the importance of Pragmatics in the study of literature, the researcher has attempted to apply Grice's CP to Harold Pinter's selected plays. The maxims of Quality, Quantity, Relation and Manner have been studied in order to highlight CP 20 when it is applied to absurd plays. It may enhance the magnitudes of cooperative strategy. This study has been undertaken to shed light on significance of observance and violation of the maxims of CP and to draw out meaning out of incomprehensive absurd communicative activities. The aims and objectives of this research are as stated below.

- i) To bring out the significance of CP as a theory of language use.
- ii) To perceive character's purpose behind observation & violation of a conversational maxim.
- iii) To investigate how notion of CP provides some explicit account and state how it is possible to mean more than what is actually communicated by characters through absurd communicative activities in Pinter's plays.
- iv) To examine linguistic experiments done by Harold Pinter as a modern absurdist playwright.

- v) To shed light on the impact of observance and violation of different maxims on overall development of characters and the theme of play.

### V. Methodology

Conversational passages from Harold Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* have been selected for the analysis. An analytical model has been developed which comprises of maxims of CP. Selected conversational exchanges have been analyzed in an order of their occurrence in play that helps to maintain development of plot. The conversational passages are selected on the basis of individual perception and varied treatment of the CP, as it is not feasible as well as practicable to analyze each and every utterance in a play. Selected conversational exchanges have been analyzed in the light of observance and violation of these maxims. They are preceded by a brief introduction about contextual environment and followed by a conclusion with exploring reasons behind the observance and violation of maxims of CP.

### VI. The Theory of Co-operative Principle

The Co-operative Principle, coined by Herbert Paul Grice (1913- 1988), a British Philosopher, is assumed as the basic concept in Pragmatics, guiding communication. He invented the fundamental conclusion as conversational exchanges are governed by an overarching principle, which he labeled as CP. This principle is based on the assumption that people cooperate with one other normally while communicating. He used this term practically not ideologically. Conversational partners in arguments, deliberate deception, lying, fiction, hypothesizing and making errors are still 'cooperating' in the pragmatic sense. Observing as well as violating CP proves to be helpful for people to improve the flexibility and accuracy in language communication. This principle is the base of Conversational Implicatures. Grice defines CP as, Make your contribution such as required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the



accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. (1975:45-46) Grice proposed this key concept in Pragmatics, in the William James Lecture Series, delivered at Harvard, in 1967. According to Grice, CP refers to how people interact with each other and it aims at normal behaviour of speakers through effective and efficient use of language in conversation to cooperative ends. Grice identified four principles, which are called as the maxims of conversation too, underlying the effective use of language. These maxims can be stated as follows.

#### **The Maxim of Quality**

(Try to make your contribution one that is true, specifically)

Do not say what you believe to be false.

Do not say for which you lack adequate evidence.

#### **The Maxim of Quantity**

(Concerning the amount of information to be conveyed)

Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).

Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

#### **The Maxim of Relation**

(Make your contribution relevant)

Make your contribution relevant to the aims of the ongoing conversation.

#### **The Maxim of Manner**

(Concerning not so much what is said as how it is said, be perspicuous)

Avoid ambiguity

Avoid obscurity of expression.

Be brief (Avoid unnecessary prolixity).

Be orderly.

### **VII. Analysis of CP in The Dumb Waiter**

On the basis of theoretical background provided above, the researcher attempts to analyze selected significant conversational exchanges from The Dumb Waiter in the light of Grice's CP. Interlocutors are expected to

follow rules laid down for correct use of language. However, in actual conversation, those rules may or may not be followed by them, which mean they may observe or violate conversational principles. Observance and violation of CP is a deliberate act having some intentions in the mind of speaker. Conversation is a collaborative act as it consists of different strategies used by the interlocutors. Those are dependent on various factors such as context of utterance, relationship between speaker and listener, psychological condition of interlocutors, socio-religious background etc. CP is concerned with study of language exchange and language behaviour. The interlocutors are made to observe and violate normal conversational activity due to above mentioned factors indicating deeper meaning of an utterance. It can be identified with the application of CP. The outcomes of present analysis are meant to examine character's conversational behaviour and investigate meaning behind what they say, how they say, where they observe and violate conversational maxims and the possible reasons behind it. Analysis is focused on character's observance and violation of maxims of CP and inquires about way in which characters observe and violate these maxims. The conversational passages are selected on the basis of individual perception and varied treatment of the CP, as it is not feasible as well as practicable to analyze each and every utterance in a play.

### **Analysis of Conversational Exchanges from The Dumb Waiter**

#### **Conversational Exchange 1**

#### **Contextual Background**

Ben is reading the newspaper with a great interest and he has kept his eye on Gus' activities too. In between, he has the habit of reading few bits from the newspaper to Gus.

#### **Conversation**

BEN. What about this? Listen to this! He refers to the paper. A man of eighty – seven wanted to cross the road. But there was a lot of

traffic, see? He couldn't see how he was going to squeeze through. So he crawled under a lorry.

GUS. He what?

BEN. He crawled under a lorry. A stationary lorry. (DW: 36)

### Interpretation of Conversation and CP Analysis

Ben reflects his habit of reading out bits from newspaper to Gus. He reads newspaper which states as an old man failed to cross the road due to heavy traffic and came under the lorry. He was unable to judge how he was squeezing through it and reads as he crawled under a lorry. Gus in reply, as if he has not listened, say that 'he what?' Ben repeats that he crawled under a lorry, a stationary lorry.

In the above conversational exchange, Gus has violated maxim of manner as he hasn't paid the attention to Ben though he has said to do so. He in reply asks question to Ben. His lack of attentiveness gets reflected through his violation. Ben too, violates the maxim of quantity by referring to lorry for two times. However, he violates this maxim to tell Gus about the particular lorry. It is quite noticing that Ben is interested in reading the news to Gus which focuses death. Hence, Ben is indirectly expressing his sinister purpose if killing Gus.

### Conversational Exchange 2

#### Contextual Background

Ben and Gus are discussing about the incident of the old man who came under the lorry. Gus calls it as unbelievable and incredible. After a short silence they begin conversation.

#### Conversation

GUS. I want to ask you something.

BEN. What are you doing out there?

GUS. Well, I was just—

BEN. What about the tea?

GUS. I'm just going to make it. (DW: 36)

### Interpretation of Conversation and CP Analysis

Gus wishes to ask something to Ben but he doesn't listen to him. Instead, he asks him

question that what he is doing outside. When Gus begins to speak he interrupts him and asks him about the tea. Gus replies positively as he is just going to make it. Ben has not paid attention to Gus' demand of asking something. On contrary, he asks him what he is doing out there. He even interrupts him while he is about to give answer. Thus, Ben violates maxim of manner and shows his aggressive nature as well as his will to have a complete hold of Gus. Gus, on the other side, obeys Ben's order and gives a positive relevant reply in brief to his question about tea. Thus, he observes maxims of quality, quantity, relation and manner. He shows his generous and submissive nature with his observance of these maxims while Ben shows his domineering nature with the violation of maxim of manner.

### Conversational Exchange 3

#### Contextual Background

Gus is providing a description of crockery where he mentions the round cup, saucer's black, plates, black stripe etc. Ben gets the question why he needs the plates for.

#### Conversation

BEN (still reading). What do you want plates for? You're not going to eat.

GUS. I've brought a few biscuits.

BEN. Well, you'd better eat them quick.

GUS. I always bring a few biscuits. Or a pie. You know I can't drink tea without anything to eat. (DW: 37)

### Interpretation of Conversation and CP Analysis

Ben has asked a question about the need of plates to Gus as he predicts that he is not going to eat anything. Gus replies that he has some biscuits. Ben forces him to eat those quickly as it'd be better for them. Gus in response, says that he always bring biscuits or a pie. He reminds Ben that he cannot drink tea without having anything to eat. Gus observes maxims of quality and relation when he says that he has brought a few biscuits. Ben suggests



him to eat those quickly. Gus while answering, instead of eating biscuits, says that it's difficult for him to drink tea without having something to eat. Thus, he has unnecessarily provided the information which is not required and has violated maxim of quantity. His talkative nature gets revealed here with this violation which implies that he is just a chatterbox.

#### **Conversational Exchange 4**

##### **Contextual Background**

Gus asks Ben whether he has noticed the time taken to fill by lavatory tank to which Ben replies negatively. Gus calls it as terrible and Ben asks him that what about it then. Gus wishes that Ben should predict about it but Ben replies negatively. After his forceful question Ben replies that it has got a deficient ball cock. But Gus seems to be disagreeing with him. Gus looks at the picture on the wall.

##### **Conversation**

GUS. 'The First Eleven'. Cricketers. You seen this, Ben?

BEN (reading). What?

GUS. The first eleven.

BEN. What?

GUS. There's a photo here of the first eleven.

BEN. What the first eleven?

GUS (studying the photo). It doesn't say. (DW: 39)

##### **Interpretation of Conversation and CP Analysis**

Gus has been watching the picture on the wall. He utters that it's the first eleven cricketers. He asks Ben whether he has seen it. In reply, while reading Ben asks him what he is talking about. Gus replies as the first eleven. Ben incomprehensively asks him again what. Gus repeats as there is a photo of the first eleven. Ben again asks what the first eleven and Gus replies that photo doesn't give any indication about it. Gus violates maxim of quality in the above conversational exchange as he first utters as the photo is of the first eleven cricketers and later on changes his own

statement. He violates maxim of manner with the creation of an ambiguous environment. His confused state of mind reflects here. However, Ben seems to be uninterested for having conversation with him. He tries to speak very less with Gus and line outs his plan to kill him.

#### **Conversational Exchange 5**

##### **Contextual Background**

Though Gus is insisting about a photo of cricketers, Ben seems to be unenthusiastic about his speech. He tries to avoid him by observing the photo and giving a negative reply that photo doesn't show any kind of symptoms that it is of first eleven cricketers. To move Gus' attention from his claim, Ben asks him about the tea. Still, Gus seems to stick on same thing and gives a vague reply that they (perhaps cricketers) all look indifferent to him. Then afterwards, Gus wanders downstage, looks out front and then looks at the whole room. He complains to Ben that he don't want to live in that dump room and wishes to have a window for that room.

##### **Conversation**

BEN. What do you want a window for?

GUS. Well, I like to have a bit of a view, Ben. It whiles away the time.

He walks about the room. I mean, you come into a place when it's still dark, you come into a room you've never seen before, you sleep all day, you do your job, and then you go away in the night again.

Pause.

I like to get a look at the scenery. You never get the chance in this job. (DW: 40)

##### **Interpretation of Conversation and CP Analysis**

When Gus demands to have a window for the room, Ben surprisingly asks the purpose of his wish for window. Gus replies that he wants to look outside the room and have a glance at outside view and adds that it passes the time. He then prefers to walk about the room. He proceeds his speech and says that this activity

is necessary for them as they've come to this place when it is in dark and even place is as such that haven't ever seen before, an unknown place. He takes pause in between and continues that he prefers to look at the scenery as he likes it and it is even true that they are not getting opportunities to have a look at scenery in the present job. As Ben has asked a question to Gus about his purpose for demanding window for the room, it is expected that Gus should give answer to this question. In reply, Gus tells to Ben that he likes to have a bit of view as it passes the time. Thus, Gus has observed the maxim of relation by giving relevant answer. However, after a short walk in the room, Gus continues a lengthy and unnecessary speech that the room is very dark and even it has never seen before by both of them. They sleep all the day; they do their job and even go away in the night again. With a pause in his speech he comes on the same track and says that he likes to look at the scenery and they do not get any chance to have a glance at scenery in this job. Thus, with the continuation of his speech, Gus has violated maxim of quantity where he has given information which is more than required. It is noteworthy that through his violation of quantity maxim, Gus tells indirectly to Ben that they are doing a risky job in which they have to live at an unknown place in darkness where even a bit of scenery cannot be seen easily.

#### VIII. Conclusion

The present research paper has successfully attempted to observe Pinter's core dramatic innovations in terms of his use of language. The characters often communicate using incomplete sentences, using utter illogical statements, repeating the same words, sentences and taking pauses for no apparent reasons. The characters change their use of language, attitude and mind-set as per the situation in which they are placed. They have not fully violated or entirely observed all the maxim of CP. At certain instances, some

characters have violated and observed either maxim of quality or quantity and at another, some characters have violated and observed maxim of relation or manner in order to fulfil their interactional purposes.

This research paper intensifies the truth that words, when used in context, become significant and alive through conversational activities. It even projects that words can express meaning beyond the lines when uttered in context. It has been perceived that CP is an influential pragmatic concept which enables the way to arrive at exact meanings conveyed through the seeming absurd conversational activities. The major conclusions derived from present research paper are as under.

- i) Conversational activities become more comprehensive as well as interesting with application and analysis of CP in *The Dumb Waiter* which reflects significance of CP as a theory of language use.
- ii) CP is observed and violated intentionally as well as accidentally through absurd communicative activities.
- iii) Conversational purposes of the interlocutors are fulfilled even when CP is observed or violated.
- iv) Conversational activities are found enhanced with interest when CP is violated.
- v) CP is violated as a necessity of ongoing communicative activity and for purpose of creating menace, hiding identity and so on.
- vi) Occurrence of violation of conversational maxim is more frequent than the observance.
- vii) It is an intricate task to investigate characters' past whereabouts in the play due to their failure in producing valid & convincing evidences about themselves. For example, we can't get valid information concerning past whereabouts of Gus and Ben in *The Dumb Waiter*.
- viii) Silences, pauses and gaps between the conversations in an absurd play reveal



characters' insecurity, unknown threat resulting into their inefficiency in the use of language and disturbed relations.

- ix) The way in which characters observe and violate the maxim of conversation explore their mental, physical state, relations with each other, struggle for survival; efforts to acquire control over the situation.
- x) Maxims of CP reveal obscurity in the use of language, burden of outside reality on the characters and their behaviour in absurd plays.
- xi) Character's observance of CP shows their agreement of views and violation shows disagreement which expresses their relationship.
- xii) Quantity maxim is violated due to creation of image by certain characters in the ongoing conversational activities.
- xiii) Ben, in *The Dumb Waiter*, remains silent without replying to Gus's constant questions about the nature of their job. It is the violation of maxim of manner. There is sinister purpose of killing Gus behind his silence.
- xiv) Ben is found interested in reading various news for Gus that highlight death, which is an instance of violation of maxim of quantity on the part of Ben.
- xv) Ben shows his domineering nature by insulting Gus for many times through violating maxim of manner.
- xvi) Both Ben and Gus violate maxim of quantity at many instances. It indicates violence nearing to death. Gus by violating maxim of quantity reveals his uncomfortable feelings about their current place of residence as well as job.

#### Bibliography

##### Primary Sources:

- ♦ Grice, H. P. (1975). *Logic and Conversation*, In P. Cole and J. Morgan (eds) *Studies in Syntax and Semantics III: Speech Acts*, New York: Academic Press, pp. 183-98.

- ♦ Pinter, Harold (1957). *The Dumb Waiter*. London: Methuen.

##### Secondary Sources:

- ♦ Akmajian, A. et al. (2003). *Linguistics: An Introduction to Language and Communication*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall.
- ♦ Aitchinson, Jean. (1994). *Words in the Mind: An Introduction to the Mental Lexicon*. Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell. (Second Edition).
- ♦ Allan, K. (2001). *Natural Language Semantics*. Oxford, Massachusetts: Blackwell.
- ♦ Allwood J. et al. (1977). *Logic in Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- ♦ Austin, J. L. (1962). *How To Do Things With Words*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- ♦ Behera, G. C. (1998). *Reality and Illusion in the Plays of Harold Pinter*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers.
- ♦ Kates, K.A. (1980). *Pragmatics and Semantics: An Empiricist Theory*. London, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- ♦ Leech, G.N. (1974). *Semantics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- ♦ Leech, G.N. (1983). *Principles of Pragmatics*. London and New York: Longman.

