

## Practice Test Topic 2: Grice's Cooperative Principle

### ACTIVITY 1

Determine the maxim(s) that is/are flouted in the following sentences. Indicate the resulting implicature.

- (a) *Example.* The neighbours are having a party tonight. It's going to be a short night's sleep.

Maxim flouted: relevance; Implicature: My neighbours are very noisy; there's going to be a lot of noise.

- (b) A: Have you seen *All About My Mother*?

B: I don't like Almodóvar.

- (c) A: Is John good at teaching?

B: John is a good researcher.

- (d) How did you like my essay?

Well, printers do wonderful things these days.

### ACTIVITY 2

What might the second speaker 'mean' in each of the following dialogues? Write a pragmatic paraphrase in each case, and think about how you inferred this meaning.

- (a) Virginia: Do you like my new hat?

Mary: It's pink!

- (b) Maggie: Coffee?

James: It would keep me awake all night.

- (c) Linda: Have you finished the student evaluation forms and the reading lists?

Jean: I've done the reading lists.

- (d) Phil: Are you going to Steve's barbecue?

Terry: Well, Steve's got those dogs now.

- (e) Annie: Was the dessert any good?

Mike: Annie, cherry pie is cherry pie.

### ACTIVITY 3

Let's look at the responses in the previous exercise – this time, with a different utterance from the first speaker. The content of the second speaker's utterance remains the same, but does the meaning remain the same? Write a pragmatic paraphrase for the second speaker's response in each dialogue.

- (a) Virginia: Try the roast pork.  
Mary: It's pink!
- (b) Maggie: We went to see *The Omen* last night but it wasn't very scary.  
James: It would keep me awake all night.
- (c) Linda: You look very pleased with yourself.  
Jean: I've done the reading lists.
- (d) Phil: His garden looks awful.  
Terry: Well, Steve's got those dogs now.
- (e) Annie: I thought the pie would cheer you up.  
Mike: Annie, cherry pie is cherry pie.

### ACTIVITY 4

Now return to the dialogues (a), (b) and (e) in activity 2. How do you think the first speaker would interpret the second speakers' response if you had the following extra information?

- Pink is Mary's favourite colour and Virginia knows this.
- James has to stay up all night to study for an exam and Maggie knows this.
- Mike loves cherry pie. As far as he's concerned, no one can ruin a cherry pie, and Annie knows this.

**ANSWER KEY:**

**ACTIVITY 1**

(b) A: Have you seen All About My Mother?

B: I don't like Almodóvar.

Maxim: Relevance; Implicature: I haven't seen the film.

(c) A: Is John good at teaching?

B: John is a good researcher.

Maxim: Relevance; Implicature: He's not a good teacher.

(d) How did you like my essay?

Well, printers do wonderful things these days.

Maxim: Relevance; Implicature: the essay was awful.

**ACTIVITY 2**

(a) Virginia: Do you like my new hat?

Mary: It's pink!

Maxim: Relevance; paraphrase: I don't like it/ I love it!

(b) Maggie: Coffee?

James: It would keep me awake all night.

Maxim: relevance; paraphrase: No, thank you // Yes, please (it depends on the context)

(c) Linda: Have you finished the student evaluation forms and the reading lists?

Jean: I've done the reading lists.

Maxim: quantity; paraphrase: I haven't done the student evaluation forms.

(d) Phil: Are you going to Steve's barbecue?

Terry: Well, Steve's got those dogs now.

Maxim: relevance; paraphrase: No, I'm not, because I'm afraid of dogs.

(e) Annie: Was the dessert any good?

Mike: Annie, cherry pie is cherry pie.

Maxim: quantity; paraphrase: It was nothing out of the ordinary // I loved it! (depends on the context).

**ACTIVITY 3**

(a) Virginia: Try the roast pork.

Mary: It's pink!

Maxim: relevance; paraphrase: It's undercooked!

- (b) Maggie: We went to see *The Omen* last night but it wasn't very scary.  
James: It would keep me awake all night.

Maxim: relevance; paraphrase: I get scared very easily.

- (c) Linda: You look very pleased with yourself.  
Jean: I've done the reading lists.

Maxim: relevance; paraphrase: I thought I'd never finish these reading lists, and having finished them makes me very happy.

- (d) Phil: His garden looks awful.  
Terry: Well, Steve's got those dogs now.

Maxim: relevance; paraphrase: It's not his fault.

- (e) Annie: I thought the pie would cheer you up.  
Mike: Annie, cherry pie is cherry pie.

Maxim: quantity; paraphrase: It was nothing out of the ordinary.

#### ACTIVITY 4

**Now return to the dialogues (a), (b) and (e) in activity 3. How do you think the first speaker would interpret the second speakers' response if you had the following extra information?**

- Pink is Mary's favourite colour and Virginia knows this: she loves the hat!
- James has to stay up all night to study for an exam and Maggie knows this: he'd love a coffee then!
- Mike loves cherry pie. As far as he's concerned, no one can ruin a cherry pie, and Annie knows this: he's surprised that she asks whether he liked it or not. Come on, cherry pie is cherry pie! Of course I liked it!