

BICULTURALISM IN ACHEBE'S NO LONGER AT EASE: A PRAGMATICS ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Biculturalism means having or combining two cultures. A bicultural setting is a social or geographical setting where two cultures coexist. Biculturalism involves at least two cultures that intersect and/or collide to produce such a contextual meaning that an utterance which may mean one thing in one culture may reveal an entirely different meaning in another culture or cultural context. Obi Okonkwo, the protagonist of Achebe's No Longer at Ease, is a child of two cultures: the Igbo culture and the English culture. In order to understand Obi's utterances and actions, you have to understand the specific context (and its implicature) in which he is making those utterances. This calls for a pragmatics reading or account of Obi Okonkwo's utterances and actions as a quintessential bicultural person and character. Themes like biculturalism, border-crossing, migration, and hybridity can be revealed in a pragmatics analysis of the Achebean masterpiece, No Longer at Ease. The researchers will however concentrate on the theme of biculturalism and its specific meanings, using the theoretical tools of Gricean Pragmatics

Key Words: Biculturalism, Pragmatics, Implicature, maxims, context

Introduction

Biculturalism is the presence of two different cultures in the same individual, the same country or region. Pragmatics studies the way in which context contributes to meaning. This paper rests on a quarter pod of four interrelated objectives. The first is to examine how a cultural context as gleaned from utterances contributes to meaning; in other words, how the transmission of meaning depends not only on structural or linguistic knowledge of the speaker and listener but also on the context of the utterance, the inferred intent of the speaker. In this respect, a pragmatics reading of Achebe's *No Longer At Ease* explains how characters as language users are able to overcome apparent ambiguity since meaning relies on the manner, place and time of an utterance. An example is Obi Okonkwo's address to the Umuofia Progressive Union. The address reveals the whole question of the ability to understand another speaker's intended meaning. The ability to understand another speaker's intended meaning is called pragmatics competence. The second is to study the speaker's meaning or the speaker's intentions and beliefs, and the study of the speaker's meaning in context requires knowledge of the speaker's identities, place and time of the utterances. The third is to study fundamental implicatures, that is, the things that are communicated even though they are not explicitly expressed. The fourth is to study the ambiguity of cultural and intercultural expressions, for

without knowing the speaker's intent it is difficult to infer the meaning of an utterance with certainty. These four objectives will therefore provide the conceptual frame of reference for this study's pragmatics discourse of biculturalism in Chinua Achebe's *No Longer at Ease*.

This paper will rest on the theoretical foundation of H.P. Grice's Theory of Conversational Implicature. One of his two most influential contributions to the study of language and communication is his Theory of Meaning, which he began to develop in his article "Meaning," written in 1948 but published only in 1957 at the prodding of his colleague, P. F. Strawson. Grice further developed his theory of meaning in the 5th and 6th of his William James lectures on "Logic and Conversation," delivered at Harvard in 1967. These two lectures were initially published as "Utterer's Meaning and Intentions" in 1969 and "Utterer's Meaning, Sentence Meaning, and Word Meaning" in 1968, and were later collected with the other lectures as the first section of *Studies in the Way of Words* in 1989. But Grice's most groundbreaking contribution to philosophy and linguistics is his theory of implicature which started in his 1961 article, "The Causal Theory of Perception," and is most fully developed in his 1967 "Logic and Conversation." According to Grice (1967), what a speaker means by an utterance can be divided into what the speaker "says" and what the speaker thereby "implicates." This results in what Grice calls Conversational Implicature. To conversationally implicate something, according to Grice, is to mean something that goes beyond what one says in such a way that it must be inferred from non-linguistic features of a conversational situation together with general principles of communication and cooperation. To Grice, a conversational implicature is, therefore, something which is implied in a conversation, that is, something which is left implicit in actual language use. In other words, implicature provides some explicit account of how it is possible to mean more than what is actually said. Grice then goes on to propound his theory of implicature which he calls the Cooperative Principle. The Cooperative Principle, according to Grice, is a norm governing all cooperative interactions among humans and it consists of four conversational maxims: Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Manner and Relation.

From the foregoing, one could simply ask the question as to why the speakers' utterance can mean different things at different times on different occasions. Another question is how one can interpret what the words actually mean on a certain specific occasion. Also why don't people just say what they mean? According to Thomas (1995, p. 1-3), several interesting questions arise from observations. He asserts: "If speakers regularly mean something other than what they say, how is it that people manage to understand one another if a single group of words such as "it's hot in here" could mean so many different things at different times, [in different contexts], how could one work out what it actually does mean on one occasion as opposed to the other? And why don't people just say what they mean? To him, these and many other similar issues are addressed within the area of linguistics known as pragmatics. Simply put, pragmatics is a field of study that shows how language is used to send messages that are not directly related to the additive value of the raw linguistic data of the utterance. Thomas (1995, p. 1-2) posits that "in the early 1980s, when it became common to discuss pragmatics in general textbooks on linguistics, the most common definition of pragmatics was: meaning in use or meaning in context, in other words, contextualized meaning.

Synopsis of the Novel

No Longer at Ease is a continuation of Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*. We are told that the protagonist of the novel (Obi) is the grandson of Okonkwo, the central character of *Things Fall Apart*. The novel begins with the end of the story, which is the docking and sentencing of Obi Okonkwo for taking a bribe of twenty pounds. Then the story goes back in time to trace the concatenation of events which lead to the humiliation of Obi Okonkwo. Obi Okonkwo comes home after four years of studying English in England. During the trip back home, he gets to know the nurse Clara who also studied in England and whom he had met once at the N.C.N.C. dance in London. Back home in Nigeria the two begin a love affair. This affair is to cause a major problem between Obi and the Umuofia Progressive Union. The Umuofia Progressive Union in Lagos had raised eight hundred pounds to pay for Obi's studies in England. They expect him to pay this money back so that it could be used for further scholarships. Besides, the Union count it a big blessing that one of their sons will now be one of the "been-tos", with a good government job. However, Obi turns out, in their opinion, a disappointment. To add insult to injury he decides to marry an Osu, Clara. The Union tries in vain to stop him.

Obi comes home with all the high ideals of a been-to. But then the hard realities of living in two worlds begin to hit him in the face. As secretary to the Scholarship Board he refuses to bow down to a cascade of corrupt offers being made to him. Meanwhile, he gradually sinks into a swamp of debts. There are electric bills to be paid; schools fees of his younger brother cannot wait; his old parents at home need his financial support; and there is the eight hundred pounds owed the Umuofia Progressive Union to be cleared. As if this mountain of debt was not enough, Obi loses the fifty pounds he has borrowed from Clara to settle some of his debts.

Furthermore, his insistence on marrying an osu alienated Obi from his kinsmen in Lagos. Obi's difficulty gets even much more complicated after his parents' refusal to give their blessing to the marriage. For his mother, marrying Clara can only take place over her dead body. On returning to Lagos after the horrifying home visit where he has met his waterloo over the issue of Clara, Obi loses any hope of marrying Clara. He persuades her to abort his child she is carrying, having made up his mind that the marriage is not likely to take place. This abortion extinguishes any hope still remaining of marrying Clara. On top of all that, his mother dies. Confused, deeply in debt and finding no hope of escaping from a circle of woes, Obi finally yields to the temptation of bribery. He is arrested when he accepts twenty pounds marked by the police to trap him, and sentenced. "Everybody wondered why. The learned judge, as we have seen, could not comprehend how an educated young man and so on and so forth. The British Council man, even the men of Umuofia, did not know. And we must presume that, in spite of his certitude, Mr Green did not know either." (NLE 154)

Analysis

Here, the study will identify specific passages, dialogue and character utterances which speak to Gricean Conversational Implicature and try to ascertain to what extent they reveal utterer's or speaker's intent. The paper will also examine how cultural context contributes to the meaning of the utterances. In addition, time will be spent studying the speaker's intentions and belief and how they require knowledge of the speaker's identities, and place and time of the utterances.

There are certain bicultural extracts from the novel that could be analyzed in the light of Conversational Implicature Theory by Grice:

Extract 1

An in-law went to see his in-law

Oyiemu___o

His in-law seized him and killed him

Oyiemu___o

Bring a canoe, bring a paddle

Oyiemu___o

The paddle speaks English

Oyiemu___o (NLE, 42)

This song is used by the narrator in this novel to show that things have really fallen apart in the lives of the Umuofia people. The unexpected has happened. This song deploys the literary tools of hyperbole and irony to capture the situation of things in Umuofia. These hyperboles and verbal ironies used by the narrator are a clear violation of the maxims of quantity, quality and manner. The maxim of quantity is violated when the narrator tries to trigger implicature by giving the impression that an in-law is killed by an in-law and the paddle speaks English rather than simply saying that the culture of Umuofia has been tampered with. She uses hyperbole (exaggeration) to paint the situation. There is no evidence to show that the paddle speaks English. That again violates the maxim of quality. It is undoubtedly a verbal irony, and ironies do not capture the true picture of any situation. The maxim of manner is also violated here since the reader has to make extra effort, needlessly, to understand the meaning of the song.

Extract 2

Do not trouble yourself Ogbuefi Odogwu, said Okonkwo

I am not refusing to place a kola nut before you.

What I say is that it will not be used as a heathen sacrifice in my house. (NLE,47)

This statement is made within the context of the conflict between the European-Christian culture and the Igbo tradition, which conflict mirrors the difference between the convert Isaac Okonkwo and the traditional religion believer Ogbuefi Odogwu. Reading the conflict in the light of pragmatics, one can see that the Igbo language user is habitually employing hyperboles or exaggerated utterances that contravene one of the four cardinal maxims of Grice maxim of quantity, which emphasizes the use of not too much or too little information (but sufficient information) to communicate an idea.

Extract 3

‘Good morning’, he said, smiling broadly.

‘Good morning,’ she said, and made to pass.

‘Thank you for the tablets’, he said in Ibo.

‘Did they make you feel better?’, she asked in English.

This conversation is between Clara and Obi. It is an indicator of biculturalism. It clearly violates the Grice’s _____ maxims _____ of _____ manner _____ and relation. The apparent code switching between two languages ___English and Igbo___ introduces an

unnecessary imprecision which undermines the Gricean dictum about the use of precise unambiguous language. It also undermines the maxim of relation in which Grice enjoins us to stay on point and remain faithful and relevant.

Extract 4: (Background: The following conversation between Obi and Joseph takes place in the first night of the few days the former spends in the latter's lodgings in Obalende, while passing through Lagos to the United Kingdom. This is Obi's first time in Lagos and Joseph has so much to gist him).

Joseph (T1): Dancing is very important nowadays. No girl will look at you if you can't dance. I first met Joy at the dancing school.

Obi (T1): Who is Joy?

Joseph (T2): She was my girl-friend for let's see..... March, April, May, June, July- for five months. She made these pillow cases for me. She was a nice girl but sometimes very foolish. Sometimes, though, I wish we hadn't broken up. She was simply mad about me; and she was a virgin when I met her, which is very rare here... (NLE, P.12-13)

It is literally not true that no girl will look at a man simply because he cannot dance. Again, the utterance is a case of the fallacy of hasty generalization, so that Joseph merely underscores implicitly the possibility of good dancing-skill as what can spark off a sexual relationship between two individuals. Joseph, therefore, flouts the maxims of quality and quantity in his first turn. More so, he (Joseph) tends to say more than is necessary in his reply to Obi's question 'who is Joy?' which is another flouting of the quantity maxim. His response is also devoid of brevity, which is against the maxim of manner.

Extract 5: (background: Obi has returned from the United Kingdom. After his interview with the Public Service Commission, he tells Joseph what has transpired during the interview, and has been reprimanded by Joseph for being angry (Joseph's opinion is that a man in need of a job cannot afford to be angry.). Having been eating for a while the food brought to them by Mark in silence, Obi breaks the silence as both friends discuss Joseph's impending marriage.

Obi (T1): You know you have changed a good deal in four years. Then you had two interests - Politics and women.

Joseph (T1): You don't do politics on an empty stomach.

Obi (T2): Agreed. What about women? I have been two days here now and I haven't seen one Yet.

Joseph (T2): Didn't I tell you I was getting married?

Obi (T3): So what? (NLE, P.37)

Joseph flouts the quantity maxim in his first conversational turn by his response reflecting only the 'politics' aspect in Obi's question and with the 'women' aspect completely left out. This makes his contribution to the exchange less informative than the question requires.

Extract 6: (Background: While waiting to find out if he will be employed by the Public Service Commission, Obi makes his first visit to his hometown Umuofia. His home coming is a grand affair and as such, his people have come in their large numbers to welcome him in a celebratory mood. The following conversations are between Isaac Okonkwo and a kinsman and they border on certain ideological principles).

Kinsman (T1): Azik, bring us a kola nut to break for this child's return.

Isaac Okonkwo (T1): This is a Christian house.

Kinsman (T2): A Christian house where kola nut is not eaten?

Isaac Okonkwo (T2): Kola nut is eaten here; but not sacrificed to idols.

Kinsman (T3): Who talked about sacrificed? Here is a little child returned from wrestling in the spirit world and you sit there blabbing about house and idols, talking like a man whose palm-wine has gone into his nose. (NLE, P. 46-47)

Isaac Okonkwo's response to the elderly kinsman's utterance is a visible flouting of the quantity maxim because of its much weaker and less informativeness; and the fact that his interlocutor (i.e. the elderly kinsman) can hardly gather maximum information with minimal processing effort (as it almost resulted in a breakdown in communication but for the intervention of Isaac Okonkwo) justifies that the response is a flout of the maxim of relation. Besides, the elderly kinsman's assertion of what is not well-founded and a claim which he lacks adequate evidence (i.e. that Obi returned from wrestling in the spirit world) is a flagrant violation of the quality maxim. What is more, the claim by the elderly kinsman that Isaac Okonkwo is 'blabbing' is literally false and therefore another flouting of the maxim of quality.

Extract 7: (background: That night, after the kinsmen and other visitors have gone away and other members of the family have also retired to bed, Obi and his father Isaac Okonkwo have a heart-to-heart talk).

Isaac Okonkwo (T1): Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word.

Obi (T1): What is that, father?

Isaac Okonkwo(T2): Sometimes, fear came upon me that I might not be spared to see your return.

Obi (T2): Why? You seem as strong as ever.

Isaac Okonkwo (T3): Tomorrow we shall all worship at church. The pastor has agreed to make it a special service for you.

Obi (T3): But is it necessary, father? Is it not enough that we pray together here as we prayed this night?

Isaac Okonkwo (T4): It is necessary. It is good to pray at home but better to pray in God's house Did you have time to read your bible while you were there?

Obi (T4): Sometimes, but it was the bible written in the English language.

Isaac Okonkwo (T5): Yes, I see. (NLE, P. 51)

Obi's assertion in his (T2) that his father is as strong as ever is literally not true but a mere compliment. He therefore flouts the quality maxim. Again, his response in his (T4) 'sometimes' to his father's question as to whether he did have time to read his bible while in the United Kingdom is also untrue, and another blatant flouting of the quality maxim. The rest of what follows in that response 'but it was the bible written in the English language' constitutes saying more than is required in the conversational situation (which is a flout on the quantity maxim) and tends towards irrelevance. The derivable implicatures are that Obi uses the language in which the Bible he used

while in Britain is written to excuse his inability to read his verses fairly at prayers that evening and that the one he is meant to read from, now that he is back, is written in the Igbo Language.

Extract 8: (Background: Upon Obi's return from the United Kingdom several years later, he finds himself waiting for his girl friend Clara in one of the poorer neighbourhoods in Lagos. Obviously, he does not fancy the vibrant life that is juxtaposed with the dirty smells of the city. He finds the general lifestyle of that part of the city quite irritating).

Obi (T1): I can't understand why you should choose your dressmaker from the slums.

Clara (T1): (Clara's response was a hum) 'chesarasara' (NLE, P.15)

An utterance in any conversational exchange is expected to attract a reply but certainly not the type offered by Clara. She tries to be enigmatic by saying nothing but humming. Obi, however, assumes she is being cooperative and attempts to figure out the possible implicit meaning: that it is her choice and not his. Clara in her conversational turn flouts the maxim of manner since she is not communicating clearly.

Extract 9: (Background: Having been given to spending a lot, occasioned by the enormous responsibilities he has got to shoulder, Obi experiences a serious financial difficulty that makes him borrow 50 pounds from the bank with a deliberate attempt to conceal it from his girl friend –

Clara who later funds out).

Clara (T1): Why didn't you tell me?

Obi (T1): Well, there was no need. I'll pay it easily in five monthly installments.

Clara (T2): That's not the point. You don't think I should be told when you're in difficulty.

Obi (T2): I wasn't in difficulty. I wouldn't have mentioned it if you hadn't pressed me.

Clara (T3): I see.

Obi (T3): (after some moment of silence on the part of Clara) it's very rude to be reading when you have a visitor.

Clara (T4): You should have known I was very badly brought up. (NLE, P. 92-93)

Obi flagrantly flouts the maxim of quality in his second conversational turn, when he deliberately says what he knows to be untrue (that he is not in difficulty). Clara, on the other hand, flouts the maxims of quantity and quality in her third and fourth conversational turns respectively. In the third turn, Clara says too little and she is less informative, while in the fourth turn she means the exact opposite of her utterance, and further implicitly underscores Obi's insensitivity to her role as his girl friend and perhaps his fiancée.

Extract 10: (background : Clara and Obi converse as they drive back to Ikoyi from Tinubu Square where they have dropped one Miss Mark who has visited Obi (unexpectedly) in her quest to ensure she is selected to appear before the scholarship board, so that she can have a chance at getting the scholarship.)

Clara (T1): I'm sorry I came at such an awkward time.

Obi (T1): Don't be ridiculous. What do you mean awkward time?

Clara (T2): You thought I was on duty. I'm sorry about that. Who is she, anyway? I must say she is very good-looking. And I went and poured sand into your garri. I'm sorry, my dear.

Obi (T2): I won't say another word to you if you don't shut up.

Clara (T3): You needn't say anything if you don't want to. Shall we call and say hello to Sam? (NLE, P. 85-86)

Clara's utterance in her first conversational turn is not only ironical, but also a sarcastic one. It is therefore an unambiguous flouting of the quality maxim. She further violates the same quality maxim by her metaphorical uses of the 'sand' and 'garri' in her second turn.

Extract 11: (Background: The following conversations between Obi and Clara are subsequent to the ones they both have while returning from Tinubu square to Ikoyi. After calling at Hon. Sam's place, and on getting back to Obi's flat, Obi explains Mr. Mark's visit to his office and gives as well a detailed account of all that transpired between Miss Mark and himself before Clara's arrival).

Obi (T1): Are you satisfied?

Clara (T1): I think you were too severe on the man.

Obi (T2): You think I should have encouraged him to talk about bribing me?

Clara (T2): After all, offering money is not as bad as offering one's body. And yet you gave her a drink and a lift back to town. Na so this world be. (NLE, P.86)

Clara could have simply said 'No' and 'Yes' in her first and second turns respectively and these would convey the maximum amount of information as required by Obi's first and second questions in that order. However, she offers responses that apparently do not advance his conversational goals. By giving these much weaker and less informative responses, Clara demonstrates a level of non-cooperation and flouts the maxim of quantity. The pragmatics implication is that Obi, by assuming Clara is cooperative, is prompted to work out the implicit meaning that Clara considers his (Obi's) judgment as irrational or unsatisfactory.

Extract 12: (Background: Obi's father sends a letter to ask Obi to come home, not only to visit his ailing mother, but also to discuss an urgent matter. Obi is granted two weeks' leave and he wastes no time in setting out for home. The following conversations are the prelude to the serious talks between Obi and his father).

Isaac Okonkwo (T1): How were all our people in Lagos when you left them?

Obi (T1): Lagos is a very big place. You can travel the distance from here to Abame and still be in Lagos.

Isaac Okonkwo (T2): So they said. But you have a meeting of Umuofia people?

Obi (T2): Yes. We have a meeting. But it is only once a month. It is not always that one finds time to attend.

Isaac Okonkwo (T3): True. But in a strange land, one should always move near one's kinsmen. (NLE, P.119)

Obi's first turn (T1) which is a response to his father's first question is unarguably a flouting of the maxim of relevance. This is because it literally does not answer his father's question and neither

does it advance his father's conversational goal (of wanting to learn how their fellow villagers in Lagos are faring). However, upon his father's assumption that he (Obi) is being cooperative, his

father is prompted to work out the implicature which (he succeeded in doing) that Obi's response is an implicit way of admitting and excusing his not having seen nor heard from them in a while. This obviously must have triggered his father's second question: "But to you have a meeting of Umuofia people?" Obi, in responding to the question, flouts the quantity maxim by saying "too much"; and leaving room for possible pragmatics inferences such as: that he often does not identify and or associate with them.

Extract 13: (Background: Obi, not being in attendance in the November meeting of the Umuofia Progressive Union, attends that of November alongside his friend - Joseph in style (i.e. in fancy, new car). The entire union is impressed. But after a few exclamations, accompanied by brief excitement, the meeting continues).

Obi (T1): I have one little request to place before you. As you all know, it takes a little time to settle down again after an absence of four years. I have many little private matters to settle. My request is this, that you give me four months before I start to pay back my loan.

A UPU Member (T1): That is a small matter. Four months is a short time. A debt may get mouldy, but it never decays.

UPU President (T1): Your words are very good. I do not think anyone here will say no to your request. We will give you four months. Do I speak for Umuofia?

UPU Members (T1): (in chorus) ya!

UPU President (T2): But there are two words I should like to drop before you. You are very young, a child of yesterday. You know book. But book stands by itself and experience stands by itself. So I am not afraid to talk to you. You are one of us, so we must bare our minds to you. I have lived in this Lagos for fifteen years. I came here on August the sixth, nineteen hundred and forty-one. Lagos is a bad place for a young man. If you follow its sweetness, you will perish. Perhaps you will ask why I am saying all this. I know what government pays senior service people. What you get in one month is what some of your brothers here get in one year. I have already said that we will give you four months. We can even give you one year. But are we doing you any good? What the government pays you is more than enough unless you go into bad ways.

UPU Members (T2): God forbid!

UPU President (T3): We cannot afford bad ways. We are pioneers building up our families and our town. And those who build must deny ourselves many pleasures. We must not drink because we see our neighbours drink or run after women because our thing stands up. You may ask why I am saying all this. I have heard that you are moving around with a girl of doubtful ancestry, and even thinking of marrying her... (Obi leapt to his feet trembling with rage. At such time words always deserted him.) Please sit down Mr. Okonkwo.

Obi (T2): Sit down, my foot! This is preposterous! I could take you to court for that...For that... for that...

UPU President (T4): You may take me to court when I have finished. (NLE, P.74-75)

The responses to Obi's request by one of the UPU Members and the UPU President (Both in their turn 1) are a serious violation of the quantity maxim. Whereas the former gives a response that is weaker and less informative so that Obi, on assuming his interlocutor is being cooperative, is prompted to work out the implicature which is that his request is considered, the latter utters a response that is more informative than is required by the speech situation. Again, the UPU president's claim in his second conversational turn that 'Lagos is a bad place for a young man' is characterized by falsity and is therefore a flouting of the maxim of quality. However, it is logical to assume that members of the speech community are able to work out the implicit meaning that Lagos is a place where young men are given to being easily misled and so they need to be thorough, sensible and guided in their approach to life in Lagos. More so, the president's utterances (from his second to the third turns) can be adjudged irrelevant since it does not in any way advance his interlocutor's (i.e. Obi's) conversational goal. He also flouts the maxim of manner in that he is not brief, and his apparent refusal to yield the floor and allow other interactants to take their turns further buttresses this.

Finally, Obi's response is also a flouting of the maxim of quantity, which involves saying more than is needed in response to the UPU's President's speech. His threat to go to court comes from a clash in his bicultural personality. He is Igbo but also English. A normal Igbo person will not respond to such a speech the way he does. In his response, he becomes completely English. He not only violates a maxim but reveals his ignorance of the Igbo cultural context. This is one big challenge bicultural persons have, this failing to give a response that is satisfactory in the native cultural context because of two cultures fighting to find expression in certain situations.

Conclusion

The essay has established that biculturalism involves two asymmetrical behaviours and manifestations. It underscores the binary relation between the original culture and language, the original tradition and the received tradition i.e the Western tradition. This asymmetrical relationship reveals itself in the use of language and the meaning inferred from that language and cultural tradition. Quite often, there is an uneasy symbiosis between the original cultural tradition and the received tradition which has contextual implications for the double language user. The implication for the double language user like Obi Okonkwo is that things are really not what they appear to be on the surface. It requires an understanding of the cultural context as a prerequisite for understanding the meaning of the utterance that the language employs. It requires an appropriate response to conversations in a particular cultural context. In the case of Obi the flouting of maxim comes mainly from a personality immersed in two cultures, each trying to find expression in each conversational situation. In such a battle of cultures the bicultural character Obi Okonkwo as a second language user will always violate the basic maxims enunciated by H.P Grice.

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