

GRICE, Herbert Paul (1913–88)

H. P. Grice was born on 15 March 1913 in Birmingham, England. He was educated at Clifton College in Bristol, and then at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He read “Greats” at Oxford, the BA degree that combined classics with philosophy, graduating with first class honors in 1936. Between 1939 and 1967, Grice taught philosophy as lecturer, tutor, fellow and then University Lecturer at St. John’s College, Oxford. His teaching at Oxford was interrupted by World War II, when he served for five years in the British Royal Navy with active service first in the North Atlantic, and then from 1942 in Admiralty Intelligence. Following the war, Grice’s fame within philosophy spread both in England and the United States. In 1967 he gave the prestigious William James Lectures at Harvard, later published in *Studies in the Way of Words*, and in that same year he became a professor of philosophy at University of California at Berkeley. He was promoted to full professor in 1975. Grice was President of the Pacific Division of the American Philosophical Association in 1974–5. In 1980 he retired, although he continued to teach occasionally until 1986. Grice also held visiting positions at Harvard, Brandeis, Stanford, Cornell, and the University of Washington. Grice died on 28 August 1988 in Berkeley, California.

Grice is perhaps best known for two papers, “Meaning” of 1957 and “Logic and Conversation” of 1975, both reprinted in his *Studies in the Way of Words* (1989). The article “Meaning” drew attention to two quite different senses of the word “mean.” On the one hand, there is the evidential relationship between, say, a cause and its effect. An example of this sense is “Those spots mean measles.” In this sense of “mean,” “*x* means *y*” is related to “*x* shows that *y*,” “*x* is a symptom of *y*” and “*x* lawfully correlates with *y*”; more than that, a particular claim that “*x* means *y*” on this first sense of “mean” can only be true if, when the *x* in question occurred, so did *y*. Thus those

spots on little Jimmy *do not* really mean measles, in this first sense of “mean,” if Jimmy does not have measles, even if the spots typically correlate with measles. Grice called this first sense of the word “natural meaning.” On the other hand, there is the sense of “mean” that pertains to language and communication. On this second sense, it is words and speakers which mean. To give a couple of examples, take “The Spanish word ‘rojo’ means red” (word meaning) and “What he meant by saying he was thirsty was that you should bring more whisky” (speaker meaning). And on this sense of “mean,” “*x* means *y*” is closer to “*x* says/asserts that *y*,” “*x* expresses *y*,” and so forth. And when “*x* means *y*” is the case, it will usually be true that someone, or some group, means something by *x*. (Compare: the spots on Jimmy do not express anything, and no one meant anything by them.) In this second sense of “mean,” it can be true that “*x* means *y*” even though *x* obtains when *y* is not the case. Thus our speaker might indeed have meant that you should bring more whisky, when in reality you should not: his meaning it, in this second sense, does not make it so.

In “Meaning,” Grice went on to analyze in more detail this second sense of “mean,” which he called “nonnatural meaning.” His fundamental idea was that for a person to mean something, in this nonnatural sense, was for her to intend to induce some belief in her hearer. More than that, it was to induce the belief by getting the addressee to recognize the intention to induce a belief: in meaning something, the speaker does not merely cause the hearer to have a belief, she overtly gives him a reason to believe, the reason being that she wants him to believe. To take the “I’m thirsty” example, the idea would be that *the speaker meant in the nonnatural sense that you should bring more whisky* amounts to *the speaker intended to induce in you the belief that you should bring more whisky, and he intended you to come to have this belief on the basis of recognizing his intention to induce it*. Thus what a person means, in the nonnatural sense, comes down to

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complex mental states of hers, especially intentions. As for what words and sentences in the language mean, Grice thought that this could emerge from what beliefs those expressions were standardly used to induce. If some sentence *S* is standardly used by speakers to induce the belief that Howard wants ice cream, then *S* will conventionally mean, in the nonnatural sense of “mean,” that Howard wants ice cream. Grice held that linguistic meaning emerged, at bottom, from human psychology.

Grice’s “Logic and Conversation” (in *Studies in the Way of Words*) discusses the divergence between speaker meaning and word meaning, as these will not always coincide. A speaker might mean something that the words she utters don’t mean. The whisky example is a case in point: the speaker meant that you should bring more whisky, but his words conventionally mean only that he, the user of the sentence, is thirsty – a mere point of information, and one which does not even say what one is thirsty for. One of the key lessons of this pioneering work was that there are several kinds of “content” attaching to speech episodes. There is the content that derives from what the sentence used conventionally means in the language, and there is the content that the speaker manages to convey nonconventionally. Most strikingly, Grice explained how the latter could happen – namely, because talk exchanges are a rational, cooperative endeavor. By making use of the audience’s expectation that she will cooperate – she will say the most helpful thing she can in the most helpful way – a speaker can get across something more than, or something different from, what she has said.

Grice is most famous for drawing attention to a certain kind of merely conveyed content, which he called conversational implicatures. These come in two kinds. There are implicatures which only attach in very special circumstances, and there are those which *usually* attach to the use of these words. To give examples of each, in saying “Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical” one would not normally implicate that Jones was a poor student. But this

implicature would arise if this sentence were the only thing said in a letter of reference supporting Jones’s application to graduate school! In contrast, one would usually implicate that *one’s own* finger was broken in saying “I broke a finger,” and one would usually implicate that one had *exactly* one sister in saying “I have one sister.” These are generalized conversational implicatures.

Important as Grice’s papers on meaning are, they are not genuinely the core of his philosophy. The real core is conceptual-linguistic analysis. There are two facets of conceptual-linguistic analysis, and both were crucial for Grice. First, there is the process of analyzing concepts through careful study of language, which for Grice, is a philosophical method. Second, there is the product of that process, these being various particular *analyses*. These are the results of applying the philosophical method. Grice reformed the analyzing method borrowed from the “ordinary language” school of his Oxford peers J. L. Austin and P. F. Strawson. According to Grice, to discover what is genuinely revealed by careful linguistic description requires a general theory of language and communication, not just piecemeal observation. As he puts the point, “Before we rush ahead to exploit the linguistic nuances which we have detected, we should make sure that we are reasonably clear what sort of nuances they are.” (1989, p. 237) His variation on the process/method of conceptual-linguistic analysis is one half of the “core” of his philosophy. The other half consists in the particular products of conceptual-linguistic analysis. These products were not mere exercises in lexical semantics, because the aim was to uncover metaphysical *reductive emergences* of various kinds: the reduction of meaning, as we have seen, but also of perception, reason, and value. Crucially, the kind of reductive emergence Grice investigated was conceptual: very roughly, in “Meaning,” meaning was claimed to be conceptually related to intentions to induce beliefs and actions; in “The Causal Theory of Perception,” perception was held to be conceptually related to the causation

of sensations; in *Aspects of Reason* (2001), reasoning was held to be conceptually related to (good) transitions between goal-directed states; and in *The Conception of Value* (1991), value was said to be conceptually related to an evaluation of whether something carried out its function well. In every case, the philosophically charged kind is shown to emerge *by linguistic-conceptual equivalence*, as it were, from something else – possibly but not inevitably something more basic. What connects these two facets of “the core of Grice’s philosophy” is that one arrives at these conceptual-linguistic analyses not via natural science, but by applying the aforementioned method/process. As a result, “conceptual reductive emergence” contrasts with the kind of physical emergence that scientists discover a posteriori, for example, that getting hotter emerges from greater molecular motion.

Consider an example. In Grice’s 1961 paper “The Causal Theory of Perception” (in *Studies in the Way of Words*) he provides an analysis of the ordinary notion of perceiving a material object. What he was aiming for was neither a scientific hypothesis about how perception actually occurs, nor a philosophically perspicuous amendment to ordinary talk. To the contrary, he was aiming for an analysis of our existing notion. Simplifying for the purposes of illustration, Grice maintained that (1) An ordinary claim that a person *X* perceives some material object *M* says that *X* has a sense datum that was caused by *M*. Thesis (1) could use some clarification since it can be misleading by suggesting two objections which are not actually apposite. First, there is a familiar complaint about this kind of appeal to sense data: we need to say what a sense datum is; and they seem, at first glance, to be either peculiar philosophical constructs, or postulated entities of the kind scientists introduce. But, continues the objection, for Grice they can be neither, because (1) is meant to be an account of what ordinary people mean, when they say things like “Joan saw a green leaf,” and ordinary folks do not mean to talk about philosophical constructs or

postulated entities of psychology. To address this first misleading feature of (1), Grice thinks we should allow that a phrase like “*X* has a red sense-datum,” as used in the analysis, is really just shorthand for ordinary locutions like “That looks red to *X*,” or “It feels to *X* as if there is a red thing.” The second non-apposite objection is that it is not enough for perceiving *M* that *M* be a cause of a sense datum; for, as is obvious, when one has a red sense datum due to a ripe tomato, the retina of the eye also plays a causal role in giving rise to it, as does the sun; but neither of these things is perceived whenever a ripe tomato is. To address this, Grice notes that what is meant is that the sense datum is caused *in the right way* by *M*, namely in the way that ripe tomatoes cause red sensations. Put more carefully, then, Grice’s view is (2) An ordinary claim that a person *X* perceives some material object *M* says that (a) some present-tense sense-datum statement is true of *X*, (b) this statement reports a state of affairs for which the material object *M* is appropriately causally responsible. Thesis (2) illustrates the product of conceptual-linguistic analysis, i.e., reductive emergence. But “The Causal Theory of Perception” also illustrates Grice’s process of analysis, as a method of careful inspection not only of linguistic nuances, but of what they derive from. In particular, we discover that perception emerges from causation and statements about “looks,” “appears,” and “seems” by looking below the surface of ordinary talk, to see what is responsible for the nuances we find. Grice insists that when I utter “It looks to me __,” what I strictly and literally *say* can very well be true, even if both doubt and denial are absent. To speak this way may be odd, when there is no doubt-or-denial, but only because it is misleading: it somehow suggests, incorrectly, that there is doubt-or-denial. More precisely, to employ the term introduced above, there is a generalized conversational implicature of doubt-or-denial that attaches to “It looks to me __” claims. But to conversationally implicate something misleading is not to assert what is false, let alone to

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speak nonsense. Grice makes similar points about “cause.” It may be that speakers conversationally implicate that the situation is unusual, when they describe the cause. But one does not *say* that the situation is unusual. One’s description of the cause of the sense datum thus is not false, but at most peculiar and misleading, if the perception is perfectly normal.

Grice’s conceptual–linguistic analysis might be threatened by W. V. QUINE’s rejection of the analytic–synthetic distinction. Grice’s approach is to proceed by analysis of meaning, setting aside as irrelevant “factual knowledge” that clouds our intuitions about meaning – which amounts, in effect, to seeking out analytic truths. The metaphysical emergences he purports to uncover – of meaning, perception, reason, and value – are meant to be different from what I called above “physical emergence” (for example, that lightning involves a massive flow of electrons), because only the latter involves finding synthetic truths by means of scientific investigation. But how can this approach even make sense, or its products be correct, if there is no analytic–synthetic distinction?

Grice responded to Quine’s threat in “In Defense of a Dogma,” co-authored with his student Peter Strawson (also reprinted in *Studies in the Way of Words*). Grice and Strawson read Quine as complaining that one cannot give a definition of “analytic” and “synthetic” except by appeal to expressions that belong in the same family-circle, such as “necessary,” “logical truth,” and “synonymous.” In light of this, the first premise of Grice and Strawson’s reply is that if there is independent reason for thinking that the analytic–synthetic distinction is real, then it is not a problem if one cannot give noncircular necessary and sufficient conditions for its application. They defend this first premise by highlighting an absurd consequence if one rejects it. They note, first, that if this premise were false of the analytic–synthetic distinction, it would have to be false when generalized: the analytic–synthetic distinction could not be the only one which is threatened if it “cannot be clarified.”

Thus Grice and Strawson’s first premise is denied, then for any distinction there would be a serious problem if one could not give noncircular necessary and sufficient conditions for its application. The distinction would have to be abandoned, even if there was independent reason to accept that distinction. To cite one example, the only way adequately to explain the distinction between “true” and “false” is to invoke other words in their family-circle – words like “correct,” “statement,” “entails” and so forth. So if the analytic–synthetic distinction is suspect on these sorts of grounds, so too is the true–false distinction. But, note Grice and Strawson, one can hardly ever provide such an exhaustive noncircular definition. Given this, if their first premise were false, very few distinctions would be safe. But this is absurd. So, since the denial of their first premise leads to absurdity, their premise must be accepted. The second premise is that *there is independent reason for thinking that the analytic–synthetic distinction is real*. In support of this, Grice and Strawson note that one can give an informal explanation of the distinction without difficulty. Indeed, precisely because this is possible, philosophers have traditionally used these words without any problem, applying “analytic” to roughly the same cases and “synthetic” to roughly the same cases. More than that, a lay person can easily be trained to make the distinction, and to apply “analytic” versus “synthetic” to new cases. Nor is it just that these technical terms can be informally explained, and have a use within philosophy. Rather, these technical words are, as Quine also notes, connected to ordinary ones like “means the same as.” Thus there is a pattern of *ordinary* usage at play, which equally supports the presumption that the distinction is real. The conclusion of the two-premise argument, obviously, is that it simply is not a problem that the distinction has not been “adequately clarified.”

The theoretical motivation for the two premises relates to Grice’s larger philosophy. Grice takes words to mean what they do

because of how they are standardly used. But then any expression which has a standard use among a population must equally have a meaning. Now, “analytic” and “means the same as” have reliable uses, projecting even to novel cases. So, say Grice and Strawson, they surely have a meaning. What is more, insofar as the relevant community contrasts the use of “analytic” and “synthetic,” there is a *contrasting* meaning. Thus there is good reason to think the distinction real. They grant that Quine’s writings about the analytic–synthetic divide may show that the distinction cannot bear all of the weight that certain philosophers have tried to hoist upon it, if it cannot be clarified in the way Quine sought. However, Grice’s larger project does not require that “analytic” and “synthetic” be immune to criticisms of blurriness or unclassifiability. All it requires is that there *be* a distinction. Now, it might be that the analytic–synthetic divide is supposed to be “a distinction without a difference,” comparable to the “distinction” between suns and stars, or between the brontosaurus and the apatosaurus. In such cases, one has two different terms, but they actually pick out the very same thing. Or perhaps there really is only a pseudo-distinction here, with expressions that end up not having any genuine sense at all, comparable to the “distinction” between people with healthy auras versus people with auras afflicted by the evil eye. But has Quine given us good reason to assimilate “analytic” either to “sun”/“star” or to “healthy aura”/“afflicted aura”? Such assimilation is not supported by the points Quine makes about how hard it is, while eschewing concepts within their family circle, to give necessary and sufficient conditions for being analytic versus synthetic. After all, providing such a definition is something we can hardly ever do, as was noted while supporting the first premise of Grice and Strawson’s argument, that where there is independent reason to take the distinction seriously, it does not matter whether a noncircular definition can be given.

Grice is making an important point about his larger project. He is, in effect, conceding that complete reductive analyses, ones that specify all necessary and sufficient conditions while breaking us out of a circle of related concepts, are simply not to be expected. If the product of conceptual–linguistic analysis was supposed to be reductive analyses of that sort, Grice would be in trouble, but he never intended such results. Conceptual–linguistic analysis involves careful reflection upon the nuances of language use, in light of a theoretical understanding of the contribution of standing meaning to such nuances, and its product is a statement of relationships between concepts. Despite Quine’s famous attack upon the analytic–synthetic distinction, the two parts of the “core” of Grice’s philosophy remain intact.

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GRONLUND, Laurence (1846–99)

Laurence Gronlund was born on 13 July 1846 in Copenhagen, Denmark. He attended the University of Copenhagen, graduating with an MA in 1865 and afterwards studied law. He emigrated to the United States in 1867, settling in Chicago. He was admitted to the Chicago Bar in 1869 but soon gave up practicing law in favor of journalism and radical socialist politics. He published several pamphlets advocating socialism and then produced his first major book, *The Cooperative Commonwealth in Its Outlines: An Exposition of Modern Socialism*, in 1884. As a socialist he disagreed with Henry GEORGE's single tax reform but nevertheless supported his 1886 campaign for Mayor of New York. After Edward BELLAMY's widely read book *Looking Backward* (1888) incorporated many of his ideas, Gronlund began supporting the Nationalist movement, though he was still active in the Socialist Labor Party. By 1891 he was working as a statistician in the office of Commissioner of Labor Statistics in Washington, D.C. In 1898 he moved to New York City and worked as an editorial writer for the *New York Journal*. Gronlund died on 15 October 1899 in New York City.

Gronlund was a radical socialist who, unlike Karl Marx, favored socialist reform rather than the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. In *The Cooperative Commonwealth* he articulated his utopian vision about the dissolution of all government and the natural ascension of the "State," in the form of a cooperative commonwealth governed by a National Board of Administrators democratically selected by the masses. These governors would somehow administrate "the State" so judiciously that there would no longer be any need for laws, litigation, or lawyers. His book was influential in the United States and England. It strongly influenced Edward Bellamy's novel *Looking Backward* (1888) which popularized Gronlund's ideas and brought him so much attention that Gronlund eventually came publicly to endorse Bellamy's Nationalist