4

UTTERER'S MEANING REVISITED

ANDREAS KEMMERLING

Grice's ideas of what it is to mean something by doing something, conceptually condensed in various analyses of 'utterer's (or speaker's) meaning', are today mostly disputed in the context of the question of how much—if any—semantics can be based on that concept. In this paper, I shall say nothing about this topic, but rather discuss some aspects of the analysis of 'utterer's meaning' itself. Since Schiffer's book *Meaning*, its details seem to be regarded as more or less settled, further scrutiny being disdained as sheer fussing over trifles and philosophically boring to boot.

So for a revisitor it seems wise to avoid niceties and to be brief, which is not always easy in discussing Gricean meaning. But I'll try my best. For the sake of brevity and perspicuity I introduce some informal abbreviations which render the analysans of Grice's (1957) original account of 'By uttering x, (some speaker) S meant something' in the following way:

[1] There is an audience A, and a reaction r such that[1]

    (1) $I_S(r_A)$
    (2) $I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)))$
    (3) $I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)) \sim r_A)$

The abbreviations are to be read as follows: '$I_S(—)$' is short for 'S uttered x intending (to bring it about) that —'; '$B_A(—)$' is short for 'A believes (or comes to believe) that —'; 'r_A' is short for 'A does r'; '$\ldots \sim r_A$' is short for 'The fact that . . . is at least part of a reason for A to do r', and this is to be taken to entail, together with an assumption of A's rationality, that if . . . then r_A.[2] More generally, '$\ldots \sim \phi_Y(—)$'

[1] This existential prelude already deserves qualifications, but I shall refrain from going into details since they do not have a bearing on the main points of the following. For a thorough discussion see Meggle (1981).

[2] This 'if . . . then —' is not to be taken in the mere truth-functional sense, but as expressing a certain substantial connection between . . . and —.

is short for 'The fact that . . . is at least part of a reason for Y to ϕ
that —'.

In the following, I basically want to defend Grice's original analysis
against several of its revisions which increase the number of intentions
in the analysans. The fundamental characteristics of the sort of com-
munication which the analysis is designed to elucidate are, I shall argue,
not concerned at all by those revisions. Their point is a peripheral if not
a negligible one which can be better accounted for anyway without
ascribing further intentions to the speaker. This is what the first part of
the paper is about. In the last part, I give a sketch of a reconstruction
of the original analysis in which the concept of intention (or, more
accurately, the concept of an action done with the intention to bring
about a certain state of affairs) is eliminated in favour of the concepts
of belief and desire. This somewhat more articulate account reveals
—more clearly than does [1], I think—what I take to be the basic
features of Gricean meaning, namely rationality and non-naturalness.
In non-bizarre cases of meaning, an atmosphere of (if only restricted)
trust and co-operation will (be assumed to) prevail; these aspects could
be easily incorporated if one thought of them as further characteristics.
Furthermore, the reconstruction uncovers hidden architectural details
of the original analysis, e.g. how (2) derives from (1) together with part
of what is meant by (3). The introduction of further intentions into the
analysis will be seen to be something that cannot be done all too lightly;
it takes more to justify such a step than merely presenting a 'counter-
example' which would be removed by the ascription of an additional
intention. Alleged counterexamples might be pointless, but intentions
ascribed to rational agents might not be.

Before I turn to these things, just one step of progression by
digression. How does the concept of utterer's meaning connect with
a theory of linguistic meaning? Among other things, a theory of
meaning is concerned with *what* we can do by uttering sentences
and *how* we can do these things. Many things we can do with
utterances are utterly irrelevant to the theory's subject: for example,
ending a nap or frightening an absent-minded person. In order to
achieve this, we just have to produce some noise, and this can be
done by uttering any sentence. Austin's concept of illocutionary
force can be thought of as being meant to pick out of the things that
can be done by uttering sentences just those things that can be done by
uttering *sentences* (as meaningful items). I take this to be the main
characteristic of the category of illocution: to keep out anything

that can be achieved by uttering a sentence which is not due to its being a meaningful item.

Austin ended up with a clearly narrower conception of illocutionary acts because of the specific examples he took into closer consideration, like christening, bequeathing, and marrying. Those things can be done only if they are done properly; they don't allow for dispensing with the formalities. Moreover, going through the motions of the formalities pertaining to these acts is often sufficient for doing them. So, in order to perform such acts, you just have to utter a certain sentence under certain circumstances, no matter what effects you want to bring about or actually bring about. Taking those acts to be typical of what can be done by uttering sentences smooths the way to a quite legalistic conception of illocutionary acts. According to such a conception, what illocutionary acts are is determined by a web of consequences conventionally associated with the performance of these acts; these consequences are thought of as speaker's and addressee's rights and duties emerging from the utterance (without being, in any interesting sense, caused by it). So what illocutionary acts are is basically determined by certain rules which distribute the respective consequential rights and duties. How illocutionary acts are performed is again a matter of rules, namely rules determining for any possible situation which utterance (if any) would constitute the performance of a given illocutionary act in this situation. These rules render certain words 'illocutionarily effective' for certain situations; performing an illocutionary act is simply happening to come up with such words in a relevant situation. This Prussian outlook on speaking a language fits in nicely with what the Red Queen says to Alice: 'When you've once said a thing, that fixes it, and you must take the consequences.'

Any such legalistic account is, I think, mistaken and misleading. It leaves out the essential point: why we talk, and how this connects with how we do it. This is mirrored in many of the taxonomies of illocutionary acts which speech act-theory abounds with. One finds acts ordered horizontally, according to several aspects of how they are performed and which kinds of consequences are triggered by their being performed. This is fine. But a vertical ordering—one which is sensitive to varying degrees of communicational importance and basicness—is not easily to be found along those lines. And even if the rule-oriented approach were phenomenologically acceptable, it certainly leaves out those unifying facts about linguistic communication which could contribute to getting a systematic theory of force going.

Grice's thought on communication has the desired quality of giving an account of this subject as a unified whole: it connects what is basically done by uttering meaningful items with why and how it's done. And it is thereby explained what renders an item meaningful, namely being used in this particular 'Gricean' way. This is, to me, part of what makes Grice's concept of utterer's meaning so fascinating: putting the fundamental *What, Why*, and *How* of linguistic communication into one smooth perspective.

Let me end this digression by hinting at (what I take to be) a more promising reference to the basic ingredients of a theory of force. On the surface of it, it's nothing but an exchange of slogans: swap 'No act without regulation' for 'Patefaction yields the action'. It's a good trade anyway. So, why not accept something like

(C) For any speaker S, addressee A, and utterance x: By S's making it clear to A that, in uttering x, S wants to ——, S, in uttering x, succeeds in ——ing.

as a criterion of those acts the concept of illocutionary force was designed to capture? It fails to pick out many classical members of the original class. Naming a ship, bequeathing a watch, etc. are ruled out because the respective verb-phrases, if put in the slots, don't render (C) a true sentence. Let's have a look at what substitutions (C) admits: e.g. 'express', 'inquire', 'request', 'order', 'assert', 'agree', 'dissent', 'suggest', 'urge', 'congratulate', and 'accept'. That's not too bad. Of course, some inveterate legalists might come up with some misgivings about including some of these items on the list. But their objections, as far as I am familiar with them, are pretty prissy, mixing up what they take to be the proper way of doing these things with just doing them. The point of the Gricean twist of (C) is exactly to take us back to the essentials of communication, to lay bare *the way* those things get done —any way you do them. That's why I think that an elaborated version of (C) points to a basic layer of things that can be done by uttering sentences: things which can be done, in principle, by uttering anything whatever.

There are lots of internal problems with the envisaged criterion of illocutionary acts, for example those which are due to an inappropriate content of the act in question. Can I assert that the prime between 8 and 10 is divisible by 2? Assuming that every assertion is the performance of an illocutionary act if any assertion is, an important question,

according to (C), is: Can I make it clear, by what I do, that I want to assert this somewhat off-beat content? (Making clear that I want to do this might turn out to be not as easy as simply uttering a semantically appropriate sentence; I might, additionally, have to present myself as an outstandingly stupid or ingenious fellow.) An answer to these questions requires at least two things: (a) getting clear about what an assertion is, and (b) getting clear about what makes one's desires clear consists in. Problem (b) is deeply entrenched in the concept of utterer's meaning and will be a leitmotif in the rest of the paper, the riff stemming from Grice, Strawson, Schiffer, Lewis, and Bennett. As regards (a), it has to be noted that (C) is supposed only to give a hint at which work should be done primarily but that it is not supposed to do this work or contribute to getting it done. (C) is to indicate nothing more than those acts which might be useful to get clear about first. The fact that an act is picked out by (C) doesn't tell us anything interesting about what kind of language-game it is. (C) only points to its being a basic game—basic in so far as the value of its being played is ranked sufficiently high not to have been overgrown by arbitrary restrictions on how to get the game in motion.

There are linguistic acts, of course, which have to be performed in a certain conventionally prescribed manner in order to be done at all. Their performance assumes the fulfilment of so-called 'happiness'-conditions over and above the fulfilment of the requirement to make one's relevant desires clear. Indeed, the fulfilment of additional happiness conditions can sometimes even eclipse the fact that this requirement is not fulfilled. This is undoubtedly an amazing fact about the organization of some forms of interaction (a judge can sentence somebody and yet, by the same token, make it quite clear that he does not want to). But those excesses and deformities of bourgeois convention do not make up the core of human communicaton. Conventions come and go. An account of linguistic communication has to try to capture primarily, what stays unaltered if it is to contribute something substantial to the theory of meaning.

Descriptions of linguistic acts have become entangled with the parochial paraphernalia of our elaborately sophisticated practices. Some criterion like (C) might help to get back to those acts which reveal quite purely a basic pattern of linguistic communication. And this pattern is, of course, what Grice's work on utterer's meaning is about.

REVISIONS

I am only concerned here with those revisions that were meant to protect the analysans against its being insufficient, and I omit details that would necessitate the introduction of new concepts (for example, 'mode of correlation', etc.). The first revision stems from Strawson (1964) and consists in the addition of

(4) $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)))))$

to the original analysans. Grice (1969) accepted this—if only provisionally—as well as the addition of

(5) $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)) \sim r_A)))$

to (1)-(4), which arose from an objection presented by Schiffer, who —if only provisionally—even demanded a further step: namely the addition of

(6) $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)) \sim r_A)))))$

to (1)-(5). Grice (1969) refused to follow, but Schiffer (1972), insatiably, suggested adding something to the original analysans which in effect is roughly equivalent to the following clause:

(S) For any condition c that we obtain from the original analysans, or from the application of S, add $I_S(B_A(c))$ to the conditions obtained so far.

This proposal requires someone who means anything at all by doing what he does to have infinitely many different and logically independent intentions with an indefinitely increasing degree of irreducible complexity. This makes any such proposal objectionable. As long as Gricean meaning is regarded as a fairly common phenomenon among human beings, such a position cannot in all consistency be held. At least, that is what I want to argue in the next few paragraphs.

Schiffer (in conversation) insists that on his actual proposal there is only one intention attributed to the speaker, although a complex one (consisting of infinitely many different and logically independent conjuncts with an indefinitely increasing degree of irreducible complexity). This intention is, very roughly, of the following type: $I_S[B_A(p) \& B_A(B_S(p)) \& B_A(B_S(B_A(p))) \& \ldots]$. Schiffer's point in favour of the 'only one intention'-claim is that a statement of the type 'S utters x with the intention to bring it about that p and q' does not

entail a statement of the type '*S* utters *x* with the intention to bring it about that *p*'. I think that he is wrong to deny that the entailment-relation in question does obtain. But be that as it may, the fundamental question still remains: can we ever (correctly and with good reason) attribute such an infinitely complex intention to anyone, or at least to a common communicator?

We cannot do this, I contend, because of the indefinitely increasing degree of irreducible complexity of the conjuncts that make up the content of what would have to be intended. Plainly, what is intended (if only as an inseparable part of a complex intention) has to be intelligible to the person who is said to have the intention. Intentions of the kind under consideration are attributed to someone in order to explain why he does what he does; they are supposed to lead him to a certain action (or utterance, for that matter). But it is hard to see how an intention whose content is not intelligible to the intender (if there were such a thing) could lead him to a certain action instead of leading him to any other action or to none at all. What leads one nowhere or everywhere is not part of what one intends, so what is unintelligible to us is not part of what we intend.

Irreducible iterations of propositional attitude-operators, if sufficiently long, are not intelligible to us. Although we know that a sequence of, say, fifty billion 'You believe that I believe that'-items (followed, in the end, by something that couldn't be more obvious to us, as for example, 'we are in *Barney's Beanery*') represents a certain definite state of affairs, most of us are bound to fail to see which state of affairs that is. It is in this sense that the fifty-billion-item series is unintelligible to us. So most of us fail to be in a position to intend to bring about this state of affairs, even if it were only a somehow inseparable part of a very complex state of affairs. (Let's forget about the ones among us who can—or believe they can—do better in this respect; but if they are going to engage in developing a theory about our common ways of communicating, they should not forget about us who cannot.)

Weakening the concepts involved in the iteration is of no help; for example, substituting 'to have reason to believe' for 'to believe'.[3] The resulting sequence would still be of *irreducible* complexity, in contrast

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[3] This is, in effect, to weaken Schiffer's (1972, p. 30 ff.) account of what he calls 'mutual belief' to Lewis's (1969, p. 52 ff.) account of what he, misleadingly, calls 'common knowledge'—a manœuvre of a kind recently recommended by Loar (1981, p. 250).

to, for example, an 'It is true that it is true that . . .'-sequence where, in order to find out what it says, we can simply wait for its last item; or an 'It is false that it is false that . . .'-series where we only would have to do a little counting while waiting for its last item. Complexity *qua* complexity does not yield unintelligibility, but irreducibility of high or very high complexity does—where the complex state of affairs described by a certain sequence, say *s*, is neither identical nor 'follows from' a less complex state of affairs whose description is embedded in *s* (or any composition of less complex states of affairs whose description is embedded in *s*). A 'You have reason to believe that I have reason to believe that . . .'-sequence might be thought to be less easily false than a corresponding 'You believe that I believe that . . .'-sequence, but as regards irreducibility of complexity, and hence intelligibility and 'intendability', they are on a par. So the objection to Schiffer's proposal would not be avoided.[4]

A quite analogous objection holds if the (outmost) intention-operator is changed into a belief operator, thereby yielding something of the following type: $B_S[B_A(p) \ \& \ B_A(B_S(p)) \ \& \ B_A(B_S(B_A(p))) \ \& \ . . .]$. Although this is a better shot in several respects, it suffers from the same defect as the other one: nobody believes (or has reason to believe) what is unintelligible to him. The appeal to the unconscious, tacit, or implicit character of the belief in question doesn't save this epistemic monster. For, first, unintelligible content marks a limit not lightly to be dismissed even to tacit belief, and, second, the appeal to tacit belief itself is appropriate only if weaker means fail to explain satisfactorily what we want to explain. But, as will become apparent later, the explanatory goal can be reached equally well by weaker means, for example by a requirement like $\neg B_S \neg [B_A(p) \ \& \ B_A(B_S(p)) \ \& \ B_A(B_S(B_A(p))) \ \& \ . . .]$ which does not face the problem of psychological reality but rather has a high prima-facie-plausibility. Anyway, it is not yet clear what this explanatory goal is supposed to consist in and whether it is worth being pursued at all. So let us turn to this.

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[4] There is, in the last event, the possibility of its being claimed that, as a matter of fact, every speaker has acquired an infinitely iterated concept of the Lewisian or Schifferian kind—e.g. by having spontaneously developed an appropriate recursive definition—which he applies in forming his communicative intentions. Since nobody seems to want to go so far as to make such a wildly implausible claim, I prefer to discard it as deservedly undiscussed. A more elaborate version of this line of criticism is to be found in Kemmerling (1979).

DIAGNOSES

Its being afflicted by Multiple Intentionitis not only makes the analysis lose some of its innocent charm and attractiveness, it may make one even wonder what after all it is meant to be an analysis of. For a native speaker of the German language at least, it is clear right from the outset that the crucial point of the analysis is *not* to explicate the common concept of meaning something by doing, especially saying, something. For to mean something by an utterance, 'mit einer Äußerung etwas meinen', in the completely ordinary sense of that phrase, can, in German, be achieved without all intentions being, as Strawson put it, 'out in the open'. On the contrary, you can very well say that, for example, Apollo meant that the King would destroy his own kingdom, by saying 'If you cross that river, you'll destroy a mighty kingdom' to the poor consulting King (through the mouth of the Delphic Oracle). You can say that Apollo meant exactly this, even if he did not intend the King to arrive at that interpretation—in fact, even if he intended him to come to the false conclusion at which he (is said to have) actually arrived.

So, a German-speaking student of the Gricean analysis has to do without the aid of those conceptual intuitions that apparently underlie the Anglo-Saxon consensus that the famous so-called counterexamples (against the sufficiency of the analysans) given by Strawson and Schiffer earn their title. Unable to grasp it by virtue of his linguistic intuitions, he has to look for an explanation.[5] In doing this, one can rely on the assumption that the sort of (attempted) communication the Gricean analysis is about is hallmarked by (at least) two features: rationality of the process of communication and non-naturalness of the means used. Do the revisions account better for these features than the original analysis?

In the following consideration of this question I restrict myself to cases where the desired reaction of the audience consists in believing a certain state of affairs to obtain, i.e. I shall often talk of the conditions listed below as if they were the conditions of the original Gricean analysans.

[5] I have learnt that the above remarks tend to be understood as if I took the Gricean analysis to be a semantical analysis of the English word 'meaning'. But, of course, I do not, as will become apparent later on. The assumption—by now, I have reason to think, the mistaken assumption—underlying these remarks was that the English word 'meaning' may point somewhat more naturally to the phenomenon of human interaction which Grice's analysis is about than its German counterpart does.

[2] (1) $I_S(B_A(p))$
(2) $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p))))$
(3) $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p)))) \sim B_A(p)$

To take the non-naturalness factor first: The Gricean analysis is designed to reveal what it is for arbitrary actions or action-products to stand (on a certain occasion) in a non-natural meaning relation to any state of affairs. Put in a dangerously different way, one might be tempted to say that the analysis is designed to tell us what non-natural meaning is. Now some stupid fellow might reason as follows: 'According to Grice, (S's uttering) x had a non-natural meaning iff x was uttered with the three intentions of the original analysans. But given these intentions, (S's uttering) x still has a natural meaning, namely that S intends A to believe that p. Since it is non-natural meaning we are after, let us see what we can do about that. Well, we could repeat the trick and treat the complete first clause of [2] just the way we treated "p" in [2]'. Then he would get [3].

[3] (2) $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p))))$
(4) $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p))))))$
(7) $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p)))))) \sim B_A(I_S(B_A(p)))$

The problem of non-naturalness would then have reached clause (2), and he could proceed in the same way to overcome it. And so on, for ever and ever. This could be called *Trying-to-Get-Rid-of-Naturalness-by-Shifting-It*. But all this is obviously nonsense: first, the alleged problem is not solved but only displaced (even if infinitely many times) and, second, the whole 'problem' rests upon a misconception, since things have neither natural nor non-natural meanings *simpliciter*, rather one and the same thing can (on the same occasion) have something as a non-natural meaning and some other things as natural meanings.[6] [2] is designed to reveal the conditions which must be satisfied for x (as uttered by S) to stand in a non-natural meaning relation to p; but this is of course fully compatible with x being used on that occasion as a natural sign for the fact that one or the other of these conditions is satisfied.

Nobody commits howlers like these, so Trying-to-Get-Rid-of-Naturalness-by-Shifting-It could not be the name of the game played by the intention-increasers.

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[6] Actually, one deep philosophical point of Grice's account is just that non-natural meaning is, after all, nothing but a certain kind of natural meaning.

As regards the rationality factor, it is a remarkable trait of the analysis that the route by which the audience is supposed to be led to the desired reaction is intended to be rational, if only in the weak sense of being produced or supported by reasons (which may or may not be good reasons). Clause (3) brings in the aspect of rationality; the belief that S intends him to believe that p is intended to give A (the missing) part of a *reason* to believe that p. If everything works out nicely, A comes to believe that p for a reason. Now someone might, stupidly, reason as follows: 'By now, the analysans secures that A comes to believe that p rationally. But furthermore he is intended to come to believe that S intends him to believe that p. It is not yet secured that he comes to believe *that* rationally too. What can one do? Well, I could easily secure that along the same lines. The original analysis suggests that the scheme given in [4]—sometimes referred to as the Gricean Mechanism (GM)—is supposed by S to be satisfied by A.

$$[4] \quad B_A(I_S(B_A(p))) \curlywedge B_A(I_S(B_A(p))) \rightsquigarrow B_A(p)$$
$$B_A(p)$$

A's belief that p has been 'rationalized' by supposing that A believes that S intends him to believe that p, and by supposing furthermore that this second, complex belief provides for him a rational basis for the transition to the belief that p. I could rationalize A's belief that S intends him to believe that p by doing with that complex belief exactly what I just did with the belief that p'.—Repeating the trick yields [5].

$$[5] \quad \vdots \qquad\qquad\qquad \vdots$$
$$B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p))))) \curlywedge B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p))))) \rightsquigarrow B_A(I_S(B_A(p)))$$
$$B_A(I_S(B_A(p))) \curlywedge B_A(I_S(B_A(p))) \rightsquigarrow B_A(p)$$
$$B_A(p)$$

The problem of rationalizing would then have reached the belief which is represented at the topmost left in [5]. Boringly enough, he could go on repeating that trick for ever and ever. (That is what the dots are intended to indicate.) And if he were somehow to ascribe to S the intention to let A make all those transitions, he would *ipso facto* ascribe to S the intention to give A all the reasons for finally coming to believe that p. This could be called *Trying-to-Secure-Rationality-by-Endless-Complication*.

What is wrong with that? Before giving the obvious answer to this question, let me mention a certain harmless feature of this procedure.

On the right hand side of the [5] scheme there will appear more and more premisses that are not rationally founded. Hence, one could think that the problem of rationalizing is, so to say, only shifted from the left to the right and is therefore not solved at all. But this difficulty can easily be overcome just by S's crediting A wih the relevant *trust* in S. Just let S ascribe to A something like the following belief: 'Whatever S intends me (now, of certain things, for example his intentions, etc.) to believe, is the case.'[7] There seems nothing wrong *in principle* with letting S ascribe to A such a belief or open set of beliefs. (But then, of course, not everyone who communicates is like this speaker; and not every audience is like A is thought to be by S.)

The problems with the scheme obviously lie on its left-hand side. It is simply impossible to rationalize *all* of A's left-hand side beliefs in the suggested way—since a *regressus ad infinitum* fails to rationalize anything. At least one right-hand side belief must be rationalized in some other way; why not take one of a low level of intricacy, i.e. one with some degree of intelligibility and credibility? Having resort to higher-order beliefs, therefore, is only of apparent help since it does not solve the problem of rationalization but only displaces it—even if infinitely far away.

Moreover, an infinitely large part of the superstructure over the GM indicated in [5] must be completely superfluous. For one of these higher-order beliefs on the left-hand side of [5] must be rationalized by being connected with (S's doing) x without there being beliefs of still-higher order that, together with the relevant trust, render this connection rational along the considered regressive lines. That means, the truth of at least one of the statements listed in [6] must not (even partially) be due to the truth of a following one. ('x_S' is short for 'S does (or utters) x'.)

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[7] Trust is not the only thing that could support the right-hand side of [5]. A's appropriate conditional beliefs—'If $I_S(B_A(p))$, then p', 'If $I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p))))$, then $I_S(B_A(p))$', etc.—could be backed up in some other way. Accordingly, in cases where the desired reaction is the performance of a certain action, the rational back up for A's wanting to perform this action conditionally upon his believing that S wants him to do this need not necessarily contain even a remote component of co-operation. It may even be that both want to harm each other. But cases of communication where the speaker relies on the GM but not on A's trust or A's (belief in S's) co-operativeness obviously run counter to the spirit of Grice's ideas. By adding some fussy supplementary conditions to the analysans we could eliminate such unintended cases of meaning. But this, in my opinion, would be to do them too much honour. I would prefer to accept them as cases of meaning, although as admittedly weird ones. I do not think it to be the task of the analysis to cover only those cases which *epitomize* Gricean meaning. (A little more about this below.)
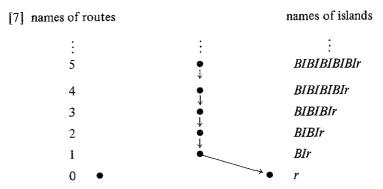
[6] $x_S \rightsquigarrow B_A(I_S(B_A(p)))$

$\quad x_S \rightsquigarrow B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p)))))$

$\quad x_S \rightsquigarrow B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(p)))))))$

$$\vdots$$

Together with the statement that S utters x, each of these statements would get the scheme of [5] going; of course, different statements would get it going at different points, with different degrees of nestedness, intricacy and, therefore, intelligibility and credibility. But at some point the utterance must get in touch with the left-hand side of [5] and then, with the assistance of the right-hand-side statements it goes all down the line to the desired belief that p.

Well, at least one of the connections represented by the statements listed in [6] must be provided—but which one? One answer says: all of them. This is as bold as it is bad since it eliminates the difference between (*a*) what A comes to believe by reasoning (and thereby relying on the conditional beliefs backing up the right-hand side of the scheme), and (*b*) what he obtains in a different way. In fact, this answer makes the whole right-hand side (except the bottom point) completely superfluous. We would obtain every belief on the left-hand side (except the one that p) without the assistance of the right-hand side in a purely rational way. But if S is able to produce the desired belief that $I_S(B_A(p))$ in A directly and still rationally, there is no point in his intending to produce other—and more complicated—beliefs which, after all, were only introduced to secure rationality of that desired belief.

Let me try to illustrate that point.

[7] names of routes   names of islands

names of routes		names of islands
$\vdots$	$\vdots$	$\vdots$
5	● ↓	*BlBlBlBlBlBlr*
4	● ↓	*BlBlBlBlBlr*
3	● ↓	*BlBlBlBlr*
2	● ↓	*BlBlr*
1	●	*Blr*
0	●	*r*

What is found in [7] is part of a map of the Sea of Communication. S is on the island with no name (bottom left) and he wants to go to the island r. The direct way to r is over troubled water, and as we all know: When the water is rough, the sailing is tough. But S wants to do it nice and easy. The island called 'Blr' has a bridge connecting it with r. The bridges there are called 'rational connections', and one can walk over them only in the direction indicated by the arrow. The water between S's island and any island except r is so calm that S could use his small boat, called 'x'; but if he wanted to go to r directly he would have to use a heavy ship (called 'Natural Evidence'), and this would cause a lot of inconvenience which S prefers to avoid.

Let me mention some alien terminology to be found in theories about travelling in the Sea of Communication. Moving is called 'intending' over there, and the several routes one can take from S's island to r have specific names. Taking route 0 is called 'providing Natural Evidence for p' (p, of course, being the capital of r). Taking route 1—i.e. going to Blr and using the bridge to r—is called 'gricing'. Taking any other way (except route 0, of course) is called 'disgricing'. Various forms of disgricing are to be distinguished. In particular, to make one's way on route 2 is called 'to strawson'; but, to be careful, by saying of someone that he strawsons, one leaves it undetermined how he comes from $BlBlr$ to Blr. To take route 2 and thereby going down on the bridges —i.e. to strawson in a special way—is called 'to schiffer in the first degree'; taking route 3 and using all three bridges downwards is accordingly called 'to schiffer in the second degree', and so on. One schiffers in the last degree if one moves up to an indefinitely, in fact, to an infinitely remote island, and if on one's long way down to r one crosses all the bridges.

To be sure, no one was ever seen to schiffer in any degree. Taking any other route than route 1 would mean a lot of trouble one could easily avoid;[8] somehow it appears to be altogether pointless, and to schiffer in the last degree is obviously impossible.

Before I close this chapter of tendentious geography and return to less frivolous meaning-theory, let us have a brief look at the possible answers to our queston. In the light of this analogy our question becomes, 'Which route should S take?' The infinite scheme given in [5] would require one of the two answers: 'He should take all routes other than 0 at once', and—apparently somewhat less demanding—

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[8] 'Don't schiffer, if you can grice', and 'No kicks on route 66', these two sayings among foreign sailors come as no surprise.

'He should take the outermost route'; or, in the foreign tongue, 'He should grice and he should schiffer in all degrees', and 'He should schiffer in the last degree' respectively.

It is clear enough that these answers are not acceptable, and since nobody commits humbug like this, Trying-to-Secure-Rationality-by-Indefinite-Complication could not be the name of the game played by the intention-multipliers. But it is not yet clear at all how this problem, namely, at which point the utterance should get in touch with A's beliefs, is to be solved. We shall return to that question in a moment, when we have considered a third hypothesis about the causes of Multiple Intentionitis. Let me briefly sum up what we had before our side trip to the Sea of Communication.

As I take it, the Gricean analysis of the concept of utterer's or speaker's meaning is designed to be part of an analysis of one characteristic sort of human communication—that of rational communication by means of something that stands in a non-natural-meaning relation to what is communicated. The two crucial aspects of this enterprise —i.e. non-naturalness and rationality—do not seem to fare any better in the revisions that are overburdened with intentions than in the original analysis itself. Therefore, by now we have no rational, much less a natural (but that does not mean we have a non-natural) support for the introduction of further intentions.

The third diagnosis says that the *only* point of adding further intentions is to remove certain nice stories that are called 'counter-examples against the analysis'. But what is the point of those counter-examples? In the counter-exemplary stories, S invariably intends his audience to make at least one false assumption of an easily specifiable kind. So, for at least one true proposition of that kind, S invariably intends his audience not to come to believe it. Let us call those intentions *D-intentions* (from 'deceive') and *C-intentions* (from 'conceal') respectively. And let us say that both sorts of intentions are *bad*, whereas all intentions so far ascribed to S are *good*. In Strawson's counter-exemplary story, S satisfies the conditions of the original analysans; (4_1)–(4_5) represent what in addition is relevantly true in this story.

$$(4_0)\ I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(\neg r_A)))))$$
$$(4_1)\ I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(\neg I_S(r_A)))))$$
$$(4_2)\ I_S(B_A(I_S(\neg B_A(I_S(r_A)))))$$
$$(4_3)\ I_S(B_A(\neg I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)))))$$

D-intentions

(4_4) $I_S(\neg B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)))))$ C-intention
(4_5) $\neg I_S(B_A(I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)))))$ no intention at all
     $[(4_0)$ entails (4_1); (4_1) entails (4_2); etc.$]$

(Forget about (4_0); for our purposes it does not matter whether or not it is true in the story.) S having bad intentions is obviously nothing that detracts from the non-natural aspect of his trying to communicate. But how about the aspect of rationality? Firstly, the rationality of S's uttering x (in order to get A via the GM to do r) is clearly not impaired. Secondly, S's having such bad intentions need in no way affect the rationality of the process by which A is (supposed to be) led to do r; i.e. the original GM may—and, I suppose, usually will—work without A's relying on $I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)))$. For, (a) it may well be that A, in the face of S's doing x, has reason to believe that $I_S(r_A)$, quite independently of his having the belief that $I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)))$. And, (b) it is obvious that A's potential belief that $I_S(B_A(I_S(r_A)))$ has nothing to do with the rationality of A doing r conditionally on his believing that $I_S(r_A)$. So, S having bad intentions is fully compatible with its being the case that

(a) $x_S \rightsquigarrow B_A(I_S(r_A))$,
(b) $B_A(I_S(r_A)) \rightsquigarrow r_A$,   and
(c) S, in uttering x, relies on (a) and (b) being true.

So it is sufficient for the *success* of the communicative attempt that A is rational and fulfils the GM-conditions. The success does not depend on S's intentions being 'out in the open'.[9] The reason is simply this: if A comes to believe that $I_S(r_A)$ and this belief—given the background of his desires and other beliefs—is all he needs to come to do r, then any further speaker's intentions—good or bad, open or hidden—will be idle; success would be neither supported nor hampered by them or their being recognized. Hence in this sense, bad intentions do not (necessarily) detract from rationality (and success) in communication as envisaged by Grice.

At least on my interpretation, non-naturalness and rationality are by far the most important features of the sort of communication Grice's analysis is designed to account for. Therefore, at least on my interpretation, the point of those counterexamples cannot be very important. In fact, their point seems to be a 'moral' one:

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[9] Cf. Schiffer (1982, p. 121) for an explicit claim to the contrary.

in communicating, one should have only good intentions. Strawson, Schiffer, and Grice—if only provisionally in his first revision of the original analysis —concluded that one should add the negation of (4_5) to the original analysans in order to get rid of this counterexample. That is, they required S to have the further intention (4). This way of dealing with counterexamples can be called *Getting-Rid-of-Bad-Intentions-by-Demanding-Good-Ones*; and I believe that this, at last, is the real name of the one and only game played by the intention-increasers.

But fortunately one does not need to join that game, since one can easily remove all those counterexamples by just forbidding S to have any bad intention instead. In fact, Grice, in his second revision of the original analysis, and Bennett in his book *Linguistic Behaviour*, proceeded along this much more intelligible and credible line, but there are still some difficulties about how they did it exactly. For the sake of brevity I will omit details, but just say that Grice did it a little too weakly—i.e. his method still allows for some bad intentions—and Bennett did it a little (but only *a very* little) too strongly—he in effect excludes some intentions that are not bad at all.[10] I prefer to do it by ruling out all and only C-intentions and thereby, *a fortiori*, all D-intentions as well. This can be achieved in the following way. The notion of a *Gricean p-sentence* is first defined ('*' stands for any number of negation-symbols):

> '*p' is a Gricean p-sentence;
> if s is a Gricean p-sentence, then '*$I_S(*B_A(s))$' is
> one as well; and
> nothing else is a Gricean p-sentence.

Now let us say that S, in uttering x, is *in no way deceitful or secretive* towards A with respect to p iff it is not the case that S wants (and, *a fortiori*, it is not the case that he intends) A not to believe any proposition expressed by a true Gricean p-sentence. Then all counterexamples of the sort considered can be removed by adding the following to the original analysans:

(4*)   In uttering x, S was in no way deceitful or secretive
　　　towards A with respect to (1)–(3).

The Gricean analysis of utterer's meaning is guided by three imperatives: Denaturalize! Rationalize! Moralize! To increase intentions

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[10] For the details omitted, see Kemmerling (1980).

beyond the frame of the original analysis supports neither denaturalization nor rationalization, and it is a much too strong—and therefore a bad—way of moralizing. So, I conclude that we can remove all those horribly intricate intentions without losing anything essential to the Gricean analysis. In fact, I propose we just drop them; if you feel like moralizing, add clause (4*).

RECONSTRUCTION

So the revisions do not seem to be necessary, but a reconstruction may be helpful. In the last part of this paper I want to present a reconstruction of the original Gricean analysis in which the notion of doing something with a certain intention (or intending something by doing something) does not appear as a primitive concept. This reconstruction is mainly inspired by two things: first, in the discussion of the Gricean ideas the word 'intention' is used somewhat excessively and indistinctly, sometimes referring to beliefs and desires rather than to intentions properly so called. It should be possible to do a bit better. Second, from a more articulate account of the original analysans one could expect support for a substantial justification of the complex intentions. When he introduced them, Grice (1957) justified (the ascription of) these intentions by way of counterexamples, but there was no explanation of why S had these intentions when all he wanted was, after all, to produce a certain reaction in his audience. A 'substantial' justification would, at least, have to specify the further conditions which make S's complex intentions plausible in the light of his basic desire to get A to do r. The following reconstruction is designed to suggest what such a justification might look like.

The lines along which it proceeds are given by the following six conditions which I take to be (non-trivially) sufficient for 'S does x with the intention (or thereby intending) to bring it about that p'.[11]

   (a) S does x.
   (b) S wants that p.
   (c) S believes that: p given that he does x.
   (d) S does not believe that: p given that he does not x.
   (e) There is no state of affairs q such that S wants that not-q and S believes that: q given that he does x.
   (f) If (b)–(e) were not fulfilled, (a) would not be either.

   [11] This is to be taken with a pinch of salt, since any niceties are avoided once again—even important ones such as deviant causal chains.

The fourth condition may appear unnecessarily strong, but '*S* believes that: . . . given that —' is taken to contain an 'other-things-being-equal' component: *S*'s beliefs are viewed as they are at a certain time *t* (which is not mentioned explicitly), and that he believes that: . . . given that —, says that if the belief that — were added (let's say at t') to his *otherwise unaltered* body of beliefs, then the belief that . . . would also be one of his beliefs at t'.

Let me now introduce those conditions (again, informally abbreviated) that in my opinion, form the essentials of the Gricean analysis. I call them the *core* of the analysis.

   (i) $W_S(r_A)$
  (ii) $B_S(r_A//B_A(W_S(r_A)))$
 (iii) $B_S(B_A(W_S(r_A))//x_S)$
 (iv) $\neg B_S(r_A/\neg B_A(W_S(r_A)) \,\&\, x_S)$
  (v) $\neg B_S(r_A/\neg x_S)$

'$W_S(—)$' is short for '*S* wants that —'; '$B_S(. . ./—)$' is short for '*S* believes that: . . . given that —'; '$B_S(\phi_Y(—)//. . .)$' is short for '$B_S(\phi_Y(—)/. . .)$ and *S* believes that . . . is at least part of a reason for *Y* to ϕ that —. And accordingly for '$B_S(r_A//. . .)$'.

Some brief comments on (ii), (iii), and (iv): In a case of Gricean meaning, *S* believes that *r* is under *A*'s rational control; i.e. he believes that *A* does *r* iff he has reason to do so. Maybe the most ingenious aspect of the Gricean analysis is that *S* thinks that *A*'s recognition of *S*'s want gives *A* (the missing part of) a reason to do *r*. This is what (ii) says, namely that *S* believes that: *A* does *r* given that *A* believes that *S* wants him to do *r*, and that *S* believes that *A*—via some unspecified background assumptions and/or wants—is provided with a reason to do *r* by his belief that this is what *S* wants him to do. Let us say that a little more briefly: *S* believes that *A* does *r on the rational condition* that *A* believes that *S* wants him to do it. Furthermore, *S* believes that *A* will come to that belief on the rational condition that *S* does or utters *x*. This is what condition (iii) tells us. Once again, *S* relies on some unspecified background assumptions on *A*'s part. And I think it an advantage of the analysis to leave them unspecified, since it depends on various and variable factors *which* specific assumptions of this sort *S* can expect *A* to have. Among other things, that will depend on such factors as: whether *x* is a conventional means for producing the desired

reaction, or whether it is not; whether A knows (or, at least, is supposed
by S to know) S's habits of doing things like x, or whether he does
not; whether A is (assumed by S to be) fairly clever in detecting the
intentions underlying actions, or whether he is not; and so on. I regard
it as a desirable feature of the Gricean analysis that it covers lots of
different cases of that kind and is not restricted to cases where certain
specified background assumptions (and maybe even wants) on A's part
are given. So this is the answer to the queston where the connection
between the utterance and A's beliefs should be located. One should
demand only that x is rationally linked with A's belief that S wants
him to do r—and that means linked by any old appropriate back-
ground assumptions on A's part that do this job. And one should not
demand that these assumptions contain higher-order beliefs or beliefs
about higher-order intentions since that would unnecessarily restrict
the applicability of the concept in question.

Condition (iv) states that S does not believe that his doing x has a
natural meaning for A that leads him to do r without regard for the fact
that S wants him to. This condition is strong enough to deal with all the
undesired cases considered in Grice's original work, for instance it ex-
cludes the Herod-example but allows for the example where a picture
is drawn of Mr Y displaying undue familiarity with Mrs X. But it is
exactly weak enough not to make the concept of meaning too narrow
to be interesting for an account of common linguistic communication.[12]

Under the label '*accessories* of the Gricean analysis' I list the follow-
ing three conditions:

> (vi) S prefers his doing x to all other means he believes to be at
> his disposal to get A to do r.

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[12] The stronger requirement '$B_S(\lnot r_A / \lnot B_A(W_S(r_A))$ & $x_S)$' would exclude, for
example, the possibility of S's meaning anything if he believed that A acted on the
strict and literal meaning of x even if that were inconsistent with what A recog-
nized S as wanting A to do. In cases where the desired reaction is the adoption of
a belief it would be irrational in normal circumstances for A to act like this,
wilfully ignoring the intention. Hence such cases are excluded by the fact that
rationality is required by (ii) and (iii). But no irrationality is necessarily involved
in cases where the desired reaction is an action on A's part, although such behaviour
would be very unhelpful. If an attitude of mutual co-operation is taken to be
a further characteristic of Grice's account of meaning (and it would be not un-
reasonable to do so) then (iv) should be replaced by the stronger version above. But
since there are cases of communication where co-operation is (assumed by S to
be) conspicuous by its absence, I prefer to retain (iv), cleaving, in case of doubt,
to the more austere reconstruction of the Gricean concept.

(vii) $\neg \exists q(W_S(\neg q) \& B_S(q/x_S))$

(viii) If any of the statements (i), (iii), (v)–(vii) were not true, S would not do x.

From the core and the accessories we can derive the following consequences:

(C1) $B_S(r_A/x_S)$ from (ii) and (iii)[13]

(C2) $W_S(B_A(W_S(r_A)))$ from (i), (ii), (iv), (vi) and (C1)

(C3) $\neg B_S(B_A(W_S(r_A))/\neg x_S)$ from (ii), (iii), and (v)

Along the lines of (b)–(f) it follows that if S does x, then he does so thereby intending that A do r and that A come to believe that S wants him to do r:

(i)	(C2)
(C1)	(iii)
(v)	(C3)
(vii)	(vii)
(viii)	(viii)
$x_S \rightarrow I_S(r_A)$	$x_S \rightarrow I_S(B_A(W_S(r_A)))$

From the core and the accessories it follows that S, if he is rational and there are no overriding wants, does x. So, core and accessories provide the premisses of a practical argument that leads S to do x. These conditions entail that S, when he does x, does so with the intention that A do r and that A come to believe that S wants him to do r. This second, complex intention is a consequence of S's desire to get A to do r, together with his beliefs and preferences about how to achieve this. These conditions secure that S believes that A has all he needs for a fully rational transition from S's uttering x to his own doing r. Furthermore, they secure that S does not take (his uttering) x to have a natural meaning for A which could lead A to do r regardless of what S wants him to do. Therefore, in that sense, rationality and non-naturalness are secured. If you are fond of the moral aspect as well, I recommend you to include an appropriately modified version of clause (4*) among the conditions of the reconstructed analysans.

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[13] Assuming that '$\neg B_S(\neg x_S/B_A(W_S(r_A)))$' is trivially true, if meaningful at all.

The reconstruction yields a modest concept of Gricean meaning.[14] Anything which was clearly less than this could not, I suppose, be called Gricean. But besides what is mentioned in note 12, there is at least one point where it might seem plausible to demand a little more, namely condition (ii). Let us briefly consider the case where the desired reaction is A's adoption of a certain belief. In this case S could be required to think that it is trust that accounts for A's satisfying the GM—trust in the sense that A relies on two things: (a) that S himself believes what he wants A to believe, and (b) that confidence can be put in the correctness of S's belief. An invitingly simple way of incorporating trust would be to let S rely on A's satisfying the following scheme:

$$[8] \quad x_S \rightsquigarrow B_A(W_S(B_A(p))) \rightsquigarrow B_A(B_S(p)) \rightsquigarrow B_A(p),$$

thereby assuming that S supposes the two intermediate beliefs to be obligatory way-stations on any route leading from x_S to $B_A(p)$: the first being obligatory on any route from x_S to the second, the second being obligatory on any route from the first to $B_A(p)$, and there being no route from x_S to $B_A(p)$ except via the second. From this, together with S's preference for x_S to anything else he could do to get A to believe that p, it would follow (in addition to the reconstruction above) that S wants A to have the second intermediate belief—i.e. it would follow that $W_S(B_A(B_S(p)))$. From this new derivative desire a further speaker's intention, namely $I_S(B_A(B_S(p)))$, would result.

The new core and the new accessories would clearly be more complex than the old ones. And the additional complexity of the new conditions could not be justified merely by the fact that they exclude certain unintended cases which would otherwise have to be accepted as cases of meaning under the old conditions. I know only one sort of such cases. In these S supposes the GM to work because of A's reliance on two things: (a) that S disbelieves what he wants A to believe, and, strangely enough, (b) that confidence can be put in S's being mistaken in his disbelief.[15] But the mere exclusion of such cases is clearly not

[14] Core and accessories are even an irrelevantly little bit weaker than the original analysans: the reconstructed complex intention is weaker than (2). But the absence of a third intention is not to be taken as an indication of a further difference in strength, since the original condition (3) is not to be construed as ascribing to S an intention of the sort that is characterized by (b)–(f). I think that (ii) together with (vi) express approximately what Grice meant by (3).

[15] In elaborating stories along these lines it must not be forgotten, firstly, that $B_A(W_S(B_A(p)))$ does not, in S's opinion, cease to be (an indispensable part of) A's reason for believing that p, and, secondly, that S has no bad intentions. These two points make it a little hard to invent credible stories of the relevant kind.

enough to justify the introduction of all the conditions necessary for deriving the third intention just mentioned, because the exclusion could be achieved by much weaker means, for example by just adding '$\neg B_S(\neg B_A(B_S(p))/x_S)$' to the old accessories. What is needed for justification is that in all intended cases one can plausibly ascribe to S the view indicated by [8]. It is not sufficient for this purpose, as Bennett has reminded us, that the view indicated by [8] is correct, but rather it must not be the case that S simply has no beliefs about the details of A's transition from $B_A(W_S(B_A(p))$ to $B_A(p)$—except, of course, that it is rational. Whether A's not lacking such specific beliefs can plausibly be assumed (by S) for all cases one might like to regard as cases of meaning, I will not try to decide here.

Much the same can be said about an additional requirement of co-operativeness in the case where the desired reaction is the performance of an action. In this case, the basic route (assumed by the speaker) might be thought to be roughly of the following kind: (a) the utterance leads A to believe that S wants him to perform action a, (b) this belief leads A to want to do a, and (c) this leads him to do a. A less sparse account should be expected to tell us something about S's reason to assume a transition of the kind referred to in (b). Analogous to the bizarre possibility just considered for the indicative case, there is a bundle of strange ways for (b) to be satisfied which might be thought of as desirable to exclude. In particular, there are the cases where S and A have conflicting underlying interests (they might even want to harm each other wherever possible) which—because of appropriately differing beliefs about the results of A's doing a—lead to a coincidentally common desire that A do a. So S might assume A to reason as follows: 'S wants me to do a; but as regards things like a, he doesn't know what is good for him (in fact, he has a reliable tendency to desire things that turn out to be bad for him); so, probably, it will be bad for him if I do a; that's why I want to do a'. S then has good reason to utter x in order to (a) let A know that he wants him to do a, (b) make A thereby want to do a, and, in consequence, (c) bring it about that A does a. And all of this might be 'out in the open' (and it might even be intended to be so); common or mutual knowledge of Lewis's of Schiffer's sort would not make any difference.

To block far-fetched eccentricities of this and similar kinds, (b) might be dropped in favour of something that requires an attitude of genuine co-operativeness between S and A. (This requirement should not be too strong. It should not be so narrow as to exclude various

acceptably mild forms of S's egoism or dominance and A's altruism and obedience. Common interest might be the purest basis of co-operation, but it is hardly the only one.)

But once again, the possibly desirable exclusion of queer cases does not, by itself, compel us to introduce another speaker's intention into the analysis. It might well be enough to just not allow the speaker to rely on certain odd beliefs.

So the moral of this is that not every 'counterexample' points to an additional speaker's intention, since any such intention arises only from the speaker's belief that a certain state of affairs must be brought about in order to satisfy his basic communicative desire by his preferred means. And obviously not everybody who means something by what he does, can be admired for having all, or even most of, the insights into the workings of rational communication which we owe to Paul Grice.[16]

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[16] A somewhat different version of this paper was read at the conference on *The Theory of Language Use*, Bielefeld, in June 1979. I have benefited from discussions with Jonathan Bennett, Uli Blau, Brian Loar, Georg Meggle, Eike von Savigny, Stephen Schiffer, Tim Tillmann and, especially, Wolfgang Spohn. Thanks to all of them, as well as to Jay Rosenberg and Mark Helme for linguistic help and in particular for curbing my Rock'n Roll prose.

Two papers containing more recent reflections of Grice and Schiffer on the topic—Grice (unpublished) and Schiffer (1982)—came to my attention too late to take them into account here. Let me just mention that Schiffer seems sensitive to two points of criticism I put forward here: first, that the attribution of infinitely complex attitudes to a speaker is at least problematic, and, second, that some of the speaker's attitudes usually referred to as ('secondary') intentions might more properly be called beliefs. Cf. Schiffer (1982, pp. 121 and 125). However, there still remains considerable disagreement on other points.

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