

## H. P. Grice's Cooperative Principle in a Reproductive Health Clinic in Kenya

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**Abstract :** Language is one of the most crucial tools in medical interaction. Its importance is as great today as it was many decades ago. Difficulty in openly discussing certain diseases and body parts is one of the challenges in language use in medical contexts. Guided by H. P. Grice's Cooperative Principle, this paper explores the flouting of the cooperative principles in Swahili speaking medical setting. The paper examines how men flout the maxims using the Swahili language when reporting reproductive health problems to the doctor. The data used was gathered from a qualitative study carried out in a reproductive health clinic in a public facility in Nakuru County, Kenya. All the research protocols were observed by acquiring all the research permits. Respondents' ethical considerations of consent, privacy, and confidentiality were observed. The respondents recruited were men who visited the reproductive health clinic and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study without coercion or compensation. Participant observation was the key data collection tool, with the doctor and patient conversation digitally recorded. The researcher was allowed into the clinic in a socially acceptable role. Male patients flouted the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner in order to describe their reproductive health problems without embarrassment using the Swahili language. The flouting was done through the discursive strategies of narration and circumlocution. Flouting of the maxims was acceptable to the doctor and patient due to the fact that sexual intercourse and private body parts are taboo topics and uncomfortable to talk about. The quality of health care received by the patient depended on the doctor's patience when all the maxims were flouted. In the reproductive health clinic, flouting of maxims hindered communication and, at the same time, enhanced communication between the doctor and patient.

**Keywords :** cooperative principle, doctor, men, reproductive health

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