

**A pragmatic Analysis of Census Discourse: A case study of 2009
census questionnaire.**

By

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been submitted in any other university.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband Samuel Ng'entu for your kind support and to our lovely children Muthomi and Nkirote for their love and patience.

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ABSTRACT

This project aims to describe the disparity between questions and their consequent responses of 2009 census questionnaires in Kenya. The research design is co relational and questionnaire interview was used to collect data which was sort out and then analyzed. The research tested three hypotheses including that there is a disparity between the census questions and their subsequent responses in Kenya's 2009 census questionnaires. The responses of Kenya's 2009 questionnaires flout maxims of conversation by Grice and that the suggested test frame serves as an adequate tool for questions with minimal disparity responses. Results found all the hypotheses to be true. More specifically, it was found that the questions concerning the issues of children, religion and death as well as marital status and ownership of property had the highest degree of disparity as they have cultural dimension.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents introductory aspects of this research. These aspects include a background of the research, from the background the problem is stated and the objectives of the study outlined. This is followed by hypothesis, justification of the research, its scope and limitations and the literature review. A discussion on theoretical framework comes next and the chapter ends with a discussion on the methodology of the research.

1.1 Background of the Study

The precise wording of questions plays a vital role in determining the answers given by respondents. This fact is not appreciated as fully as it should be even in ordinary conversation. Sudman Seymour (1987)

For example a colleague mentioned that he needed to pick out granite for a kitchen countertop the only day he could make the trip was the Saturday before Labor Day. Although he called on Friday to make certain that the store was open, he arrived at the store only to find a sign on the door that said “closed labor day weekend” when asked if he remembered what question he had asked the clerk at the store, he said, “I asked him what hours he was open on Saturday and he replied, ‘Nine to five’.

This story illustrates not only the importance of the golden rule of asking questions but also more important the ambiguities of language and the powerful force of context in interpreting the meaning of questions and answers.

This person had unwittingly asked an ambiguous question. Did the question refer to Saturday in general or the next Saturday specifically? In everyday life, these types of miscommunication happen and this is the basis of the current study.

To emphasize on the correct wording of a question in order to get the desired response the following example is also used;

Two priests, a Dominican and a Jesuit, are discussing whether it is a sin to smoke and pray at the same time. After failing to reach a conclusion each goes off to consult his respective superior. The next week they meet again. The Dominican says, well, what did your superior say? The Jesuit responds "He said it was all right." That's funny" the Dominican replies, "my superior said it was a sin." Jesuit "what did you ask him?"

Reply "I asked him if it was all right to smoke while praying. Oh, "says the Jesuit, "I asked my superior If it was alright to pray while smoking.(ibid:8)

The function of a question in an interview form or a questionnaire is to elicit a particular communication. We hope that our respondent has certain information or attitudes on the subject of our inquiry and we want to get these from him with a minimum of distortion. (Oppenheim 1966) This is crucial to this study because the responses elicited are said to flout Grice's maxims of conversation.

Oppenheim (ibid :6)adds that even when the question has alerted the respondent in a particular direction, what comes to mind first may not amount to a fair representation of his collected thoughts on the subject. That some process of bringing into awareness has to take place coupled with a degree of self analysis, feedback conceptualization of

ideas and generalization from specific points. The process of producing this may be affected by wishful thinking, a desire to please the researcher and the urge to be fair to one and to others.

Oppenheim (ibid: 8) to communicate the respondent must have a certain degree of ability to communicate. He/she must have a certain degree of ability to communicate. He/she must have accepted the role of respondent in the situation. He must have found motives that will not only allow him to spend time and effort on responding but allow him also to communicate private or taboo information if necessary.

The simple fact about human language according to Sperber & Wilson (1986) quoted in Maloba (2012) is that language do not encode the kind of information that human are interested in communicating. Linguistically encoded semantic representations are abstract mental structures which must be inferentially enriched before they can be taken to represent anything of interest. This brings the concept of implicature which is a component of speaker meaning that constitutes an aspect of what is “meant” in a speakers utterance without being part of what is said. What a speaker intends to communicate is far richer than what he directly expresses.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This research seeks to describe the disparity between census questionnaires and their responses using Grice conversational maxims while trying to resolve various ambiguities in these responses by suggesting a test frame that can guide for questions with minimal disparate responses. The research will use the census questionnaire of 2009 to show that despite advancement in linguistic research, statistic reports in

Kenya are dependent on erroneous question technique.

1.3 Objectives

The research objectives of this study are:

1. To identify question and consequent disparate responses of the 2009 census questionnaire
2. To demonstrate how the disparate responses from the questions operate at the level of flouting of the maxims.
3. To suggest a test frame that can guide for questions with minimal disparate responses.

1.4 Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be tested

1. Responses to the questions of the 2009 census questionnaire have disparity
2. Responses given to the questions of 2009 census questionnaire flout the Gricean maxims.
3. The suggested test frame serves as an adequate tool to guide for questions with minimal desperate responses.

1.5 Justification of the Study

Population census enables the country to forecast her future economic needs, help to determine the taxable adults and determine the standards of living of the people (KNBS). Thus Census is an important exercise to both citizens and the government.

Therefore a pioneering study in describing the questionnaire used in this important exercise and the consequent responses given to the questions will provide great

insight into language use and be helpful to the researchers on questionnaire development.

Discourse analysis is committed to an investigation of what and how that language is used so that we can utter everything to another people with the same interpretation (Brown and Yule 1983). Census questionnaire allow ambiguous responses and the language therein breach conversational maxims. This study tries to bridge this gap.

A speaker can mean just what says or can mean something more or something else entirely (Grice 1975) .This study investigates whether the responses to census questions mean something more or something entirely different.

The researcher was also motivated by (Belson's 1986;36) he concludes the causes of errors in gathering data through questionnaires as respondents failure to understand questions as intended ,the failure of respondents memory and interviewer tendency to change wording and failure of presentation.

1.6 Scope and Limitations

This study is based on the 2009 census exercise questionnaire. It does not look at other previous census due to limitations of time and resources. The data was collected in Igembe North District

The study will also not analyze the statistical report given by the Kenya bureau of statistics since this is purely a linguistic issue.

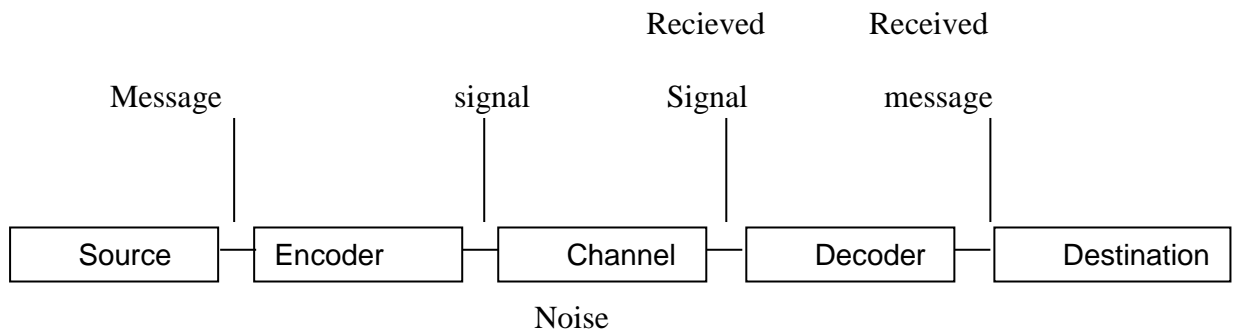
There are many types of maxims in existence but the current study has used the Gricean maxims to show the relationship that exist between the questions and their responses.

Written literature on this topic was very scarce thus the researcher relied on the raw data collected and knowledge on Grice's

1.7 Theoretical Framework

From Aristotle through to modern semiotics all theories of communication are based on a single model: a code model.(Wilson1993:8). According to code model communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages.

The following diagram of Shannon and weaver 1949 (cited in Wilson 1986:32) shows how communication can be achieved by the use of a code



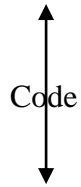
This code model assumes that communication is a linear process in which a message starts at an information source and is then converted into a signal or a code.

This signal then travels to the recipient who uses his decoding mechanisms to extract the information which is then processed and stored by his/her mind and then he/she can encode his/her own signal to transmit (Searle 1983:68)

Yokoyama (1987:72) treats communication as involving” a set of observable signals, a set of unobservable message and a code.

A communicator who wants to convey a certain message would produce the associated signals, which would be received and decoded by the audience.

Signal



Message

Therefore successful communication is guaranteed as long as both individuals are functioning correctly, each has an identical copy of the code and the signal is not destroyed in some way. Then the audience ends up with an identical copy of the message the communicator wanted to convey.

Fodor (1975:106) explains the meaning of signal, a message and a code.

Signals : are forms which can be phonetically represented.

Message: thoughts which can be conceptually represented.

Code: grammar of a language which pains phonetic representation.

Akmajian et al (1975: 351) point out that linguistic communication is successful if the hearer receives the speaker's message.

However, code model of communication assumes that:

- The communication intention is determined by the meaning in the sentence.
- The speakers only speak literally.
- That speakers use words, phrases and sentences only to communicate.
- The language is unambiguous

- What the speaker is referring to is determined by the meaning of the referring expressions uttered.

The above problems show why code model is inadequate to account for the normal human language use. Grice introduces inferential model which shows how communication can be achieved in the absence of a code.

Grice (1975; 47) “One of my avowed aims is to see talking as a special case or variety of purposive, indeed rational behavior”

Grice’s fundamental assumption is that communication is rational purposive and a cooperative activity. He formulates this assumption as the cooperative principle (CP)

“Make your conversational contribution such as is required at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” Grice (1975: 26)

Since the cooperative principle is extremely general and vague Grice lists a number of more specific conversational maxims, the idea being that by obeying them, a speaker will automatically be obeying the cooperative principle.

Grice echoing Kant calls them Quantity, quality, Relation and manner. In Grice’s theory, it is these more specific conversational maxims that do most of the work.

Quantity: this category relates to the quantity of information to be provided and under it fall the following maxims.

- Make your contribution as informative as is required.
- Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

In relation to second Maxim of quantity he says such over in formativeness, may be confusing in that it is liable to raise side issues.

Under the category of quality, falls a super maxim “try to make your contribution one that is true” and two more specific maxims

- Do not say what you believe to be false.
- Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Under the category of Relation Grice places a single maxim, namely, “be relevant”

Finally under the category of manner, which relates to how what is said is to be said, Grice includes the super maxim. “Be perspicuous- clear and comprehensible and various maxims such as;

1. Avoid obscurity of expression
2. Avoid ambiguity
3. Be brief- avoid verbosity
4. Be orderly

These maxims are often called the maxims of informativeness, trustfulness, relevance and clarity. A speaker obeying the cooperative principle should be truthful, informative, relevant and clear.

1.8. Literature Review

This section is divided into two parts: the first reviews some of the works done on the area of discourse and the second is a review of theoretical literature.

1.8.1 Literature on discourse

Gumperz (1982:1a) observes that communication cannot be studied in isolation; it must be analyzed in terms of its effect on people's lives. We must focus on what communication does: how it constrains evaluation and decision making not merely how it is structured. This assertion is important to this study because the outcome of census exercise are used to make decisions for all the citizens thus the questions should be communicated clearly in order to elicit the correct responses.

Gumperz (1982:1b) only when a move has elicited a response can we say communication is taking place. To participate in such verbal exchanges, that is, to create and sustain conversational involvement we require knowledge and abilities which go considerably beyond the grammatical competence that we need to decode short isolated messages. Once we are involved in a conversation both the speaker and hearer must actively respond to what transpires by signaling involvement, either directly through words or indirectly through gestures or similar nonverbal signals. The response, moreover should relate to what we think the speaker intends rather than to the literal meanings of the words used. This observation by Gumperz will help the researcher to confirm or discard the hypothesis that the responses to census questions are disparate.

(ibid; 14) many of the meanings and understandings at the level of ongoing processes interpretation of speaker's intent ,depend upon culturally specific conventions ,so that much of the meaning in any encounter is indirect and implicit. These assertions will help the researcher to describe the disparity between questions and their responses based on cultural conventions.

The analysis of discourse is necessarily the analysis of language in use. As such it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic terms independent of the purpose or function which these forms are designed to serve in human affairs (Brown & Yule 1983:1) This work is useful to the current study because it sheds light on the principles underlying the use of language in a natural context, it is different in that this work will specifically analyze a particular discourse in a given setting. That is, the censuses exercise.

Stubbs (1983) Says the term discourse analysis is very ambiguous and uses it to refer mainly to the linguistic analysis of naturally occurring connected speech or written discourse. Roughly speaking it refers to attempts to study the organization of language above the sentence or above the clause and therefore to study larger linguistic units such as conversational exchange or written texts. It follows that discourse analysis is also concerned with language use in social contexts and in particular with interaction or dialogue between speakers.(ibid:84) speakers may say one thing and mean another .The meaning of an utterance depends on its context of use, including its co-text or phrased differently the literal (propositional, logical, conceptual or cognitive) meaning of a sentence is only one factor in determining how an utterance of that sentence will be interpreted on particular occasion. This research borrows heavily from stubb's Work especially when analyzing the data because it helps us to base our arguments on naturally occurring social context.

Wolfson (1992) explains that researchers must investigate the use of speech in specific societies and contexts. The author found out that in face to face interactions, rules of speaking are far from universal across cultural groups; each society and contexts has its own set of patterns, and that these are different from group to group just as each language has its own phonological system so, each speech community

and context has its own rules of speaking. Wolf's study is a major contribution to the understanding of speech behavior in that by examining discourses in their rightful context we manage to understand interactional behavior and to gain insight of the varied responses given by respondents.

Wood (1992) argues that we should not isolate language from the culture, society and context in which it occurs. This is because language is multidimensional by virtue of the inextricable links that exist between speech and a number of factors, for instance, social relations, shared knowledge, culture and context. Wood's work is of much help to the current study which describes disparity in questions and responses of census questionnaire. Since it will help the researcher to base the analysis to the social relations and culture of the respondent.

Lydia Kimani (1993). A discourse analysis of the talk of the mentally retarded was concerned primarily with the structure of discourse in the talk of the mentally retarded. She found that while the mentally retarded have notions of structure to organize their conversations, these notions are realized in deviant forms due to mental retardation. Kimani's work is similar to this work because it deals with actual utterances (talk) but differs because it deals with the special case of mental retardation.

Shea's (1994:25) studied on how lack of interactional cooperation rather than lack of shared knowledge can lead to communication difficulties. Shea examined the interactions occurring in two advising sessions in which a non-native English speaking student requested a letter of recommendation from two native English –

speaking academic advisers. With one, his request was successful: with the other it was not. Shea argued that the different outcomes resulted not from a difference in shared knowledge of contextualization cue use between the adviser and the student but rather from the adviser's use of different structuring strategies. This work will borrow a lot from shea's work because it sheds light on the possible sources of disparity between questions and responses.

Mbugua (1997) in his work *Kenyan newspaper discourse: An investigation in typology and ideology* subjected samples of three sub-varieties of newspaper language news-reporting editorials and news analysis to a stylistic and then a discourse analysis. His aim was to provide a descriptive adequate account of newspaper Language and subject the same to a critical discourse analysis (CDA) to explicate the ideological underpinnings present in newspaper language on investigating the sub-varieties using the critical linguistics model; he concluded the "uniform" registers of newspaper language revealed functional differences, especially imbalances of power among discourse participants, perspectives etc. He demonstrated the various unequal relations of power inherent in the generic basis of the sub-varieties of particular newspaper in relation to specific topics and the institution of the media itself.

The current research is divergent from Mbugua's where his deals with print media and uses the CDA approach to discourse analysis. This study deals with census discourse and demonstrates how sociocultural factors influence census responses.

Another study to take into account is discourse analysis of Swahili political speeches by Habwe (1991). Habwe specifically focused on the problems of cohesion, coherence and pragmatic meaning in selected texts of Swahili political comprising cohesion approach by Halliday and Hasan (1976), Topic framework approach by Brown and Yule (1983) and the implicature approach by Paul Grice (1975). He was able to conclude that cohesion is indeed a surface manifestation of semantic relationships that point to deeper coherence in Swahili political speeches, that code switching is a concomitant feature of Kenyan political rally speeches, that meaning is largely implied and that topic is the strongest coherence principle, being used by speakers to achieve relevance and by the audience to interpret what is relevant and what is not relevant.

Another related research is that of John Bosco Kingai (2002) which concerned itself with the language employed in Catholic homilies in Nairobi as called Discourse Analysis of swahili homilies, Kingai focused on cohesion, performative quality and pragmatic meaning in selected text of Swahili homilies using any eclectic approach comprising of the cohesion approach of Halliday and Hassan (1976), speech act theory by Austin and Searle and the implicative approach by Grice (1975). He found that Homilies deal with metaphysical concepts and through metaphor. These concepts are brought into the realm of the empirical world. They are interpreted into the daily lives of the listeners in a congregation. He also postulated that persuasion is a key concern of homilies because as data revealed one of the homilies main aim is to convert a people's attitudes and make them adopt another therefore the need for persuasion.

The work of Habwe (1999) and Kingati (2002) differs from the present study because of two reasons. First because it takes an eclectic approach towards the research to be undertaken, Secondly, the former is within the domain of politics and the latter religion while the present study works with the domain of census discourse. Thus, having a better understanding of what discourse analysis entails. This study will undertake a detailed analysis of census discourse.

1.8.2 Review of theoretical literature

The earlier works by Saussure in Semiology laid the foundations for the code model of communication. Saussure defined Semiology as science which studies signs. He thought of language as sign system containing signifier and signified. This earlier works by Saussure was further improved by Pierce (1923) who claimed the relationship between the signifier and signified could either be iconic, indexical or symbolic.

Austin (1962) argues that language can ‘perform’ certain functions. In uttering certain sentences, one performs a certain act. Austin claims that, each utterance has three underlying component acts: a locutionary, illocutionary and a perlocutionary act. The locutionary act involves the actual speech production of sounds - the act of uttering. The illocutionary act is the force or the act that is performed in the locution and the perlocutinary act are the “consequential effects” of the locution on the addressee (ibid102). Speech act theory which finds its foundation in the philosophy of language mostly deals with the problem of recognizing intentions during communication.

Austin theory is extensively developed by Searle (1969) to extend speech act theory to linguistic analysis. Searle established taxonomy of speech act and crucially, defines conditions for determining speech act types and making explicit the rules governing their use.

Searle (1975) argues that illocutionary force can be divided into five subcategories or in other words, that there are just five types of utterances with which five types of basic actions can be performed: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations.

Representatives commit the speaker to a certain state of affairs; these include assertions of facts.

Directives direct the addressee towards performing some act for example promise and threats. Expressives express a psychological state like apologizing, welcoming and inviting.

Declaration bring about changes in state of affairs like christening or declaring war.

Grice (1975) inferential model of communication claims that most human communication is the expression and recognition of intentions. This theory is based on Grice central claim that utterances automatically create expectations which guide the hearer towards the speakers meaning.

Grice described these expectations in what he calls the cooperative principle which states that the interlocutors have an unspoken agreement to talk cooperatively.

“Make your conversational contribution such as is required , at the stage at which it occurs by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged” (Grice 1975:26)

Since the cooperative principle is general and vague, Grice lists four conversational maxims the idea being that by obeying them a speaker will automatically be obeying the cooperative principle.

Echoing Kant Grice calls them Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner.

1.9 Methodology

1.9.1 Research Design

A research design is thought of as the structure of research. It is the glue that holds all of the elements in a research project together. A design is used to structure the research to show how all of the major parts of the research project work together to try to address the central research question. (kombo & tromp 2006) .

The research design for this study is co relational. It is co relational in the sense that it enables the researcher to assess the degree of relationship that exists between questions and their consequent responses in the **2009** census.

(**Orothe 2003**) correlation study analyzes the correlation between two or more variables.

1.9.2 Methods of data collection

The research method used is the structured interview. The researcher used 2009 census questionnaire. This meant total control over the order in which questions were asked and over the respondent's answers. Specific questions were asked and range of possible answers recorded.

The researcher used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained using 2009 census questionnaire while secondary data was found from the internet, journals and books.

1.9.3 Methods of analyzing data

Data analysis involved scrutinizing the acquired information and making inferences. This research uses the thematic analysis technique of qualitative research. This form of analysis categorizes related topics hence the researcher will go through the collected data and identify the information that is relevant to the research and objective.

The researcher will then develop a coding system based on the collected data and classify the responses identified and further identify the intensity of the responses to show the importance given to the responses. The reason for choosing qualitative design is that the present study as is demonstrated by the research hypotheses seeks to make general statements on how categories of data are related. Mugenda (1999) notes that human behavior that cannot be investigated by direct observation such as attitudes and other emotions are best studied using qualitative research.

Creswell (1994) notes that qualitative research with its flexible procedure is the appropriate design for exploring and describing phenomena that are inconspicuous to the researcher.

1.9.4 Conclusion

This chapter formed the basis of our study. It introduced the topic of the study ,gave the background of the study , statement of the problem ,objectives of the study , the hypotheses, the rationale of the study, scope and limitations ,theoretical framework, literature review and the methodology used to facilitate the study.

In the background of the study, I have talked about the basis on which the aim of this study was found. That precise wording is very important in research questions.

The statement of the problem concretized what the entire study would fulfill. That, the study seeks to describe the disparity between questions and their responses using Gricean maxims.

The objectives of the study were clearly stated reflecting on the topic of the study. The hypotheses were based on the objectives of the study .the scope and limitations confined the study to analyze 2009 questionnaire and various responses.

The theoretical framework explained how code model of communication was used to analyze the data collected. It explained in detail what the theory is all about and which concepts were used in this study. The literature review section focused on what other scholars have said and done in the field of study.

Finally, the methodology section gives details of source of data, procedures used to obtain the data, data analysis and presentation

CHAPTER TWO

DATA PRESENTATION

2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the identification of questions and their consequent disparate responses of the 2009 census questionnaire.

2.1 Information regarding all persons

2.1.1 How old is <name>?

In this kind of question the respondent is expected to answer by mentioning his/her number of years but they gave disparate answers such as:

I am the second born in a family of four children and mum says I was born when a bomb hit Nairobi.

Wood (1992) argues that we should not isolate language from the culture, society and context in which it occurs. This is because language is multidimensional by virtue of the inextricable links that exist between speech and factors such as social relations, shared knowledge, culture and context.

The respondent chooses to answer the question indirectly because a question about one's age is sensitive. "the Meru consider the older men valuable than the younger ones and vice versa to women"(Meru ethnology ,bluegecko.org)

In the Meru community this question is likely to get disparate responses especially among women because the more the number of one's years the lesser the value is placed on them. Instead of keeping quiet they say something that would lead the

researcher to their age and avoid mentioning their number of years which would make anyone to think that they are old.

I was born in 1978 to chief Muriuki's great family.

In this response instead of saying the number of his years the respondent gives the year when he was born. This could be because of a high social responsibility that he holds and he does not know how those near him would react the moment they know his years.

2.1.2 What is <name>' s marital status?

Through this question the researcher expected to be told whether the respondent is married, single, divorced, separated, or widowed.

Marriage is intrinsically rooted in Meru culture and it is expected that any one of marrying age should be married as early as possible and in the right manner. Anything short of that is considered abnormal and makes people to raise suspicion about ones behavior or physical wellbeing. (Murungi 2003)

Also some people could be married polygamous and they wish to hide it from the public and others divorced but wishes to keep the matter to themselves.

Ochs (1996:424) social identity encompasses participant roles, positions, relationships, reputations and other dimensions of social personae which are conventionally linked to epistemic and affective stances.

Therefore, a question on marital status is given disparate responses to avoid any negative effects on the social relations of the respondent and his environment.

My wife was bewitched last year

In the above response the respondent is defending himself against the thought that he is single by choice. Since being a widower is not a positive attribute, he chooses to say it indirectly. Any mysterious death is likely to be attributed to witchcraft.

I am only 20 years old and still in college

In the above response the respondent is indirectly saying that she is single and she has not attained the marrying age .that is, above twenty years and out of college.

I am Jame's only wife

This response is disparate from its question but it communicates the social relations of the respondent. She wishes to remain in a monogamous marriage. Robin Lakoff (1973) observes that sociocultural goals broadly called politeness, lead people to express opinions and preferences in widely varying linguistic forms.

In the past marriages used to be polygamous but this has changed to monogamy with time on the coming of Christianity.

One cannot marry without money these days.

In this response the speaker indirectly passes the sense that a poor person among the Meru finds it difficult to find a girl to marry because the bride's family is not comfortable with a potential groom who might not be able to support a family. (Murungi 2003) Thus the respondent gives a disparate response.

2.1.3 What is <name's> religion?

Traditionally the Meru followed spiritual leaders called “Mugwe” who served as a prophet and spiritual leader. On the coming of missionary Meru was given to the Methodist, Catholic and Presbyterian churches. Church membership is a cultural rather than a spiritual matter (Daniel 1997)

In this question, the respondent is expected to say whether he is a Protestant, Catholic, Muslim, Hindu or traditionalist. The responses given are completely disparate from the questions because the respondent wants to appear religious even if they don't belong to any. Being religious is a cultural dictate.

The biggest Methodist church in this region.

Religion is a societal concern which is why the respondent is proud to mention the church that he attends without realizing it is not a religion on its own.

My heart is my church

The respondent gives such disparate response because being a member of a certain religion helps one to have a social identity .Thus, if he says point blank that he belongs to no religion he might be viewed negatively by the people in his social circle.

2.1.4Where was <name> born?

The above question seeks the respondent to say the district in which he/she was born but the responses given are disparate partly because of the structure of the question and also because of social issues.

Social issues evoke disparate responses because it touches on social class (how poor or enlightened ones parents were). This is if the respondent interpreted the question to mean the place where the mother delivered. The following responses illustrates this.

Pumwani hospital

Meru level five district hospital.

I was born in this village

2.2 Information regarding female aged 12 years and above.

2 .2.1How many children have you ever born alive?

Although respondent are motivated to be good respondents and to provide the information that is asked for, they are also motivated to be good people .That is, they will try to represent themselves to the interviewer in a way that reflects well on them specially if the question deals with either socially desirable or socially undesirable behavior or attitude. If respondent have acted in ways they feel are not the socially desirable, they are faced with dilemma. They want to report accurately and at the same time they want to appear to be good people in the eyes of the interviewer. Sudman (1987:12)

Therefore the above question gets disparate responses because the respondent is hiding something or because of cultural identity.

We don't count the number of children

The respondent answers the question with this disparate response as a result of a belief in Meru culture that if they count their children, the children will die or something else evil will befall them (Fadiman 1976)

Thus they give a disparate answer in order to secure their children from being harmed by evil spirit.

Four boys and one girl

In the above response the respondent avoids giving the total number of the children because by doing so, she will be beckoning the evil spirit

I am in school in form four

The respondent in the above response is presenting herself as a good person to the interviewer by telling him that she has not engaged in any undesirable behavior that might make her to get children while in school. This is because the community has high regards for girls who complete school before getting children.

2.2.2 How many children have you born alive who usually live in this household?

I have enough food to feed all my children.

Such a disparate response is given because the respondent do not want to be viewed as somebody who cannot feed her children thus allowing them to live somewhere else so that they can be fed.

We separated with their father three years ago and I left him with his children

In Meru community a woman who has separated or divorced the husband is not allowed to carry the children that they have with him to her parent's home, the man becomes the custodian of the children until peace is found.(Bernardi 1989).Thus the respondent gives a disparate answer to show why she lives with none of her children.

2.2.3 When was your last child born?

This question requires the respondent to mention the year when their last child was born but they give disparate sentences as answers to the questions:

My youngest child is called faith and she is in standard eight.

The respondent would hesitate to say the year because she is not certain why the information is necessary.

I cannot talk of a last child until my husband says so.

In this response, the respondent fails to give the expected response because as a culture it is her husband who is supposed to determine the number of children a couple will have because the man is the key decision maker.

2.2.4 Was this birth notified.

People are evil they might be jealous on you indirectly.

This response mismatches the expected response because the respondent thinks that by following the process of notifying the authority about the birth of the child it might arouse jealous in some people.

I gave birth in Pumwani hospital.

In this response, the respondent gives a disparate response because having given birth in a hospital she expects that the hospital staff will notify the necessary authority.

I thought of how to feed the child and not how to make the birth public.

This response is disparate and shows that the speaker does not understand the importance nor the process of notifying births of children.

2.3 Information regarding persons with disability

The families with persons with disability are looked down upon because socially they are looked at as people who have been cursed because of involving themselves in witchcraft or other evil doings like stealing. Therefore a question on disability receives many disparate responses because the respondents try to be as indirect as possible about their condition.

“The children with special needs used to be thrown away to cast away the evil spirit.”
Barnardi (1959)

The following responses illustrate this

2.3.1 What type of disability does <name> have?

I lost my hearing when I was four years old.

I lost my right leg in an accident

The respondent could have been born with the problem but they pretend that it came upon them as they were growing up.

2.3.2 Because of the disability does <name> have difficulties in engaging in any economic activity?

Because of the stigma that is loaded on those who suffer disability, they try to present themselves as capable as everyone else on the issues of social and economic status.

The following responses explains this,

I am a business woman

I don't borrow food

In the above responses the respondents are trying to avoid social stigma.

2.4 Information regarding Education.

2.4.1 What is the highest std/form/level reached by <name>?

Education questions in this questionnaire seeks to identify household members who are currently enrolled in educational programs and help to ascertain the education levels of household members who have completed their education. The researcher expects the respondent to mention either standard eight, form four, or university according to the Kenyan education system.

The Meru have had a strong modern educational heritage provided by the Christian missionaries. The main education institutions were started or sponsored by the catholic, the Presbyterian and the Methodist churches. Fadiman (1976)

The following are the disparate responses to the above question;

I have a bachelors' degree in economics but still jobless.

The above response is disparate with the question and the respondent is placing himself high in the social structure by saying that he has a degree in economics.

My family is poor so, I joined the village polytechnic through church well wishers.

This response apart from being disparate, it is also communicating that the respondent comes from a poor background.

It doesn't matter how educated you are these days; you only need the right connection to get a decent job.

The above utterance does not answer the asked question by the interviewer, it is answered in this way because of the social vice (corruption) that is practiced in the social environment of the respondent.

I became pregnant and got expelled when I was almost to sit for the exam that would enable me to join college.

The above response is incongruous with the question because the researcher expects the respondent to tell her the highest level of education reached as per the Kenyan education system and not the reason why she was expelled from school.

2.4.2 what is < names>s school attendance status?

I have a two months old baby.

The speaker in this response is communicating to the researcher that she is currently out of school because she has a young baby. She gives this disparate response to hide her shame because other girls of her age who don't have children are in school.

A school is a prison of its own kind.

In this response the speaker brings in the issue of prison to compare with school in order to justify why he is out of school. That, just like life is unbearable in prison, it is the same in school.

2.5 Deaths in the household for females who died at age 12-49 years.

2.5.1 Did the death occur during pregnancy?

In the above question the respondent was required to answer by saying yes or no but the responses were given in full disparate sentences. Brown and Levinson (1978) argue that the form taken by utterances in actual interaction can be seen as the linguistic means of satisfying the coexisting and often conflicting needs for negative face (the need to be left alone) and the positive face (the need to be approved of by

others) as a result ,people often prefer to express their wants and opinions off record__ that is, indirectly.

The following responses show that the respondent is no comfortable with this kind of question and would wish to be left alone. It is shameful if one died during pregnancy and she was probably not married.

She was a form four student and the doctor said she died of pneumonia

This response is disparate in that it does not match with the expected response . the speaker instead of answering the question asked by the researcher is giving information that suggest a form four student is not expected to become pregnant before completing school.

She was a clean girl the problem was the heart

In the above response the speaker is communicating that to die of a heart problem is not considered as bad as to die of pregnancy especially if it is pregnancy out of wedlock

She was bewitched by jealous people.

The speaker avoids answering the question and puts blame of death of the said female on witchcraft .this is because the people in Meru community believe that there is witchcraft and jealous people can use it to harm those who they are jealous of.

2.6 Ownership of Livestock

2.6.1 How many of each of the following livestock are currently owned by this household.

Indigenous cattle

I sold three bulls last month at 150,000 and I was left with five more.

This kind of a response is given to show that the speaker is a wealthy person.

The Meru being agricultural people and livestock keepers consider those with many cattle and other livestock like sheep and goat as being wealthy.

Exotic Cattle:

I have both freshian and Jersey

I sell 10 litres of milk to diary every day

These responses apart from being disparate to their question, they are uttered to show that the respondent is a person of middle class in the society where cattle are valued as wealth.

Conclusion

In this chapter therefore the researcher has identified questions and their consequent disparate responses from the questionnaire. These disparities can come about because of different ways of structuring questions or an argument in a conversation, different cultural assumption about the situation and about appropriate behavior and intention within it or different ways of speaking ; the use of a different set of unconscious linguistic conventions (tone of voice) to emphasis ,to signal logical connections and to indicate the significance of what is being said in terms of overall meaning and attitudes.

The questions that were found to get more disparate responses are those that have a bearing on the social relations and the culture of the people.

The next chapter will demonstrate how these disparate responses operate at the level of flouting the Gricean maxims of conversation.

CHAPTER THREE

DATA ANALYSIS

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter I will argue out to show that the responses given for the questions in the 2009 census questionnaire flout the Gricean maxims of conversation.

Grice (1975) lists a number of conversational maxims which he calls Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner

Quantity: this category relates to the quantity of information to be provided and under it fall the following maxims.

- Make your contribution as informative as is required.
- Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

In relation to second Maxim of quantity he says such over informativeness, may be confusing in that it is liable to raise side issues. Grice (1991:26)

Under the category of quality, falls a super maxim “try to make your contribution one that is true” and two more specific maxims

- Do not say what you believe to be false.
- Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Under the category of Relation Grice places a single maxim, namely, “be relevant”

Finally under the category of manner, which relates to how what is said is to be said, Grice includes the super maxim. “Be perspicuous- clear and comprehensible and various maxims such as;

- Avoid obscurity of expression
- Avoid ambiguity
- Be brief- avoid verbosity
- Be orderly

These maxims are often called the maxims of informativeness, trustfulness, relevance and clarity.

The following examples will be used to show that the responses to the census questions flout Gricean conversational maxims when the questions are asked in a code model of communication. The responses are italicized for ease of identification.

3.1 How old are you?

I was born in 1978 to the great family of chief Muriuki.

This response flouts the maxim of quantity, because it does not give the information that is required___ the age of the respondent. It gives other information: the year of birth and their family's name which are not required in this conversation.

Also, it does not satisfy the maxim of Relation because the response given does not relate with the question that was asked by the researcher. The question is not answered.

I am the second born in a family of four children and mum says I was born when a bomb hit Nairobi

The above response does not satisfy the maxim of quantity because it does not give the required information on the age of the respondent but gives details about his family.

The maxim of Relation is also violated because the information given is not relevant to the question thus it does not answer it.

3.2 What is your marital status?

My wife was bewitched last year

In the above response the maxim of quantity is flouted because the respondent has not given the information that is required. That is, whether he is married, divorced, single or widowed.

The maxim of quality is also flouted because the respondent is claiming something that he cannot give evidence against. It follows also that the maxim of relation would not be satisfied because there is no relationship between the question and the response given. The question has not been answered.

I am only 20 years old and still in college.

The above response flouts the maxim of quantity because it does not give the required information in this talk exchange. It also does not satisfy the maxim of Relation because the researcher asked a question and the respondent has not answered it. The fact that the respondent is 20 years and in college is irrelevant to the question.

I am Jame's only wife

This response flouts the maxim of quantity “do not give more information than is required in a conversation” the respondent is supposed to answer the question by saying a single word “married” but she adds unnecessary information that her husband is called James and that they are married monogamous.

The response also flouts the maxim of Relation “be relevant” because the fact that she is the only wife to James is nowhere near the expected answer to question.

One cannot marry without money these days.

In the above response the maxim of quality is flouted because the respondent claim that that it is only the rich who have the privilege to marry these days cannot be evidenced. It is also false because both the poor and the rich marry.

Again it does not answer the question of the researcher thus it flouts the maxim of Relation.

The maxim of manner is also flouted because the respondent is vague and obscure in his expression. Is he talking about his own experience or of others?

3.3What is your religion?

The biggest Methodist church in this region

This response flouts the maxim of quantity because the required information is not given. The speaker gives the church instead of religion(catholic, protestant, Muslim or other).The maxim of relation is also flouted because the response and the question do not relate thus the question is left unanswered.

My heart is my church

In uttering the above response the speaker deliberately violates the maxim of truthfulness because there is no way someone’s heart can be his church. It also flouts the maxim of relevance because the meaning expressed is totally different from the response expected.

3.4 Where was <name> born?

I was born in this village

The maxim of quantity is not satisfied in this response because the required information is the district where the respondent was born and it is not given. Also the maxim of relation is flouted because the researcher expects the respondent to say explicitly the district in which he was born. The answer given is irrelevant in this exchange thus the question is not answered.

Pumwani hospital.

The above response flouts the maxim of quantity because the respondent is supposed to tell the researcher the district in which he was born but instead he gives the hospital in which he was delivered.

I had a very hard childhood life in Isiolo before we came to this place.

The above response flouts the maxim of quantity because it does not give the required information .it also flouts the maxim of relation because it is irrelevant and finally it flouts the maxim of manner “be perspicuous”(Grice 1975:27)because there is a lot verbosity and disorder.

3.5 What is your highest level of education?

I am of a humble background even the far I am is through church well wishers.

In this response the maxim of quantity is flouted because it does not give information on the level of education reached by the respondent. It gives unnecessary information to the researcher, that the respondent family is poor and he has received help from well wishers.

The maxim of Relation is also flouted because when the respondent says that his family is humble and that he has been helped by well wishers, this information is not relevant to the question asked by the researcher thus the question is not yet answered.

The maxim of manner is violated because the respondent says “even the far I am is through church well wishers” it is not clear what the word ‘far’ here means.

I became pregnant and got expelled when I was almost to sit for the exam that would enable me to join collage.

This response violates the maxim of quantity because it gives more information than is required by the researcher in this conversation (the respondent got pregnant while in school, she was expelled from the school)

The maxim of Relation is violated because the respondent does not answer the question but only gives irrelevant information that she got pregnant while in school and was expelled.

I have a bachelor’s degree in economics and I am jobless.

According to Grice the first maxim of quantity is not satisfied by the above response because it gives more information than is required in the current talk exchange.(the respondent has a degree in economics and he has not secured a job yet)

It also flouts the maxim of relation because it does not relate to the question on the highest level of education. Thus the researcher’s question is not answered.

It does not matter how educated you are these days you only need the right connection to get a decent job.

The above response flouts the maxim of quantity for failing to give the required information (the respondent's level of education) and instead brings up other issues on the education system.

It also flouts the maxim of quality because the assertion is false. Even if one is very well networked formal education is needed to secure a job.

The maxim of relation is also violated because the information given has no bearing to the question. The researcher's question is not answered.

3.6 What is your school attendance status?

A school is a prison of its own kind.

The above response does not satisfy the maxim of quality because the claim is false.

'Do not say that which you believe to be false' Grice (1975) A school is not a prison.

It also does not answer the question asked thus it flouts the maxim of Relation. Being in school and prison are two different experiences.

The maxim of manner is also flouted because it is not clear what the speaker wished to communicate. He could have wanted to say that he is in school but has no freedom or that he fears going to school because his freedom would be curtailed.

I have a two months old baby

This response violates the maxim of quantity because it does not give the required information which is the school attendance status of the respondent but other

information of having a baby. The researcher is seeking to be told whether the respondent has completed school or is continuing.

The maxim of Relation is also violated because the answer given to the question has no relationship to what is expected.

3.7 How many children have you ever born alive?

We do not count the number of children.

In this response the respondent is expected to tell the researcher the total number of his children but he tells her that they do not count children. Thus it flouts the maxim of Relation because the issue of not counting the children does not relate to the number of which the researcher is seeking. Also it flouts the maxim of quantity because the respondent gives information about his cultural belief that if he counts children something bad might happen on them.

Four boys and one girl.

In this response the first maxim of quantity is flouted because the respondent gives more information than is expected. The gender of the children is unnecessary in this question.

The maxim of relation is also flouted because the response does not answer the question “how many children were born alive”

3.9 How many children born alive who live in this household

We separated with their father three years ago and I left him with his children.

In this response the maxim of quantity is not satisfied because the respondent gives more information than the researcher asked for. She informs the researcher that she

has been separated from her husband for a period of three years and that the man (husband) is supposed to keep the children in case a marriage fails.

It also flouts the maxim of Relation because it does not answer the question of how many children the respondent has born alive.

Mugo my son lives with his grandmother

According to Grice the first maxim of quantity is flouted because the respondent mentions the name of the child who lives away and also goes ahead to say who the child lives with.

The maxim of Relation would also not be satisfied because the information given is of a child who lives away and the question is on those who live away. Therefore, it is irrelevant for this question.

The response is also ambiguous thus flouting the maxim of manner .the response could either mean that Mugo lives with his grandmother in his house or that Mugo lives with his grandmother in her house.

3.8 when was your last child born?

I cannot talk of a last child until my husband says so.

This response flouts the maxim of quantity by giving information about her culture , that in her community it is the man who decides the number of children that a couple will have.

It also flouts the maxim of Relation “be relevant” because the speaker’s response does not match with the question asked by the researcher.

My youngest child is called faith and she is in class eight.

The expectation of the researcher in the question is for the respondent to only mention the year when her last child was born. The respondent goes ahead to mention the name of her last child and also adds that the child is in class eight. This information is not the one required in this talk exchange thus the maxim of quantity is not satisfied.

The response also flouts the maxim of relation because it does not tell when her last child was born.

3.9 Was this birth notified?

I gave birth in pumwani hospital

The above response flouts the maxim of quantity because instead of the respondent answering by a “ yes “or a “no” as the researcher expects on the notification of the said birth she talks about where she gave birth.

The response also flouts the maxim of relation because it lacks any relationship with the asked question. The information that she gave birth in pumwani hospital does not relate in any way with notification of birth to the authority.

3.10 Deaths of females who died at age 12 to 49 years.

Did the death occur during pregnancy?

She was a form four student and the doctor said she had blood cancer

The information in this response that the deceased was a form four student and that she died of blood cancer is not the required information thus the response flouts the maxim of quantity.

Also the maxim of relation is flouted because the respondent has not answered the asked question.

The doctor was careless while handling Eunice.

By uttering the above response the speaker flouts the maxim of quantity because it does not give the required information of whether the said female died during pregnancy.

It does also not satisfy the maxim of quality because the speaker cannot give evidence to incriminate the doctor for being careless while handling the patient.

The maxim of relation is also not satisfied because the respondent does not answer the question that the researcher poses. The response given has no bearing with the question that asked whether the said female died during the period of pregnancy or not.

She was bewitched by jealous people

The above response flouts the maxim of quantity because the information required is not the one that is given. The issue of witchcraft and jealous which is brought in by the respondent is not necessary.

The response also flouts the maxim of quality because the respondent cannot evidence his claim that the deceased was bewitched. Relation is the other maxim that is not satisfied by the above response because the question is on the period of death (pregnancy) and not the cause of death.

Faith was a very good singer, we still miss her.

According to Grice this response flouts three conversational maxims: the maxim of quantity, relation and manner. The maxim of quantity is not satisfied because it talks of issues that are not required such as being good at singing and how they feel for the deceased. The maxim of relation is flouted because the question of the researcher is

not answered while the maxim of manner is flouted because the respondent is obscure and disorderly.

3.11 How many exotic cattle are owned by this household?

They eat too much

The fact that exotic cattle eat too much it is not the information which is required thus the maxim of quantity is flouted. The maxim of relation is also violated because the response is not relevant to the question on ownership of exotic cattle therefore the respondent does not answer the asked question.

I sell 10 litres of milk every day

Selling ten litres of milk is not the issue at hand thus the maxim of relevance and the maxim of quantity are flouted.

The maxim of quality is flouted because the respondent is giving information on milk and it is not what is required in this conversation.

The maxim of Relevance is flouted because the response is not related to the question that it is meant to answer.

3.12 What type of disability does name have?

I lost my right leg in an accident

The above response flouts the maxim of quantity ____ don't give more information than is required in a talk exchange.

The respondent is telling a story on having an accident and not of a disability that he has.

It is also going against the maxim of relevance __Be relevant to the talk exchange.

The response is nowhere near the question that is asked.

3.13 Because of the disability, does name have difficulties in engaging in any economic activity?

I don't borrow food.

This response does not fulfill the maxim of relevance as it does not answer the asked question and does not answer the maxim of quantity too because it does not give the required information.

CHAPTER FOUR

TEST FRAME

4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapters we have identified responses that are disparate from the questions and proceeded to show how they flout Gricean maxims of conversation. From the 2009 census questionnaire, the questions that were found to elicit disparate responses were those that seek information on;

The age of the respondent

Marital status of the respondent

Religion of the respondent

Number and other issues like death of the children of the respondent

Education levels and ownership of livestock and property

The aim of this chapter is to suggest a test frame that can guide for questions with minimal disparate responses so that the maxims of conversation that are flouted can be satisfied. The responses given as answers to the above questions mainly flouted the maxim of Quantity and the maxim of Relation.

The maxim of Quantity which relates to the quantity of information to be provided urges a participant in a conversation to make their conversational contribution as informative is required and not to be more informative than is required.

On the other hand, the maxim of Relation urges speakers to be relevant in their conversational contribution.

Since no codified rules for question asking exist, it might appear that there are few if any principles to differentiate good from bad questions.

We believe however that many such principles exist and in this chapter we have provided a tentative formulation of them, to guide the novice or the experienced practitioners in asking better questions.

The ability of the interviewer to make contact with the respondent and to secure cooperation is undoubtedly important in achieving the interview. In addition, however the questionnaire as the central focus of the “conversation” plays a major role in making the experience enjoyable and in motivating the respondent to try to provide the information asked for.

A bad questionnaire, like an awkward conversation can turn an initially pleasant situation into a boring or frustrating experience. Thus the questionnaire designer must consider the questionnaire as a whole and its impact on the interviewing experience.

In the process of question asking different forms of erroneous responses were encountered such as those caused by memory, motivation, communication and knowledge. That is, material may be forgotten at the time at which something happened may be remembered incorrectly, respondent may be motivated not to tell the truth because of fear of consequences or because they want to present themselves in a favorable light, respondent may not understand what they are being asked and answer the question in terms of their own understanding and finally they may just know the answer to the question and answer it without indicating their lack of knowledge (Sudman 1982)

Therefore, we suggest the following test frame as a tool to guide for questions with minimal disparate responses to enable the researcher to get the correct information on questions seeking information on marital status, Religion, level of education, ownership of livestock and property and also on the place of birth.

4.2 Aided Recall.

This is a procedure which provides one or more memory cues to the respondent as part of the question. It helps respondent to remember events that would otherwise be forgotten.

It takes various forms;

1. Putting examples into the question
2. Showing cards to respondent which contains the expected answers.
3. Household inventory

Putting examples into the question.

Consider the following questions;

4.2.1 What is names marital status?

The above question gets disparate responses such as;

My wife was poisoned last year

One cannot marry without money these days.

I am Jame's only wife.

In the above responses the maxim of **quantity** “make your conversational contribution as informative as is required and do not make your contribution more

informative than is required “ is flouted .also the maxim of Relevance is not fulfilled because the responses do not relate in any way with the asked question.

If we apply Aided recall as a test frame, this disparity will be disposed. Consider the following suggestion,

Please listen to the following choices as I read them, which one best describes, your current marital status?

a. Married

b. Separated

c. Widowed

d. Never married

The respondent has easy time to arrive at his /her choice because the memory is aided to recall. The required information is provided thus fulfilling the maxim of quantity and since the choice given answers the question also the maxim of Relevance is fulfilled.

The use of the term single should be avoided as this often means in popular speech, divorced or separated but not currently married.

4.2.2 What is <name's> religion?

The biggest Methodist church in this area.

My heart is my church

The above question elicits disparate responses which flouts the maxim of quantity, Relevance and quality___don't say something you believe to false or what you lack evidence.

This miscommunication can be alleviated by the Aided recall test frame in the following way.

The following is a list of various religions followed by various people, please listen as I read and choose the one you, yourself belongs to;

a. Protestant

b. Catholic

c. Muslim

d. Hindu

e. traditionalist

f. other religion

g. no religion.

From the above elaborate list the respondent will comfortably choose his/her religion thus fulfilling the maxim of quantity___the required information on religion is given, again the maxim of quantity is fulfilled in that no false information is given and finally the maxim of relevance is satisfied in that the answer chosen relates to the question that was asked on the respondent religion.

4.2.3What is the school/learning institution attendance status of Name?

I have a two months old baby

A school is a prison of its own kind

The above question gets disparate responses which flout the maxim of quantity___make your conversation contribution as informative as is required for the current talk exchange.

Quality___try to make your contributin one that is true:do not say what you believe to be false,and do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

and maxim of Relevance___Be Relevant. (Grice 1975)

Through Aided recall we can come up with a question that elicits minimal disparate responses if any. Consider the following question;

The following are various school attendance status. Which one describes your own school attendance status?

1. In school /learning institution

2. Left school

3. Never went to school.

4. Don't know.

The respondent is able to choose the status that describes him/her with ease because all the options are provided.

For this reason, disparity is minimalized as the respondent is restricted and guided towards the expected response

Therefore the maxim of quantity is now fulfilled because the required school attendance status is given.

The maxim of quality is also satisfied in that the respondent gives a true choice

In addition the maxim of relevance is satisfied because the response given answers the question on school attendance status.

4.2.4 What is the highest level reached by name?

This question got disparate responses such as;

I became pregnant and got expelled from school when I was almost to sit for the exam which would enable me to join collage.

I have a bachelors' degree in economics.

The responses flout the maxim of quantity because the information offered is much more than is required'

The maxim of Relevance is also flouted and finally the maxim of manner _____be perspicuous" avoid verbosity. The first respondent is disorderly and quiet lengthy.

Consider the same question after involving the test frame.

Which among the following school certificate does name own?

- a. K.C.P.E*
- b. K.C.S.E*
- c. P.1*
- d. Diploma*
- e. Degree.*

With the above memory aids the respondent arrives at the required response without having to beat around the bush. Thus the maxims are all fulfilled .that is, the maxim of quantity is satisfied be providing the required information regarding the highest level reached.

The maxim manner is also satisfied because the respondent is brief and finally the maxim of Relevance is satisfied because the response answers the question on highest level reached by the name.

4.2.5 What is name's Tribe/Nationality?

My father is a Kikuyu while my mother is a kisii

The above question and it consequent response are disparate.

The response flouts the maxim of quantity, relevance and manner .

Consider the question after involving a aid recall.

Which among the following Kenyan tribes do you associate yourself with?

1.Meru

2.Kikuyu

3.Kamba

4.Luo

5.Embu

6 Kalenjin

7.Other

8.None

9.Don't know

This list helps the respondent to quickly come up with an *answer that otherwise* would have been difficult to retrieve.

The second form of Aided recall is whereby, respondents are **shown a card containing choices of the expected answers** and they are asked to pick the card that they identify with.

Considerer the following examples;

What is name's religion?

A question asked this way will elicit disparate responses which in turn flout Grice maxims of conversation.

A question can be restructured and cards prepared which describes the behavior or activity in question.

Choose from the following cards the one that describes your religion.

A. PROTESTANT

B. CATHOLIC

C. MUSLIM

D. TRADITIONALIST

The following cards describes the marital status of various people, please choose any one of them that suits your marital status.

A. MARRIED

B. DIVORCED

C. WIDOWED

D. NEVER MARRIED

The above examples show that the respondent is well guided because they will choose just one card by which they will describe their religion or marital status. The maxim of **quantity** “**make your contribution as informative as is required**” is satisfied because the response now contributes only the required information in the direction of the conversation.

The maxim of **relevance** “**be relevant**” is also fulfilled in that the response answers the question that is asked in a relevant manner.

Another form of aided recall that can guide for questions with minimal disparate responses is the **household inventory** conducted jointly by the respondent and the

interviewer .These household inventories can be used to determine the presence of assets such as television, furniture, appliances or cattle , goats or sheep.

Thus, instead of asking a question like

4.2.6 How many exotic cattle are owned by this household?

To get disparate answers like,

They eat too much

It is better to conduct household inventory where the interviewer accompanies the respondent to the cow shed to count the number of cattle.

Therefore, the respondent will not have a chance to give disparate responses and the maxims of conversation will be satisfied.

However, certain **precautions** must be observed when aided recall is used. First the list or examples provided must be as **exhaustive** as possible behaviors not mentioned in the question or mentioned as others will be substantially underreported, relative to items that are mentioned specifically.

A problem may arise with long list where respondents are likely to report some activities either by deliberately fibbing or by unconsciously misremembering the date when a behavior occurred. Such problems can be avoided by, making the list so extensive that virtually all respondents will be able to answer “yes” to some items.

Or you can start with a screening question such “do you consider you, yourself religious?” the short screener question should not be used several times in the interview because respondent may learn that they can skip out of a whole series of questions by saying “no”.

The questions in the questionnaire that seek information on the respondent place of birth require to be **made specific** so that the aided recall can apply.

The simple reason for making each question as specific as possible is to make the task easier for the respondent which in turn will result in accurate reports of behavior.

As Payne (1951) quoted in Sudman (1982) points out, the researcher should behave like a newspaper reporter and ask the five W'S; who, what, where, when and sometimes why.

For behavior questions it should always be clear whether the respondent is reporting only for himself or for other household members or for household in total.

The word "you" can be either singular or plural and is a source for confusion. We suggest the use of you, yourself when information is wanted only from the respondent.

The "**when**" **question** should specify the time period by using actual dates instead of terms such as "last week" or "last month"

It is generally less precise to ask "when was the last time you did something because there are those who do it rarely and those who do it often, so that their answers are subject to much greater memory errors.

Therefore limiting the time period minimizes the number of erroneous or potentially erroneous responses.

Let us consider the following questions from the data which had a vague expression.

4.2.7 Where was name born?

In pumwani hospital

In this village

kautine

The above disparate responses could have been caused by the vagueness of the word “where”.it gets various interpretations from the respondents which include; the hospital, a place or a village.

Because of such ambiguity the maxims of quantity, quality and Relevance are flouted. If the vague word is made specific and Aided recall brought in, this problem can be solved.

Let us look at the following same but with specific wording.

In which District among the following was name born?

- a. Imenti north
- b. Imenti south
- c. Tigania east
- d. Tigania west
- e. Igembe south
- f. Igembe north
- g. Other
- h. Don't know.

The respondent now knows that it is the district in which he/she was born that the interviewer seeks to know. The choice can now be made from the provided list thus fulfilling the maxim of quantity because he/she now contributes to the direction of the conversation and the maxim of Relevance is also fulfilled because the respondent will now answer the question by giving a relevant answer.

4.3 Deliberately sequencing a question.

In chapter one we observed that changing the wording of questions changes the kind of responses to those particular questions. From the 2009 census questionnaire, questions that sought information on the number of children of the respondent, those that asked information on the age of the respondent and those which asked about deaths in the household received disparate responses that flouted the maxim of relation.

These kinds of questions need to be sequentially framed because if they are asked at once the respondent feels threatened and thus they give a disparate response.

Let us consider the following questions from the questionnaire;

4.3.1 How many children have you ever born alive?

The following were the disparate responses

We don't count children

I am a student in form four

Children are a gift from God

The above question was answered in disparate responses because of asking it as one question. It should be sequenced as follows so that the disparity can be disposed.

It can be written as follows.

a. Do you have children

1. yes

2. No

b. Do you have both boys and girls?

1. Boys only

2. Girls only

3. Both boys and girls

c. Tick the number of boys (1 2 3 4 5 6)

Number of girls (1 2 3 4 5 6)

Through such sequencing the respondent gives the total number of the children unaware. Therefore, they give a relevant answer which satisfies the maxim of relation and also the maxim of quantity because it contributes the required information in the conversation.

4.3.2 How many children have you born alive who live in this household

In order to get less disparate responses for this question, we can restructure the question as follows;

- a. *It is normal for parents to allow their children to live with friends and relatives. yes/no*
- b. *Do you happen to have some of your children living somewhere else? Yes/no*
- c. *Name all the children who live here with you.*

1.

2.

3.

If this question is formulated in this manner it leaves no gap for irrelevant responses thus the maxims are obeyed.

How old is <name>?

Which is likely to yield disparate responses that flout the maxim of relation. it can be structures as follows;

- a. What is your age as of date 2/11/2015
- b. What is your date of birth day/month/year.

Checking the respondent years against date of birth may reduce the likelihood of careless mistakes or coy attempts to remain young for another one year. Therefore the respondent gives a relevant answer to the question that he was asked and gives only the required information thus fulfilling conversational requirements.

4.3.3 When was your last child born?

The word “**when**” triggers disparate responses because the respondent will undergo a lot of difficulty while trying to understand the question. It is not specific on what it is asking.

Thus the question gets the following disparate responses;

My youngest child is called Faith and is in class eight.

When I was so broke

Consider the same question but structured differently.

What is the year, month and date of birth of your last born child?

_____year_____month_____date

Structured this way, the respondent will have to give an answer which is the required one and one that is relevant.

Information about deaths in the household

Did the death occur during pregnancy?

The above question elicited disparate responses such as the following

The doctor was careless while handling her

She was bewitched by jealous people

She was a form four student and doctor said she died of blood cancer.

The above responses can be avoided if we restructure the question in a sequential manner.

Let us consider the following same question but structured differently.

a. Death is a natural process that all of us will undergo.

b. we loose friends and relatives everyday

c. Is there a female who has died during pregnancy in this family for the last one year? yes/no

If this question is asked in these stages, the respondent is prepared little by little to give the required answer at the end. This answer will be relevant to the question thus will fulfill the maxim of relevance and quantity at the same time.

Conclusion

In the above chapter the main objective was to offer a test frame that can guide for questions with minimal disparate responses.

The previous chapters had identified the questions and their consequent disparate responses and then it was shown how these disparate responses flout Grice maxims of conversation.

Aided recall is the major test frame that has been suggested as an adequate tool to guide for questions with minimal disparity.

It comes in different forms such as including examples in the questions, using cards as cues to the respondent and conducting household inventories helped to satisfy the maxim of quantity. Others include sequential formulation of questions and making questions specific which help to satisfy the maxim of relation.

These methods disposed disparity and the responses given satisfied Grice conversation maxims,

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND REMARKS ON HYPOTHESIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises a brief outline about the contribution of each chapter, remarks on how the findings measured up against each hypothesis as laid out in chapter one and finally a few recommendations for further research.

5.2 Summary

Chapter one of the current study aimed at introducing the key components it will employ. It provided background information, the statement of the problem which had as its proposition that census questions and their consequent responses are disparate, objectives which included identifying questions and their consequent disparate responses, demonstrating how they operate to flout the maxims and suggesting a test frame which can guide for questions with minimal disparity.

It also included hypotheses, literature review which involved foregrounding the area of discourse analysis, scope and limitations, methodology which highlighted the study's correlational design, justification of the study and theoretical framework. In tandem with the first objective of the research, chapter two identified questions and their consequent disparate responses.

Corresponding to objective number two of the study chapter three demonstrated how the disparate responses flouted the Gricean maxims of conversation.

Chapter four which is in tandem with objective number three suggested Aided recall method and deliberate sequencing of questions as the major test frame that can be used when constructing census questions in order to reduce disparity between them and their consequent responses. On a general note, we found out that despite advancement in linguistic research, statistic reports in Kenya are dependent on erroneous question techniques.

This research began with some assumptions (based on the objective of the study) and at this point as we conclude our study, some generalizations can be made against each hypothesis.

1. Responses to the questions of the 2009 census questionnaire have disparity.

Questions and their responses were found to be disparate

2. Responses given to the questions of 2009 census questionnaire flout the Gricean maxims__chapter three of this study illustrated that the four Gricean conversational maxims__ quantity, quality, Relation and Manner are not satisfied by the responses in various ways.

3. The suggested test frame will serve as an adequate tool to guide for questions with minimal disparate responses.

Aided recall method couple with specific question wording was found to be an adequate tool to guide for questions with minimal disparate responses.

5.3 Recommendations

This study focused on the disparity between questions and their responses in a structured interview consequently the first recommendation of the researcher is to describe disparity in other genres like radio broadcast live interviews.

This research used only 2009 census questionnaire because of time limitation, therefore the next recommendation is using more census questionnaires for a broader perspective.

This study used data collected in Igembe north district, consequently, the next recommendation is to use data collected from other districts to confirm the findings.

The final recommendation extends to Kenya bureau of statistics that Aided recall method should be used when constructing census questionnaire questions coupled with specific question wording in order to capture the desired data.

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Appendix I

(CONFIDENTIAL)

Republic of Kenya Population and Housing Census - 24th/25th August 2009																													
Province		District	Division	Location	Sub-Location	E.A. Number	E.A. Type	E.A. Status	Household No.	Household Type	Constituency	Structure No.: S																	
Ward	Males =	Females =	Total Household Population =			<input type="checkbox"/> Spoilt <input type="checkbox"/>																							
A: Information Regarding All Persons											B: Information Regarding Females Aged 12 Years and Above																		
Name	Line Number	Relationship	Sex	Age	Line Number of Mother	Usual Residence of household	Tribal/Nationality	Religion	Marital Status	Birth Place	Previous Residence	Duration of Residence	Orphanised	Particulars of All Live Births						Particulars of Last Live Births									
(P-00)		(P-10)	(P-11)	(P-12)	(P-13)	(P-14)	(P-15)	(P-16)	(P-17)	(P-18)	(P-19)	(P-20)	(P-21)	(P-22)	(P-23)	(P-24)	(P-25)	(P-26)	(P-27)	(P-28)	(P-29)	(P-30)	(P-31)	(P-32)	(P-33)				
What are the names of each person who spent the night of 24th/25th August, 2009 in this household? (Report two names of each person, young and old, starting with the head of the household.) An illustration of how to write the names is shown below. PATRICIA ODENG	1																												
	2																												
	3																												
	4																												
	5																												
	6																												
	7																												
	8																												
	9																												
	0																												

31568600020



20000001

Line Number	B: Information Regarding Persons Aged 12 Years and Above			C: Information Regarding Persons with Disability			D: Information Regarding Persons Aged 3 Years and Above			E: Labour Force Particulars (To be asked of all persons aged 5 years and above)			F: Information Regarding ICT (To be asked of persons aged 3 years & above)					G: Annual Live Births		H: Information About Deaths in the Household																
	(P-34)	(P-35)	(P-36)	(P-37)	(P-38)	(P-39)	(P-40)	(P-41)	(P-42)	(P-43)	(P-44)	(P-45)	(P-46)	(P-47)	(P-48)	(P-49)	(P-50)	(P-51)	(H-10)	(H-11)	(H-12)	(H-13)	(H-14)	(H-15)												
	Particulars of Last Live Births	Was this child still alive?	Sex of child	Age of child	What type of disability does NAME have? (List not more than three)	Because of the disability, does NAME have difficulties in engaging in any economic activity?	What is the highest level of schooling completed by NAME?	What is the highest level of schooling completed by NAME?	What was NAME's main occupation during the last 7 days preceding the census night?	Economic Activity	For those who worked or held a job (including those in household work)	Who was NAME's main employer?	How many hours did NAME work in the last 7 days preceding the census night?	Also NAME able to get a service from the following items within the last 6 months?	How often does NAME use internet (e.g. email, chatting, etc.)?	Where did NAME use the internet?	How many live births occurred in the household between 24/09/2008 and 24/09/2009 (last 12 months)?	How many deaths occurred in the household between 24/09/2008 and 24/09/2009 (last 12 months)?	Name of the household member who died.	Was this death notified?	How old was NAME at his/her death?	1=Male 2=Female	Age	Sex												
1																																				
2																																				
3																																				
4																																				
5																																				
6																																				
7																																				
8																																				
9																																				
0																																				
Continuation page of																																				
I: Information About Deaths in the Household				J: Information Regarding Livestock								K: Ownership of Household Assets										L: Emigrants														
(I-10)				(J-17)								(K-20)										(L-20)														
For females who died at age 12 - 49 years				How many of each of the following livestock are currently owned by this household?								Did the household own any of the following assets?										How many emigrants of this household have migrated to another country since 1995?														
1=Deceased 2=Deceased 3=Age 12-49 years 4=Other 5=DK				Livestock		Number		Livestock		Number		Dwelling Units		Habitable		Tenure Status of Main Dwelling Unit		Roof of Main Dwelling Unit		Construction Material of Main Dwelling Unit		Main Source of Water		Main Mode of Human Waste Disposal		Main Type of Cooking Fuel		Main Type of Lighting Fuel		1=Yes 2=No		1=Radio 2=TV 3=Mobile Phone 4=Landline Telephone 5=Computer 6=Animal Drawn cart 7=Motor Cycle 8=Truck/Tractor 9=Refrigerator 10=Boat 11=Other (Specify)				
				1. Exotic cattle		7. Pigs		8. Indigenous chicken		9. Chicken Commercial		3. Goat		4. Camel		5. Other (Specify)		1=Completely from sheets 2=Partly from sheets 3=Wood 4=Other (Specify)		1=Concrete 2=Brick 3=Wood 4=Other (Specify)		1=Pipe 2=Well 3=Other (Specify)		1=Septic tank 2=Open pit 3=Other (Specify)		1=Electricity 2=Kerosene 3=LPG 4=Other (Specify)		1=Electricity 2=Kerosene 3=LPG 4=Other (Specify)		1=Radio 2=TV 3=Mobile Phone 4=Landline Telephone 5=Computer 6=Animal Drawn cart 7=Motor Cycle 8=Truck/Tractor 9=Refrigerator 10=Boat 11=Other (Specify)		If NONE write "0" and end the interview				