

# **Liberating Education: What From, What For?**

Editors:

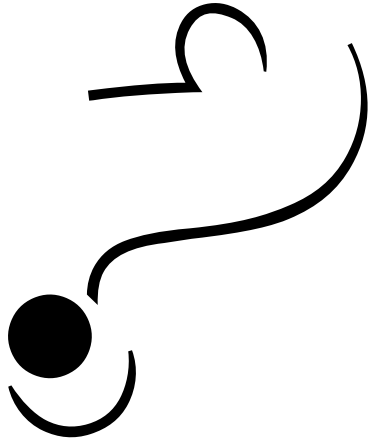
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# **Deliberative Education and Quality of Deliberation: Toward a Critical Dialogue and Resolving Deep Disagreements**

## **1. Introduction**

In this paper, I discuss the foundations on which an effective programme of deliberative education can be built in order to help reduce political polarization and provide citizen emancipation. First, I will examine the key concept of quality of deliberation, based on the key features of deliberative democracy. Briefly, these are: freedom of participation, equality of participants in a deliberative environment and critical examination of opinions held by each of the participants. Rather than talking about it from a purely theoretical standpoint, I will discuss recent promising research on deliberation within deeply divided societies and explore why the evidence of positive deliberative transformative moments (DTMs) points toward a substantial reason for optimism. However, in exploring the benefits of current research, I will try to show that deliberative performance is, while promising, still far from satisfactory.

Namely, various problems that are usually posed as detrimental to deliberation – group polarization, exclusion of those unwilling or

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unable to rationally argue for their views, moderator bias, unbridgeable deep divisions, etc. – do become dangerous if we are willing to leave things as they are. In order to propel deliberation forward and make deliberative mechanisms truly efficacious, I will argue that we need a model of deliberative education that takes realities of the actual, not idealized, political discourse into account. Furthermore, such a model should also outline a mechanism for assessing and prescribing a cogent way to make deliberative events reflective of the key democratic values such as freedom, equality, tolerance, respect, and others. To do that, I will use two complementary elements. The first one is the index devised for determining the quality of deliberation, the DQI (Steenbergen et al 2003).<sup>2</sup> The second are the conversational maxims formulated by Grice (Grice 1989). Even though they explicitly state the conditions for genuinely productive conversations, they have thus far been rarely applied in political discourse. However, as I will try to show, in combination with the descriptive DQI, they genuinely provide a sound normative element that can lead us to formulate viable and comprehensive models of deliberation.

In the second part of the paper, I move on to discuss how such positive DTMs can be made more frequent, how deliberation could increase in quality, and why that will help restore public trust and reduce polarization. Rather than adopting any of the unfounded top-down approaches, I will claim that a bottom-up strategy of introducing deliberation through education in schools is the approach that could be successful in the future. Efficient deliberation must go beyond its commonly stated goal – a better understanding of how potential voters behave during their participation in deliberative processes. Our focus, I will claim, needs to be predominantly on the future voters.

Thus, in the third part of the paper, I try to show that deliberation will be most effective if it is first taught in schools, where students would learn how to participate in such events and learn the impor-

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2 See also Steiner 2012; Steiner et al. 2017.

tance of listening to others and understanding their own views. Accomplishing that, they will be educated in a way that will make them much better equipped to approach the voting ballot with a clear idea of their preference ordering. Even though precise, detailed, and extensive research still has to be conducted, we can safely claim that deliberative education and subsequent deliberative practice will raise awareness for participation in various voting opportunities.

Throughout the paper, I will try to show that the main benefit of deliberative education consists of adopting the following elements: 1) improving interest in social, political, economic, and cultural issues of one's society, 2) reinforcing argumentative thinking and critical examination of the content provided in these areas, 3) practicing one's preference ordering and impartial discussion with peers and teachers, 4) increasing openness to hearing dissenting views. This is the way in which one can improve emancipation by effectively adopting Kant's advice to 'dare to think', but also expanding it with 'dare to be disproved by good arguments'.

## **2. Quality of Deliberation**

If we want to understand how and why political disagreement persists and, ideally, how we might make it less prominent, we need to pay attention to how things look 'on the ground', i.e. in different deliberative events. To that end, I explore the implications of deliberative events organized recently in countries such as Colombia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Belgium. The qualitative research method used in analysing these events shows us several very important aspects of deliberation. First, it features deep disagreements between the sides that are very polarized, which reflects the current state of affairs in politics and shows how mechanisms of deliberative democracy can be applied in order to produce what Steiner calls 'positive transformative moments' (Steiner 2017), when discussion, as viewed through the lens of DQI, becomes more inclusive and more



productive. Second, it offers a detailed analysis of how concrete discussions proceed under a wide range of realistic circumstances and shows piecemeal the ways in which deliberative discussion can proceed, stall, turn more polarized or, crucially, become genuinely fruitful.

The qualitative research of deliberative processes also attempts to show under which conditions societal disagreements can subside. However, answering the question of how a deliberative event should be organized is not straightforward, but context-specific. Steiner et al. note that this is because simulating real-world conversation among citizens that live in a democratic society as equals provides a more accurate picture about how such a process functions when widely applied (Steiner 2017: 1-10). It is at this point that we arrive at the key demand that is at the root of the deliberative process itself – the demand for equality. Because the crux of the issue is how exactly a deliberative process needs to be organized in order to have a productive outcome, we have to pay close attention to whether, and to what degree, deliberators participate in the discussion as equals.

To assess this, Steiner et al. developed the DQI – discourse quality index, which measures several aspects of a discussion (Steiner 2012: 11-18). Among its parameters, the most important ones in this context are those that check for the level of participation (how often a participant speaks), whether there are interruptions, and the degree of openness toward other opinions. Following this measurement, one can examine every individual utterance (or a speech act, as Steiner calls it) and see how it contributes to the overall index. A measurement outline can be represented in the following table. For spatial convenience, the different factors were shortened. From left to right, the DQI measures the number of times a speaker was interrupted (Int.), the amount of protestations exhibited against the current speaker (Prot.), the length of a speech act (Lgt.), the responses the speaker offered to others, including the interruptions and protestations (Resp.), if the speaker listened carefully to others (List.), arguments that were offered to support the view

of a speaker (Arg.), whether the content was relevant (Cont.), whether speakers changed their opinions in the course of the event (Chang.) and whether they told personal stories to support their views (Stor.). The rows from 1-5 represent the number of speakers (it can be up to 40, or sometimes even more) and each blank field in the table is then filled with the characteristics that accurately describe each individual speech act.

<b>DQI</b>	Int.	Prot.	Lgt.	Resp.	List.	Arg.	Cont.	Chang.	Stor.
1									
2									
3									
4									
5									

The result is a comprehensive picture of the quality of deliberation. This is especially important since one of the advantages that deliberative democracy purports to have over procedural democracy is the opportunity to change one's preferences in light of rational arguments or compelling viewpoints.<sup>3</sup> Thus, rather than looking solely at the end result of the discussion, seen in terms of what percentage of people mutually agree on some particular topic, by using DQI, Steiner et al. break down a deliberative process into its elementary components. One of the examples cited by Steiner concerns discussions that were organized in different countries between parties that have traditionally been engaged in violent conflicts, such as Colombia, Brazil, or Bosnia (Steiner 2012).

The following figures represent the measurement of the level and quality of participation in discussions that revolved around questions about the future of Colombia and Bosnia. Participants were divided in two groups. In Colombia, the members of the two groups were former combatants, ex-paramilitaries and ex-guerilla. In Bosnia (in Srebreni-

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3 Cohen 2009. For an alternative view, see Hardin 2009: 231-246. See Fuerstein 2013.

ca, to be exact), the members were Serbs and Bosniaks, the two ethnicities that were embroiled in a fairly recent civil war. The conversation was held without a moderator. The research was qualitative, in that it primarily measured how the discussion was flowing, how participants were treating one another, how they approached the discussion, etc (Ibid.). The left-hand side of the column represents the measurement of how many participants spoke, and to what degree they did so; the right-hand side of the column measures how the participants spoke about the topic at hand – the recommendations for a more prosperous future of the two countries.<sup>4</sup>

Colombia:

Did not speak up at all: 34%	No justification at all: 36%
Spoke up once or twice: 30%	Justification with an illustration: 34%
Spoke up 3–10 times: 28%	Reason given, but no connection with opinion: 17%
Spoke up 11–20 times: 7%	Reason given, connection with opinion: 10%
Spoke up 21–30 times: 1%	More than one reason, connections with opinion: 3%
Total participants: 100%	Total speech acts with opinion: 100%

Bosnia:

Did not speak up at all: 18%	No justification at all: 79%
Spoke up once or twice: 7%	Justification with an illustration: 12%
Spoke up 3–10 times: 18%	Reason given, but no connection with opinion: 3%
Spoke up 11–20 times: 23%	Reason given, connection with opinion: 6%
Spoke up 21–30 times: 15%	More than one reason, connections with opinion: 3%
Spoke up 31–40 times: 10%	Total speech acts with opinion: 100%
Spoke up 41–50 times: 7%	
Spoke up 51 times or more: 2%	
Total participants: 100%	

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4 Ibid.: 46-47, 75, 80. I discuss how some of the following data can help us contextualize deliberative democracy within the debate between political moralists and political realists. Here, the goal of presenting some of the same data is different in that it is more specifically tied not to the theoretical, but to the practical implications of adopting a deliberative approach to political issues. For the former approach, see esp. Šoć 2016: 931-934. See also: Šoć 2019.

As we can see from the data above, the quality of deliberation was low in both places. A significant number of participants did not speak at all. Of those who did, a large percentage either didn't speak in connection to given topics or didn't try to justify their views in any way. The figures were, perhaps predictably, much more promising in the case of Belgium or at Europolis, but are still not ideal (Steiner 2012: 48, 81).

Belgium:

Did not speak up at all: 0%	No justification at all: 18%
Spoke up once or twice: 2%	Justification with an illustration: 27%
Spoke up 3–10 times: 24%	Reason given, but no connection with opinion: 12%
Spoke up 11–20 times: 35%	Reason given, connection with opinion: 38%
Spoke up 21–30 times: 28%	More than one reason, connections with opinion: 5%
Spoke up 31–40 times: 6%	Total speech acts with opinion: 100%
Spoke up 41 or more: 5%	
Total participants: 100%	

Now, being essentially pragmatic, deliberative democracy must examine its empirical implications on concrete cases like these if it is to be effectively implemented. Even though it might seem that the results above run counter to my main proposal and seemingly vindicate political realists – reality, in a way, shows us just how far we are from our idealized epistemic goals – one would be wrong in thinking this. Rather, these results point squarely towards the way in which one can further explore and perfect deliberative processes in order to achieve a better level and quality of participation. Further explorations of these discussions, undertaken by Steiner et al, actually yield a very promising result. In their 2017 book, they explore ‘deliberative transformative moments’ (DTM), conceived as instances in which discussion is transformed from low-quality to high-quality, and *vice versa*. What does that mean exactly?

Naturally, a discussion will be of high quality if all speakers have common interests in mind, support their opinions with stories and

arguments, if they respond rationally and constructively to opposing views, if they respect their collocutors, if they actively participate in the discussion and if the discussion is constantly flowing toward finding a common ground. This is perhaps an idealized scenario since a deliberative discussion rarely satisfies these conditions throughout its duration. Still, it serves an important heuristic function. Namely, even if this or that discussion does not satisfy all, or any, of these conditions, we still know what it is that we must strive toward. Furthermore, the discussions examined so far also show us how to accomplish this. Here is where the role of DTMs becomes constructive and fruitful.

First, exploring DTMs allows us to understand which aspects of any given discussion need to be emphasized, what sort of behaviour is detrimental to purposeful and effective deliberation and what type of argument employed by a participant can further or hinder deliberative and overall democratic progress within societies. Second, DTMs help us recognize pitfalls of deliberative processes, as well as their fragility. One example of this is the situation when a discussion is transformed from high-level to low-level (a negative DTM). For instance, a participant – a former member of Colombian guerilla “did not give any useful information about these questions, neither on the process of reintegration in general. His story lacked specifics and was not related in any intelligible way to the peace process” (Steiner 2017: 56). Let us compare this to an instance of a speech act that helps positively transform the discussion. The positive DTM was brought about because a participant, Ernesto, could, as Steiner et al. observe, “show to the other participants that there are huge social and economic inequalities in Colombian society” (Steiner 2017: 43).

The two instances of DTMs, one positive and one negative, do not exhaust the list of possible reasons for such moments occurring. As Steiner et al. further report, playing a role of a deliberative leader (a person who only contributes to positive DTMs), a deliberative spoiler (someone who contributes only to negative DTMs), putting forward well-constructed rational arguments or yelling off-hand insulting re-

marks, also shifts deliberation from one level to the other. Sometimes even being silent can have a detrimental effect on a discussion (Steiner 2017: ch. 5–7).

Everything we have mentioned so far helps us understand how deliberative processes work. The upshot of the discussion about DTMs is that, for deliberation to be effective, participants need to address common issues and find common ground – something that all of them share, be it values, concerns, fears, etc. The fact that it can be effective, even sporadically, and even in the context of discussions between former members of groups that used to be at war with each other, represents an encouraging signal. Deeply divided societies are especially in need of good quality deliberation, even if enabling it is much harder than in developed democracies (Steiner 2017: ch. 1) or at institutions where participants can claim to be expert deliberators, such as Western European parliaments (Steiner et al., 2005). To find even a limited success without moderation, without prior deliberative education or experience, while conversing in the shadows of recently ended conflicts, should be a signal that an even greater success is not only a theoretical possibility, but a prospect for which we have every reason to strive.

So far, we have sketched potential advantages of deliberative democracy and outlined a type of approach to deliberation that involves breaking down deliberative processes into different components and exploring under which conditions such processes gain or lose in quality. Regardless of the presence of negative DTMs, which is to be expected at this stage, the frequency of positive DTMs in the context of low-quality deliberation does point to a road toward overcoming deep divisions. Now, someone might immediately point to several worrisome indicators. One is the set of data I already quoted. It unequivocally suggests that deliberation was of very low quality because many participants did not speak and of those who did, only a few used rational arguments in support of their views. The second potential problem is tied to the first. Here is the difference in opinion before and after deliberative events in Colombia:

	Before experiment	After experiment
<b>(Former enemy) increases violence</b>		
Ex-guerrillas agree	55%	69%
Ex-paramilitaries agree	75%	78%
<b>(Former enemy) helps to make Colombia stronger country</b>		
Ex-guerrillas disagree	40%	44%
Ex-paramilitaries disagree	66%	73%

As we can see, the outcome of the research was that both groups, though to a slightly different degree, viewed the other side more unfavourably than before the discussions took place. As Steiner notes, it is quite possible that many participants who did not deliberate, either at all, or not constructively enough, influenced the result (Steiner 2012: 174). These two facts would seem to counter the proposed value of deliberation. However, we would be wrong in thinking that. What these results show is: 1) that we are at a very early stage of conducting successful deliberative events and 2) that it is exceedingly difficult to achieve constructive results in deeply divided societies. Neither should be overly surprising. On the other hand, what does call for mild, yet firm optimism is the fact that even in the atmosphere of a lengthy and bloody conflict, former Colombian combatants did manage to achieve good quality deliberation throughout the process, and even transform the discussion from low-quality to high-quality without any moderation. The same was observed in both Brazil and Bosnia, the two equally deeply divided societies. Thus, even if discussions as such do not yield a better outcome when it comes to trusting the other side in the process, positive DTMs clearly suggest that at least *within* the discussion and *among* those who actively and constructively participated, better trust was firmly established. Moreover, when compared to the large part of deliberators who didn't actively partake, only a slight increase

in unfavourable views toward the other side should present even more of a reason for optimism. Looking at all the data in conjunction, we can extrapolate that with the increase in the quality of deliberation, and with more participants actively contributing to the discussion, the numbers could actually dramatically swing toward the two sides having a much more favourable view of each other. A question that immediately needs to be asked is how exactly something like that can be accomplished. Fortunately, here again we have a reason for being optimistic. The answer, Steiner suggests, lies in education (Steiner 2017: 255-263). In the next section, I will try to further elucidate this point.

### 3. Deliberation and Conversational Implicatures

In the previous part of the paper, I have discussed the DQI as a measurement of the quality of deliberative discussions. However, this measurement doesn't provide us with more than a way to reflect on existing deliberative events. Regardless of its usefulness,<sup>5</sup> it cannot help us reach normative prescriptions that could help us determine how deliberative events can become more successful, which is crucial for determining the right way to set up a comprehensive programme of deliberative education. Nevertheless, it does show us the way towards the solution. The crucial element of both the DQI and the DTM is its basic measurement unit – utterance. Namely, the insistence on utterance, or a singular speech act, in the analysis of deliberative quality, helps us understand that, when the problem arises in the discussion, it is tied to the way in which the conversation between multiple interested parties becomes productive or otherwise breaks down. In order to try and establish an effective way of promoting the former and minimizing the latter through education, I want to show that we could do it through the normative application of a theory that is widely known, but heretofore little used in analysing political dis-

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5 While the DQI is one of the most commonly used multifaceted quality indices, it is not the only one. See, Niemeyer and Dryzek 2007; Shaffer and Friberg-Fernros 2017; Wyss, Beste and Bächtiger 2015.



course – Grice’s theory of conversational implicatures (Grice 1989).

For Grice, conversational implicatures are “essentially connected with certain general features of discourse” (Grice 1989: 26). The term itself refers to the meaning of an uttered sentence that is not explicitly stated but is more or less clearly implicated.<sup>6</sup> One of Grice’s examples is the following:

A is standing by an obviously immobilized car and is approached by B; the following exchange takes place:

A: *I am out of petrol.*

B: *There is a garage round the corner.* (Grice 1989: 32)

The conversational implicature of B’s utterance, if it is to conform to what Grice calls the conversational maxims (which we will shortly specify), is that the garage that B refers to sells petrol and is open at the time of speaking.<sup>7</sup> What is crucial for Grice is that these implicatures are tied to some general features of our conversations. He characterizes the said general features of discourse in the following manner:

[Our talk exchanges] are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts; each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction. This purpose of direction may be fixed from the start (e.g., by an initial proposal of a question for discussion), or it may evolve during the exchange. (Grice 1989: 32)

Grice’s view certainly applies to a wide variety of different types of

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6 Grice introduces the terms ‘implicate’ and ‘implicature’ as ‘terms of art’ in order to convey what was said, where ‘say’ again has a specific meaning. In Grice’s words: “In the sense in which I am using the word say, I intend what someone has said to be closely related to the conventional meaning of the words (the sentence) he has uttered.” (Grice 1989: 26-27)

7 Aside from this illustration of implicatures, they also have additional features, such as cancellability (i.e. B can reject that he meant that the garage was open and sold petrol, and that the only content he meant to utter was the information that a garage was around the corner). However, this, and some other nuances regarding implicatures are not pertinent in the present context.

discussions, from everyday conversations about the weather, to more complex exchanges. However, the way he describes features of conversation makes it particularly applicable to the case of deliberation for several reasons. First, deliberation, more than ordinary conversation, explicitly states the common purpose of the discussion. As we have seen, the very point of deliberation is discussing a particular issue or a set of issues. Second, while deliberation does have a fixed starting point (say, the economic future of former combatants in Colombia, the terms of Britain's exit from the EU, etc.), Steiner et al. have shown the ways in which it can unfold unpredictably. While that unpredictability can sometimes yield positive DTMs, it is also at least as likely to generate negative DTMs and make a deliberative event less fruitful than it could have been. Third, one of the key characteristics of implicatures is that, as Grice puts it, they must be capable of being worked out:

To work out that a particular conversational implicature is present, the hearer will rely on the following data: (1) the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references that may be involved; (2) the Cooperative Principle and its maxims; (3) the context, linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance; (4) other items of background knowledge; and (5) the fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants and both participants know or assume this to be the case. (Grice 1989: 31)

All five types of data are pertinent for conversation in general and deliberative conversation specifically. In order to start bridging deep divides, other speakers must work out anything implicated by a single speaker. Clearly, Grice's view captures the details of all the key factors that are perhaps even more relevant in deliberative contexts than in many 'ordinary' contexts. Aside from the features that ordinary conversation has in common with deliberation, there are further reasons for applying a Gricean theory. To grasp them more easily, we first have to examine an important aspect of Grice's view – his cooperative principle. We said that Grice emphasizes the cooperative nature of

discourse. Grice's 'cooperative principle' is the general principle that, according to him, everyone is expected to follow in a conversation:

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 1989: 26)

In one sense, for everyday contexts, such a principle seems readily applicable. Every time two (or more) people start talking, they cooperate in a way that makes the unfolding of the conversation much easier. For instance, if I want to exchange a few words with my neighbour about the weather, we cooperate in so far as we both want the conversation to be fairly brief (since we are almost certainly not meteorologists), but also to convey our general sense of amicability. To accomplish that, we of course have to work together and join our conversational forces in fulfilling our purpose in that context.

However, over the years, the CI theory was criticized on various fronts. That might put our efforts to successfully apply it to deliberative contexts in doubt. After all, if the theory doesn't hold, how could it represent an effective tool for making deliberative mechanisms more efficacious? This is especially pertinent since one of the main criticisms is that Grice's Cooperative Principle (CP) works only in idealized circumstances, whereas in reality, as described by social psychology, evolutionary biology or game theory, people are not always ready to truly cooperate through conversation.<sup>8</sup> Even though such a charge seems to render the CP inapplicable, to defend its use in deliberative contexts we needn't try to save it, or other aspects of Grice's view, in their entirety. Rather, the more relevant observation would be that even if Pinker and Davis are correct in that the CP doesn't hold in a wide range of contexts (and here we set aside answering the question of whether they are), it still doesn't mean that the CP cannot be applied specifically to

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<sup>8</sup> See Pinker 1997. For criticisms that pertain to other aspects of Grice's view, see, for instance, Davies 1989; Davies 2013.

deliberation. In fact, everything we said so far tells us that deliberative contexts are perfectly suited for this, since they share common key features with those conversational contexts that Grice initially sought to describe. In addition, even if deliberative contexts don't always feature cooperative participants, combining the Gricean approach with the DQI can help us pinpoint the problem and then try to resolve it through the interventions of a moderator, or deliberative training. Indeed, Steiner et al. showed how the DQI can track the performance of uncooperative participants (recall their concept of a deliberative spoiler – a person who almost exclusively contributes with negative DTMs). In that sense, even some of the seemingly more idealized assumptions of the CP can be firmly grounded by the DQI and the very structure of deliberative events that are intended from the start to be a fully cooperative endeavour.

Thus far, we have mentioned two reasons for applying the CP to deliberation. The first reason lies, as we have seen, in framing the conversation in a particularly suitable way for exploring it the way Grice formulates his theory. The second reason is, however, even more important, as it directly addresses one of the potential weak spots of every deliberative event – its suboptimal efficacy and the attempt to increase the amount of positive DTMs. In addition to these, there is a third reason for applying the CI, and it is arguably the strongest. Namely, the CP is especially relevant in political contexts, specifically in cases of deliberation. The stakes for participants in deliberative events are always higher than in an ordinary conversation. Revealing our preferences, generating reasons for them, or otherwise revealing personal history to further the conversation requires us to commit to what we say more tightly than in ordinary contexts. To see this more clearly, let's examine the specifics of Grice's views. His CP is supplemented with four maxims (Grice 1989: 26-27):

*Maxim of Quality.* Make your contribution true; so do not convey what you believe false or unjustified.

*Maxim of Quantity.* Be as informative as required.

*Maxim of Relation.* Be relevant.

*Maxim of Manner.* Be perspicuous; so avoid obscurity and ambiguity, and strive for brevity and order.

These maxims provide a way to connect the CP to previously described deliberative situations. We have seen in the previous section that conveying what you believe to be false can lead readily to negative DTMs and can have a detrimental effect on deliberation, and this is fully captured by the first maxim. In addition, the maxim of relation fully captures one element of the conversation – the relevance of an utterance to the overall purpose of the conversation – that, if absent, almost always leads to negative DTMs or at least prevents the conversation from becoming fruitful. The same is the case with the second and fourth maxims, the absence of which stops other participants from fully benefiting from the discussion.

Now, if we remember the aspects of a conversation that are captured by the DQI, it might seem that there is some overlap, whether implicit or explicit. Let us recall that the DQI tracks the level of participation (how often a participant speaks), whether there are interruptions, and the degree of openness toward other opinions, whether participants provided reasons for their views, etc. Even though giving reasons for an opinion falls under the purview of the CP, or the second and fourth maxims, and all of these are implicitly connected with the CP, the key reason why we need a two-dimensional approach is the very way in which the DQI is constructed. Namely, it can only tell us what happened *post hoc*. Since deliberative events have shown their promise, we have seen that low participation percentages, as well as a fairly low amount of positive DTMs, require us to find a way to improve the terms of deliberation through education. On that point, the DQI is silent. It is neither an effective tool for devising a programme for deliberative education, nor was it meant to be. However, the CP and the four maxims are readily available to supplement the descriptive efficiency and comprehensiveness of the DQI. First, they are already prescriptive in kind. We can use them to elegantly formulate

normative propositions that would anchor an educational program. For instance, the normative version of the cooperative principle (CPn) would state that:

*(CPn): All participants in a deliberative event ought to make their 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 they are engaged.*

Similarly, all maxims could simply be expanded with the phrase ‘all participants in a deliberative event ought to...’. One might now wonder whether we need the DQI at all if Grice’s CP and maxims do all the work. The empirical results show us that the DQI is an indispensable tool for describing the conversation and diagnosing the problem in the first place. Without the DQI, the normative reformulation of the CP and the maxims might seem unnecessary or trivial, and in a sense, it would be. However, its usefulness stems from the way in which we can first see where the problem lies by analysing individual utterances using the DQI. Without it, our use of the maxims could tell us that participant A wasn’t sufficiently informative, or that they offered too much information. But the DQI tells us at which point it happened, what kinds of utterances preceded it, what were the reactions of other participants to A’s earlier utterances and how they responded both verbally and non-verbally to A’s most recent utterance. The DQI tracks all these elements piecemeal, which means that it serves as a kind of microscope under which we can observe all of the moving parts of a deliberative event that generally goes unnoticed, such as reactions from each participant, change in their stance toward a fellow participant in light of their reasons, personal stories, etc.

All of these variables are something that the CP and the maxims weren’t designed to account for. However, together the descriptive nature of the DQI and the normative reformulation of Grice’s CP and the maxims help us form a two-dimensional matrix. The descriptive dimension tracks deliberative performance against the normative

requirements, while normative requirements serve as a guide in understanding how to make particular utterances more effective. Slightly altering Grice's terminology, we can say that the DQI can use the CPn and normatively reformulated maxims to track what particular deliberational implicatures conformed to or violated the normative conversational requirements. These two approaches – the normative and the descriptive – can then function as tools to see to what degree conforming to the CPn raises positive DTMs and lowers negative DTMs. With such a tool, we can have a way to make multifaceted political reality more intelligible and devise a focused programme of deliberative education that would work toward constantly increasing positive DTMs, all the while fully embracing the realm of facts. As we can see from the first conversational maxim (or, in our context, normative deliberational maxim), insisting on truth *is* what will help us bring opposing sides together, if we insist on looking at deliberation through nuanced and detailed lens of the DQI and the CPn.

#### **4. Conclusion**

In conclusion, I will try to sketch several reasons why the upshot of deliberative events organized by Steiner et al. should be viewed through a positive lens. First, even deliberative events organized in poor and war-torn countries with little history of political deliberation show us that disputed sides can be brought closer together. Moreover, with the aid of the normative tool reflected in the CPn and the maxims, we can trace a clear path toward improving the situation in places as diverse as Colombia, Brazil, Bosnia, and many others. Using a two-dimensional matrix, consisting of the descriptive DQI and the normative CP, to track and improve deliberation ought to show a realistic path to deliberative progress. The accumulation of positive DTMs might bring us closer to a consensus, or at least make it likely that participants will more easily accept opposing and (in case of subsequent voting) majority preferences.

Second, the very occurrence of positive DTMs, even in an unmoderated setting, gives us a reason for optimism. While both sides entered the discussion with beliefs they held as true, they did manage to make some concessions without giving away that assumption. With the application of an educational program anchored by the Gricean deliberational maxims and the CPn, we can reasonably expect an even greater percentage of positive DTMs.

Third, as Helene Landemore notes:

[I]t would be more useful for democratic theorists to acknowledge explicitly the complexity of the object and unite in a constructive attempt at clarifying the relation between the various properties of democracy, whether intrinsic and instrumental (or procedural and epistemic).<sup>9</sup>

Clearly, the empirical, bottom-up approach to deliberation accomplishes exactly this in several ways. Although political issues are multifaceted and highly diverse in nature, by exploring deliberative performances in such different countries as Brazil, which has a history of class-based problems, Colombia, which just got out of a decades-long civil war, or Belgium, Britain, and Switzerland, where there is a strong democratic background but where deep divisions on the questions of immigration, EU membership, and others are also arising, we can fully embrace the recognized complexity. Because our two-dimensional approach offers a concrete way to build towards improved performances, and because the DQI tracks those performances utterance-by-utterance, we can fully hope to see improvements in deliberative efficaciousness, insisting that there are political truths that are worth pursuing, but only while we remain open to having our minds changed or allowing better reasons for our views to crystalize during deliberative events. These are the goals around which a curriculum for deliberative education should be based and toward which it should aim.

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9 Landemore 2017: 290; See also, Landemore and Page: 2015.



Now, to state this also means that epistemology can become an equal partner in forming such an educational basis. Thus, a wide range of options is open for exploring. If we are going to further elaborate on how a variety of mechanisms can be effectively applied to elucidate the nuanced nature of deliberation to students, we can explore whether democratic systems have their heir in epistocratic models proposed by Estlund or Brennan.<sup>10</sup> In doing that, we would bring to the forefront of a deliberative programme the issues of agent reliability, strength of justification and the need for a careful method of attaining true beliefs. It is also clear that we can wonder which aspect of epistemology can be the best fit with political philosophy and how the relationship between epistemology, politics and education can be beneficial for all of these domains. If what we have said so far is indeed tenable, and if the Gricean view of our conversational practices holds and has application in politics, as I tried to show, then some form of epistemic contextualism seems to be a natural fit, as I mentioned earlier. Virtue epistemology is also among promising options and, specifically, reliabilism. After all, emphasizing the role and epistemic virtues of subjects involved in deliberation should help both political theorists and deliberating participants themselves understand the strength of their own positions, as well as the strength of the opposing ones. It can also help us further explain via our two-dimensional scheme how a successful deliberation can proceed and on what grounds it can be further improved. To do that, we would need to explore proposals such as those from Zagzebski<sup>11</sup> which lies beyond the scope of this paper. However, suffice it to say for now that, if correct, we have seen a clear path towards a fruitful cooperation between politics, epistemology, and education, increasing the prospects of formulating a complex and comprehensive view of efficacious deliberative mechanisms, making deep disagreements less deep and more readily resolvable. If we can extrapolate from the aforementioned data obtained from the empirical research, the students eager to participate in society as active citizens can be effectively taught how

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10 See Estlund 1998; Brennan 2016. For a recent criticism, see Ahlstrom-Vij 2019.

11 See, for example, DeRose 1995; Sosa 2003; Zagzebski 1996.

to engage in difficult discussions with their peers and learn to accept differing viewpoints or, when the strength of supporting justification is sufficiently expressed, change their views. Thus, to recall Kant's famous phrase from the essay "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?" (Kant 1999), they will 'dare to think', while also being ready to be proven wrong by the strength of a better argument.

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