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Controversially on withholding information deceptively

Deception can be defined as a verbal or non-verbal act, whether or not successful, oriented towards causing the hearer believe to be true something the speaker believes to be false (see Dynel 2018). All forms of deception (e.g. lies, untruthful implicatures or covert ambiguity) necessitate withholding information. This is because a deceiver needs to keep covert what he/she believes to be true as well as the deceptiveness of his/her ongoing or previous act for the deception to succeed. However, an act of *deceptively withholding information*, or simply *withholding information* (Mahon, 2008a, 2015), may be employed strategically as an independent type of deception in its own right. In my presentation, I aim to distil the essence of deception performed by means of withholding information. This is a concept hitherto largely neglected in the psychological, linguistic and philosophical research on deception even though relevant remarks have intermittently been made on related topics or notions (e.g. Castelfranchi & Poggi, 1994; Galasiński, 2000; Vincent Marrelli, 2004; Mahon, 2008a, 2015; Carson, 2010; Horn, 2017a; Fallis, forth). These will be critically addressed in the course of my talk.

Firstly, I will specify the key conditions for deceptively withholding information. Essentially, deceptively withholding information comes into being if a piece of information necessarily relevant to the hearer (of which the speaker is aware) remains unavailable to him/her as a result of the speaker's purposeful communicative action or inaction.

Secondly, I will argue that deceptively withholding information can be conceptualised in pragmatic-philosophical terms as being based on the violation of Grice's first maxim of Quantity on the level of what is said (i.e. saying too little), which is conducive to covertly untruthful meaning, specifically *hearer-inferred what is said* (a necessary addition to Gricean framework so that it captures deception) that presents the violation of the first maxim of Quality. Before this proposal is made, Gricean and neo-Gricean scholarship on the first maxim of Quantity and its consequences will be revisited.

Thirdly, I will examine a number of linguistic realisations of withholding information based on a selection of examples reverberating across the literature on deception. Overall, deceptively withholding information can rely on pertinent utterances not being made at all, or on utterances being "edited out". However, it will be argued that a few examples that involve *scalar* expressions and are used in the relevant scholarship to illustrate withholding information actually qualify as lies, i.e. covertly untruthful assertions, which centre on violating the first maxim of Quality in what is said. Whether or not promoting *scalar implicatures* (Horn 1972), a heterogeneous notion that Grice himself did not envisage in his conceptualisation of Quality, scalar expressions used deceptively (usually via downscaling) are proposed to involve Quality violations given the *question under discussion* (Roberts 2001) by prioritising "exactly" or "only" interpretations (cf. Recanati, 2003; Horn, 2009, 2017b).