

0. Setting up the problem.

- ✚ Grammar = sounds make words
words make sentences
word-meanings make sentence-meanings
- ✚ General expectations that people have of each other in conversation = conversational implicatures
- ✚ Total utterance meaning = grammatical meaning + conversational meaning

- **What are the kinds of grammatical meaning (= conventional meaning)?**

1. “What is said” (assertion)
 - stuff that determines whether utterance is true or false
2. Conventional implicatures (presuppositions)
 - a. Associated with particular linguistic items/forms
 - b. Not part of truth conditions
 - c. But interact with truth-conditional stuff

Example 1.

- a. She is from Brooklyn, but she is nice.
- b. It’s true that Bill is a linguist
- c. It’s surprising that Bill is a linguist

We’ll talk more about these in a week or two.

- **What are the kinds of non-grammatical meaning (non-conventional)?**

- Grice: “other maxims” like “be polite”

Non-conventional (conversational) implicatures can be

- General: relatively independent of context
- Particular: very context-dependent

1. So: how do we know conversational meaning when we see one?

- ✚ Grice: six properties of conversational implicature
 - (a) Calculable
 - (b) Cancellable
 - (c) Nondetachable
 - (d) Nonconventional
 - (e) Not carried by what is said, but by the saying of it
 - (f) Indeterminate

- ✚ Sadock: which of these can be used as tests?

- (d) is circular
- (e) is the same as (d)
- (f) conversational implicature MAY be indeterminate, and then they may not. Conventional meaning can also be indeterminate

2. Calculability

- ✚ This is a necessary condition: for any implicature hearer should be able to figure it out, speaker should expect that the hearer will be able to figure it out, etc.

So, every conversational implicature is calculable.

Are all the calculable things conversational implicatures?

- ✚ Cooperative principle is very strong.

Example 2

- Bill is the Rock of Gibraltar
- It's cold in here

Example 3

- Bernstein studies hard
- Wright letters well (*ambiguous with* Write letters well)

- ✚ Conversational implicature may become conventionalized

Example 4

- Where did you put that cute poster? Oh, it went to the bathroom.
- My dog went to the bathroom on the living room carpet

3. Nondetachability

- ✚ Conversational implicatures are computed from
 - Grammatical meaning
 - the Cooperative principle

So: they must be independent from the linguistic form.

So: a paraphrase with the same grammatical meaning must have the same implicatures (in the same context)

- ✚ Exceptions: maxim of Manner implicatures

- ✚ Entrailments (part of literal semantic meaning) and conventional implicatures are also non-detachable – so nondetachability is not a sufficient test

Example 5.

- Since Harry and Bill left, most politicians are dishonest
 - Since it's cold in here, there must be a north wind
- ✚ Non-paraphraseable expressions – in general, what's a paraphrase?

Example 6

- Can you close the door?
- Are you able to close the door?

- ✚ On the other hand – how can anything be really detached, if we can calculate any implicature on the basis of any statement?

What is the difference above? – level of directness in the request?

- ✚ Near-synonyms with denial of implicature

Example 7.

- Some people left the party early
- Some, and perhaps all, people left the party early
- Students in this class write a paper or take a test to pass
- Students in this class write a paper and/or take a test to pass

4. Cancellability

- ✚ Since implicatures are based on expectations in context, speaker can add material indicating that the inference not be drawn.

Example 8.

Some people left the party early – in fact, everyone did

- ✚ If you try to deny any part of the grammatical/conventional meaning, bad things happen:

Example 9.

- *Dogs eat cheese even though they don't eat
- #It's odd that dogs eat cheese even though they don't

- Cancellability vs. suspension

Example 10.

- It's odd that dogs eat cheese if in fact they do
- Only Muriel voted for Humphrey, if even she did
- *Only Muriel voted for Humphrey and even she didn't

- ✚ Some conversational implicatures are so general that they are hard to cancel

Example 11

- ?# Gertrude not only almost swam the English Channel, in fact she swam it

BUT, compare:

- ## Gertrude not only just barely failed to swim the English Channel, in fact she swam it

What's the difference?

- ✚ One of the meanings in an ambiguity is cancellable, just like a conversational implicature!

Example 12

- Most boys invited two girls over (but it wasn't the same two; and it was the same two)

5. Reinforcibility

- ✚ A test related to cancellability: speaker can supply material that entails what would otherwise be only conversationally implicated

Example 13.

- Maggie ate some, but not all, of the cheddar
- #It's odd that dogs eat cheese and they do

Example 14

- Gertrude almost, but didn't quite, swim the English Channel
- #Gertrude just barely failed to, but didn't quite, swim the English Channel