Implicature and Deixis

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1 Implicature

1.1 The essential properties of conversational implicature

The essential properties of conversational implicature are cancellability, nondetachability, calculability, non-conventionality, reinforceability, and universality.

1.1.1 Cancellability

Conversational implicatures can be canceled when they run counter to a) semantic entailment, b) background assumptions, and c) context.

Semantic entailment  A conversational implicature can be canceled when the semantic entailment of the utterance runs counter to the implicature:

(1) Jon often gets As
   \[ \rightarrow \] Jon doesn’t always get As

(2) Jon not only often, but always gets As
   \[ \neg \rightarrow \] Jon doesn’t always get As

Background assumptions  If an implicature runs counter to background knowledge on a subject that implicature is canceled.

(3) Kate and I got married this weekend.
   \[ \rightarrow \] Kate and I got married to each other this weekend.

However, if given the background that Kate and the speaker are not in a relationship, and actually got married to different people, just on the same weekend the following is true:

(4) Kate and I got married this weekend.
   \[ \neg \rightarrow \] Kate and I got married to each other this weekend.

Context  The linguistic context of an utterance can also cancel an implicature.

(5) Jon said to Paul that he will dismiss him.
   \[ \rightarrow \] Jon, said to Paul, that he, will dismiss him.

However given the context that Paul is Jon’s boss:

(6) After Jon told Paul that he lost the major account, Jon said to Paul that he will dismiss him.
   \[ \neg \rightarrow \] Jon, said to Paul, that he, will dismiss him.
1.1.2 Nondetachability

Conversational implicatures come from the semantic content of utterances. This means that if synonyms are used they don’t change the implicature.

(7) Jon is likely/will probably to win the lottery.
    \[\rightarrow\] There is the possibility that Jon will win the lottery.

1.1.3 Calculability

Implicatures can be calculated from the cooperative principle and it’s associated maxims. See section 1.2.

1.1.4 Non-conventionality

Implicatures are not a part of what is said, but rather part of the speaker or utterance.

1.1.5 Reinforceability

Implicatures can be reinforced by being made explicit, without there being too much redundancy.

(8) The water isn’t cold (in the lake).
    \[\rightarrow\] The water is warm.

(9) The water isn’t cold, it’s warm.

1.1.6 Universality

Conversational implicatures are usually universal across all languages. Using the quantifier some rather than all has the implicature that the speaker means not all.

1.2 The Gricean maxims and the cooperation principle

Grice proposed the cooperation principle to ensure that in a conversation the right amount of the right type of information is given at the appropriate time. This includes the following maxims.

Maxim of Quality Be Truthful. Do not say what you believe to be false. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Maxim of Quantity Quality of Information Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the exchange. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Maxim of Relation Be relevant.


A speaker can flout any of the maxims in order to alter the implicature of what they say.

1.2.1 Generalized versus particularized

Generalized implicatures do not require a specific context to arise, whereas particularized implicatures do.
1.3 The Hornian system

Horn replaced Grice’s maxims with two (opposite,) fundamental principles:

Q[quantity]-principle Make your contribution sufficient; say as much as you can (given the R[elation]-principle).

R[elation]-principle Make your contribution necessary; say no more than you must (given the Q[quantity]-principle).

Horn goes on to describe Q- or Horn-scale items. These are a pair of words that are of the same class, register, and have about the same semantic meaning where one is stronger, and the other is weaker see (10) for examples. The stronger item entails the weaker.

(10) Q or Horn-scale
    a. <all, some>  
    b. <hot, warm>  
    c. <excellent, good>

1.4 The Levinsonian system

Levinson divided implicature up into three principles Quantity, Informativeness, and Manner. These are ordered Q > M > I if there is more than one.

The Q[quantity]-principle
    Speaker: Do not say less than is required (bearing the I-Principle in mind).
    Addressee: What is not said is not the case.

The I[nformativeness]-principle
    Speaker: Do not say more than is required (bearing the Q-principle in mind).
    Addressee: What is generally said is stereotypically and specifically exemplified.

The M[anner]-principle
    Speaker: Do not used a marked expression without reason.
    Addressee: What is said in a marked way is not unmarked.

(11) Q > I
    If Bill Gates gave you a car for Christmas, it may have been a real one.
    a. Q(clausal, since, if) 
        + > The car may or may not have been a real car
    b. I(car for Christmas]
        + > The car was a toy car.
    c. Q > I
        + > Possibly the car was a real car.

1.5 Conventional implicature

Conventional implicatures are those that are derived from specific lexical items like therefore, but, even, moreover, and so. They “are not derived from the cooperative principle.” They also are not calculable, and so must be stipulated. Finally they are not cancellable.
Deictics are used by speakers to reference something in the context of the discourse. Deictic expressions are those that have a deictic usage that is central to their meaning, but they can also be used nondeictically (see (13)). Gestural deictics require direct monitoring of the physical aspects of the speech event, whereas symbolic deictics can be determined knowing the basic spatial and temporal context of the speech event.

Deictic expressions are usually interpreted from the perspective of the speaker. Deictic projection is when a deictic is used where the center is the listener.\[1\]

### 2.1 Basic categories

#### 2.1.1 Person

First and second person pronouns are deictic expressions, but third are not (because they are not participating in the speech event. Vocatives are also deictics but with the speaker not in the arguments of the predicate.

#### 2.1.2 Time

Time deictics include now, then, today, tomorrow, next week, last Monday, et c. Time deictics differ in their coding time, and receiving time sometimes (eg when a speech event is recorded to be broadcast later). The coding time is the time of the speech event, and the receiving time is the time of the playing of the event. Metalinguistic tense is deictic, while it is unclear if linguistic tense (the (morphological) realization of tense) is deictic.

\[1\]Cf

(1) Can I go to your office?
(2) Can I come to your office?
2.1.3 Space

Space deictics are prepositions, as well as words like here and there. Space deixis is crucially the relation of the landmark to the speaker or hearer, and not some other object that might be given a side\footnote{Languages differ in the types, and gradations of space deictics they have some categories include distance, visibility, and elevation.}. Languages differ in the types, and gradations of space deictics they have some categories include distance, visibility, and elevation.

2.2 Other categories

2.2.1 Social

Social deixis breaks down into absolute and relational. Absolute deictics are things titles that are reserved for specific people or ranks (Mr. President, Professor, et c.) Relative deictics are used as a way to show relational information between the speaker and referent (referent honorifics), the speaker and addressee (addressee honorifics), the speaker and bystander (bystander honorifics), or the speaker and setting (changes in register).

2.2.2 Discourse

Discourse deictics are used to refer to point to another part of an utterance.

(14) This is how birds evolved from predatory dinosaurs.
(15) That is tonight’s evening news.
(16) Here goes the main argument.

\footnote{This sentence has two meanings. One where the subject is to the rear of the car irrespective of the speaker or hearer, which is nondeictic. The second is where the car is between the speaker, hearer, or both which is deictic.}

(1) It is behind the car.