

An Investigation of The Role of Conversational Implicature in Daily Conversations

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ABSTRACT

Dialogue in everyday speech occasionally uses words that are completely different from the usual expressions. The speaker's intended meaning of the speech is represented by the conversational implicature from a linguistic standpoint. The unique dialogues between the speaker and the receiver are referred to as conversation implications. That is the most crucial aspect of conversation theory that has been debated. According to Grice's theory of dialogue inference, the literal may be given meaning. In other words, cooperative communication is based on a set of cooperative principles. As a result, one of the most popular pragmatics research fields is conversational implicature. This paper aims to examine the significance of conversational implicature in casual discussions in various circumstances, which indicates that context is crucial for understanding what people say.

Keywords: Conversational implicature, Cooperative principles, Conversations

1 Introduction

One of the speaking skills that calls for participation from both the communicator and the communicant is conversational implication. A speaker may hint or imply something with their words, even if it is not expressly mentioned in the speech. This is known as an implicature. The use of implication can be used to convey ideas more successfully than the use of explicit language. This issue is covered by the linguistics field of pragmatics.

A statement is backed up by an implied meaning. A word or phrase may convey more than is actually said. To put it another way, even if the speaker doesn't explicitly declare it, there are some implicit meanings that the speaker wants to get across.

2 Literature review

Conversational implicature is a term introduced by the philosopher H. Paul Grice. Conversational implicature is based on an addressee's assumption that the speaker is following the conversational maxims or at least the cooperative principle. The linguistics field has released a number of research works. Implicature is an example of the language phenomena. He contends that implicature is a further meaning that highlights the pragmatics' influencing element as a linguistic quality. It offers a potential justification for the statements. Additionally, it has an impact on a sentence's meaning. It ought to be used in a suitable setting. It demonstrates that the significance of implicature depends mostly on taking into account several linguistic fundamentals.

The cooperative principle is a principle of conversation that was proposed by Grice H.P, (1975). It is a kind of tacit agreement between the speakers and listeners to cooperate in communication.

A conversational maxim is any of four rules which were proposed by Grice H.P, (1975), stating that a speaker is assumed to make a contribution that

- is adequately but not overly informative (quantity maxim)
- the speaker does not believe to be false and for which adequate evidence is had (quality maxim)



- is relevant (maxim of relation or relevance)
- and is clear, unambiguous, brief, and orderly (maxim of manner).

The cooperative principle, along with the conversational maxims, partly accounts for conversational implicature. Participants assume that a speaker is cooperative, and thus they make conversational implicature about what is said.

2.1 Types of maxims

According to Grice, there are four main types of maxims (Grice H.P, 1975)

2.1.1 The Maxim of Quality

Try to make your contribution once that is true, i.e.

1. Do not say what you believe is false
2. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

2.1.2 The Maxim of Quantity

1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange)
2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

2.1.3 The Maxim of Relevance (Relation)

Make your contribution relevant

2.1.4 The Maxim of Manner

Be perspicuous, and specifically

1. Avoid ambiguity
2. Avoid obscurity
3. Be brief
4. Be orderly

If the speaker is assumed to be observing the maxim, then the addressee makes a standard implicature. A standard implicature is a conversational implicature based on an addressee's assumption that the speaker is being cooperative by directly observing the conversational maxims.

3 Materials and Methods/ Methodology

The researcher collected chats using a variety of sources. Daily talks were chosen despite the dataset's size. Additionally, the Internet is used as a source to expand the volume of interactions. A total of 15 chats were collected during this process.

The discussions were analyzed using a qualitative methodology by the researcher. To look at conversational implicature and maxim violations, two stages of analysis were completed. The researcher read both the context and the utterances in order to analyze the discussion. Investigation of conversational implicature is based on the principles of CI and Grice's theory.

4 Results and Discussion

In the following exchange, A assumes that B is being cooperative, truthful, adequately informative, relevant, and clear. Thus, A can infer that B thinks A can get fuel at the garage:

A: *I've just run out of petrol.*

B: *Oh; there's a garage just around the corner.*

If the speaker is assumed to be flouting the maxim, then the addressee makes a more non-standard type of implicature. A flouting implicature is a conversational implicature based on an addressee's assumption that the speaker is deliberately breaking (flouting) a conversational maxim while still being cooperative.

For example:

In the following exchange, B flouts the maxim of manner, thereby implying that an open discussion of the ice cream is not desired:

A: *Let's get the kids something.*

B: *Okay, but I veto I-C-E C-R-E-A-M-S.*

4.1 Generalized and particularized implicature

A particularized conversational implicature is one which depends on particular features of the context. For instance:

A: *Can I borrow your car?*

B: *It's in the garage*

→Implicature: Yes

A generalized conversational implicature is one which does not depend on particular features of the context but is instead typically associated with the proposition expressed.

For example: *Fred thinks there is a meeting tonight.*

→ *Fred doesn't know for sure that there is a meeting tonight.*

According to Grice, a generalized conversational implicature can be derived if we assume that the speaker is cooperative and that he or she, perhaps contrary to appearances, follows the Maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner. From the observation of the linguistic form of the utterance and this assumption, the audience can reason to the implicature without invoking contextual features of the current conversational situation.

Implicatures can be denied without self-contradiction. Implicatures are defensible in that their validity is context – dependent and that in particular contexts they can be cancelled without contradiction.

A clear illustration of the property of defeasibility is Scalar implicatures.

Scalar implicatures are typically associated with the use of lexical items connected to one another by a scalar ordering. “Some” and “all” are two such lexical items.

For example:

“*Some guests have gone home*” suggests more or less strongly that not all of the guests have gone home. Scalar implicatures may come “naked” and therefore as information about the world as in this example, but may also come as attributions of an epistemic position to the speaker; like all implicatures, in certain situations or connections they can be cancelled or just fail to arise.

(a) World-oriented scalar implicature

[Is the party still going on?]

Some guests have gone home.

---> *Not all of the guests have gone home.*

In the example, if the speaker wants to hear whether a certain party planned for and at which the speaker is not present is still going on, the speaker is interested in hearing whether all of the guests or most or only few, or none, are there and at the same time the speaker may assume that whoever knows about the ongoing party knows about that

(b) Speaker-oriented scalar implicature

[Politicians are often corrupt]

Some politicians are honest.

→ *The speaker does not know whether all politicians are honest.*

In discussion about the honesty of politicians the participants' knowledge is likely to be an issue: does the speaker who defends politicians know about *all* the relevant politicians?

(c) No scalar implicature

[If any of your neighbours has pets, you should not use that pesticide in your garden.]

Some of our neighbours have pets.

If we tell somebody about our neighbours having pets, it is difficult to imagine why the audience should be interested in whether all of them have pets or only some (consider, moreover, that neighbours typically form a fuzzy set); rather, the contrast at issue is likely to be one between there are or are not any pets in the area.

The sentences in square brackets in the examples above are meant as possible previous conversational turns and characterize the kind of situation in which the sentence containing "some" (or "some"-sentence) is used. In different cases, the very linguistic material in the "some"-sentence orients the attention of the receiver towards situations of certain kinds. As a result, the implicatures in (a) and (b) as generalized conversational implicatures and the example (c) as an example in which no such implicature arises.

According to Grice, scalar implicatures are Quantity implicatures, that is, they depend on the assumption that the speaker (contrary to appearances) does follow the first maxim of Quantity "Give as much information as is required".

Grice-inspired reasoning that permits the audience to derive the implicature (cp. 1989:31) should run as follows:

In the first example:

[Is the party still going on?]

Some guests have gone home.

→ *Not all of the guests have gone home*

- The speaker has said that some guests have gone home
- There is no reason to think that the speaker is not observing the first maxim of Quantity
- The speaker could not be observing the first maxim of Quantity unless he or she thought that not all guests have gone home
- The speaker knows (and knows that I know that he or she knows) that the supposition that he or she thinks that not all guests have gone home is required
- The speaker has done nothing to stop me thinking that not all guests have gone home
- The speaker intends me to think or is at least willing to allow me to think that not all guests have gone home
- The speaker has implicated that not all guests have gone home

In the second example:

[Politicians are often corrupt]

Some politicians are honest.

→ *The speaker does not know whether all politicians are honest.*

The Gricean pattern suggests the following path:

- The speaker has said that some politicians are honest

- There is reason to think that the speaker is not observing the first maxim of Quantity, because the speaker argues in favour of politicians but the offered argument is weak
- The speaker could not be following the Cooperative Principle unless the speaker fails to observe the first maxim of Quantity on reason
- One such reason might be that in trying to observe the first maxim of Quantity, the speaker would fail to comply with the second maxim of Quality (“do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence”)
- The speaker knows (and knows that I know that he or she knows) that the supposition that the speaker thinks that he lacks adequate evidence for a universal statement about politicians’ honesty is required
- The speaker has done nothing to stop me thinking that he lacks adequate evidence for a universal statement about politicians’ honesty
- The speaker has implicated that he adequate evidence for a universal statement about politicians’ honesty and therefore that he does not know whether all politicians are honest

The second property to distinguish conversational implicature from other kinds of implication is Calculability. The calculability of conventional implicature is heavily context – dependent and in many, contexts non deterministic. It is possible to trace a line of reasoning leading from the utterance to the implicature, and including at some point the assumption that the speaker was obeying the rules of conversation to the best of their ability.

For example:

A: *Will Sally be at the meeting?*

B: *Her car broke down.*

→ *Sally will not be at the meeting*

Person A’s reasons:

If B is following the rule of relevance:

- His remark would not be **relevant** unless the fact that Sally's car has broken down is relevant to whether or not she will be at the meeting.
- When people's cars break down often they cannot get to work, or cannot get there on time.
- If Sally will be late to work or will not get to work at all, then she will miss the meeting.
- B probably assumes A will reason in this way, and has not said anything to stop me from doing so.
- A conclude that B intends to convey that Sally will not be at the meeting.

The third property of conventional implicature is Non- detachability — any way you had expressed the proposition you uttered would have given rise to the same implicatures (with the exception of implicatures arising from the rules of Manner. An implication is non – detachable if it is inseparably attached to the

meaning of an utterance and does not derive merely from its form. It follows from this formulation of what is meant by non – based on the subprinciple of manner will not necessarily be non – detachable: the manner in which something is said affects the form of what is said. Conversational implicature is something “rational. Rationality is a concern that one’s moves are justified and a capacity (to some degree) to give effect to that concern.

4.2 Argumentative rationality

A conception of rationality is argumentative rationality. Argumentative rationality plays an important role in Grice’s defence of absolute value. Value can be absolute, according to Grice, insofar as there are essentially rational beings, whom he calls “persons”, who have absolute value and can attach absolute value to what they evaluate. Humans turn themselves into such essentially rational beings when they consider rationality, which they possess contingently and accidentally, as their essential property. The Gricean notion of an essentially rational being presupposes a high rating of the concern and capacity to give justifications. Not only it is something worth becoming the essential feature of a new kind of beings, persons, but also, persons have absolute value just because they possess argumentative rationality essentially. Also, according to Grice, the demand for absolute value is itself “rational”. In fact, it is raised by the concern of objectively validating one’s acceptances and attitudes, which is in turn (together with the corresponding capacity) integral to argumentative rationality. So, argumentative rationality plays the role of the ultimate source of value.

If considering argumentative rationality as a contingent property of humans (or perhaps other beings too), it is possible to say that somebody who refuses to provide a justification for one move of his or her or fails to provide appropriate reasons or evidence in support of one of his or her claims, is not, on that occasion, rational. Argumentative rationality, however, admits of borderline cases, in which for example there is the concern for giving justifications, but the justification provided is under some respect flawed. Only conversational implicature is calculable and therefore inherently rational in the argumentative sense. Explaining a certain part of the meaning of an utterance as a conversational implicature, rather than as part of what is said or conventionally implicated, requires that there be an inferential path leading to that implicature and thus an argument in support of it.

4.3 Instrumental rationality

Instrumental rationality is very likely the most widespread conception of rationality. According to it, a course of behaviour is rational if it is characterized by the agent’s non-accidental use of effective means, or of means believed to be effective, for achieving his or her goals. Such rationality is thus typically concerned with means-ends relations. Grice (1989) too has relied upon the instrumental conception of rationality in his attempt to qualify implicature as rational by establishing the rationality of the Cooperative Principle. In Grice’s opinion, the Cooperative Principle is something that it is rational for speakers to follow, in consideration of the fact that “anyone who cares about the goals that are central to conversation/communication... must be expected to have an interest in participation in talk exchanges that will be profitable only on the assumption that they are conducted in general accordance with the CP...” (Grice, 1989: 30). Relative to the goal of participating in profitable talk exchanges, it is rational for a speaker to assume that the talk exchange he or she is participating in is conducted in general accordance with the Cooperative Principle, because this very assumption is a necessary condition for the talk exchange to be profitable.

Grice (1989) uses both conceptions of rationality without opposing them to each other. But instrumental rationality and argumentative can be opposed to one another.

- Instrumental rationality does not account for the normative character of rationality since effectiveness is not a matter of norms but of fact
- Instrumental rationality does not satisfactorily deal with the relationship between rationality and value; effectiveness turns out to be the only value connected with rationality, so that indeed it is effectiveness that makes rationality into something valuable
- Instrumental rationality subtracts goals from undergoing rational screening (except as means for other goals).

Meanwhile:

- Argumentative rationality can be normative insofar as there are normative (regulative) standards for argumentation.

As to relationship to values, argumentative rationality is itself the basic value in so far as it is the essential property of persons (the beings to whom absolute value is attached), and it is also productive of other values (because persons can attach value to what they value).

Argumentative rationality allows for the rational scrutiny of goals, since goals are in the same need of justification as are means (or anything else we choose, say or do).

When conversational implicature is viewed as instrumentally rational, it is viewed as a means for the optimization of communication (in various possible senses). So instrumental rationality is fully compatible with, or even requires, a view of the calculability of conversational implicatures as psychologically implemented in actual calculations.

Under the argumentative conception of rationality, it conveys calculability as availability of an argument in support of the assignment of the conversational implicature to the speaker's utterance. What the rationality of conversational implicature requires to speaker and hearer is only that they be willing to justify their understanding of the implicature and capable (to a certain degree) to provide such justifications, namely replace intuitive grasping by some more or less complete version of the relevant inferential path.

5 Conclusions

Conversational implicature has raised many approaches to research for different linguistics. Conversational implicature appears very often in daily communication, which is connected to the comprehension of what the speaker and the listener about something that is more focused on the utterances said. It is the crucial element that has been subjected to reasoning in conversation theory. Thus, to understand the utterance or to have an effective conversation, hearers have to access the implicature after the speech.

6 Declarations

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6.2 Publisher's Note

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