

Questions on Conversational Implicature

1. Part 1: Computing Implicatures

Below are a series of dialogs. Each dialog is paired with an identifiable implicature. For each of these dialogs, please do each of the following:

- (i) Sketch out how the implicature can be deduced from (a) the T-conditions of the utterance, and (b) the assumption that the speaker is being cooperative.
 - Do this in a way that follows the format indicated in the course handouts, where each step of reasoning is clearly laid out in an enumerated list.
 - (ii) State whether the implicature is *particularized* or *generalized*
 - (iii) State whether the implicature is a *scalar* implicature
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- (1) a. Dialog:

Person A: Hey man, should I do my Chewbacca impression?
Person B: Dude, we're at a funeral...
 - b. Implicature of Person B's Utterance:
Person A should not do his Chewbacca impression.
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- (2) a. Dialog:

Person A: Is Dave a friendly guy?
Person B: He's not unfriendly.
 - b. Implicature of Person B's Utterance:
Dave is not a friendly guy.
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- (3) a. Dialog:

Person A: I'm really thirsty.
Person B: There's a convenience store right over there.
 - b. Implicature of Person B's Utterance:
The store is open (or at least, likely to be open)
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- (4) a. Dialog:

Person A: Who is that?
Person B: That is Barbara, my first wife.
 - b. Implicature of Person B's Utterance:
Person B has had other wives besides Barbara.

(5) a. Dialog: (the following is taken from an actual advertisement for the drug Yaz)

Announcer: “Lately, you may have heard some claims about Yaz that were less than truthful...”

b. First Implicature of Announcer’s Utterance:

The claims made about Yaz were not *outright lies*; they simply contained perhaps a few minor errors...

c. Second Implicature of Announcer’s Utterance:

The claims made about Yaz were made by some unknown individuals, and *not* by the advertiser or the drug company themselves.

2. Part 2: Problems for Grice

(6) Please, in your own words, state what problems the following discourses raise for the classic, Gricean theory of implicature.

a. If Sue gets married and has kids, her conservative grandma will be happy. But, if she has kids and gets married, then her grandma will be upset.

b. Person 1: How many kids do you have?

Person 2: Three.

Not an Implicature of Person 2’s utterance: Person 2 has more than three kids.