
PRAGMATICS

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THE CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLE AND IMPLICATURE

4

We look at a third type of inferencing, implicature, and at how speakers co-operate in a conversation to achieve a shared meaning for utterances.

Don't quote what he says. Say what he means!
(Senator Barry Goldwater's campaign aide to reporters)

EXERCISE

4.1 What might the second speaker 'mean' in each of the following dialogues? Write a pragmatic paraphrase in each case, and think about how you inferred this meaning.

- (a) Virginia: Do you like my new hat?
Mary: It's pink!
 - (b) Maggie: Coffee?
James: It would keep me awake all night.
 - (c) Linda: Have you finished the student evaluation forms and the reading lists?
Jean: I've done the reading lists.
 - (d) Phil: Are you going to Steve's barbecue?
Terry: Well, Steve's got those dogs now.
 - (e) Annie: Was the dessert any good?
Mike: Annie, cherry pie is cherry pie.
-

Comment

Here are some possible paraphrases:

- (a) 'I don't like your hat.'
- (b) 'I won't have some coffee.'
- (c) 'I haven't done the evaluation forms.'
- (d) 'I don't think I'm going to Steve's barbecue.'
- (e) 'No, the dessert was pretty boring.'

There appear to be many ways of saying 'No'. Yet *no* or *not* did not appear in any of the original responses. You may have also found that you drew a somewhat different inference for some of these utterances. For example, not everyone infers that the speaker in (a) does not like the hat or that the speaker in (e) was not very keen on the dessert. These kinds of inferences or CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES, to use their technical term, seem to be less 'straightforward' than those based on entailment or presupposition.

Conversational implicatures**EXERCISE**

4.2 Let's look at Mary's, James's, Jean's, Terry's and Mike's responses in **Exercise 4.1** – this time, with a different utterance from the first speaker. The content of the second speaker's utterance remains the same, but does the meaning remain the same? Write a pragmatic paraphrase for the second speaker's response in each dialogue.

- (a) Virginia: Try the roast pork.
Mary: It's pink!
- (b) Maggie: We went to see *The Omen* last night but it wasn't very scary.
James: It would keep me awake all night.
- (c) Linda: You look very pleased with yourself.
Jean: I've done the reading lists.
- (d) Phil: His garden looks awful.
Terry: Well, Steve's got those dogs now.
- (e) Annie: I thought the pie would cheer you up.
Mike: Annie, cherry pie is cherry pie.

Comment

Some typical pragmatic paraphrases are:

- (a) 'I'm not having the roast pork.'
- (b) 'I think *The Omen* is scary.'
- (c) 'I am pleased with myself, because I've done the reading lists.'
- (d) 'Steve's dogs have wrecked the garden.'
- (e) 'It takes more than cherry pie to cheer me up.'

As you can see, the context provided by the previous utterance can lead to quite a different implicature in each case.

EXERCISE

4.3 Now we return to the **original** dialogues, (a), (b), and (e) in **Exercise 4.1**. How do you think the first speaker would interpret the second speaker's response if you had the following extra information?

- Pink is Mary's favourite colour and Virginia knows this.
- James has to stay up all night to study for an exam and Maggie knows this.
- Mike loves cherry pie. As far as he's concerned, no one can ruin a cherry pie, and Annie knows this.

Most people would now interpret the responses in (a), (b) and (e) to mean 'yes'. As you can see, drawing the appropriate implicature can require a considerable amount of shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer.

Just how we achieve this level of meaning was an issue tackled by the philosopher, Paul Grice. Grice proposed that all speakers, regardless of their cultural background, adhere to a basic principle governing conversation which he termed THE CO-OPERATIVE PRINCIPLE. That is, we assume that in a conversation the participants will co-operate with each other when making their contributions. Grice then broke this principle down into four basic MAXIMS which go towards making a speaker's contribution to the conversation 'co-operative':

- 1 RELEVANCE: Make sure that whatever you say is relevant to the conversation at hand.
- 2 QUALITY: Do not say what you believe to be false. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
- 3 QUANTITY: Make your contribution sufficiently informative for the current purposes of the conversation. Do not make your contribution more informative than is necessary.
- 4 CLARITY: Do not make your contribution obscure, ambiguous or difficult to understand.

Grice pointed out that these maxims are not always observed, but he makes a distinction between 'quietly' VIOLATING a maxim and openly FLOUTING a maxim. Violations are 'quiet' in the sense that it is not obvious at the time of the utterance that the speaker has **deliberately** lied, supplied insufficient information, or been ambiguous, irrelevant or hard to understand. In Grice's analysis, these violations might hamper communication but they do not lead to implicatures. What leads to implicatures is a situation where the speaker **flouts** a maxim. That is, it is obvious to the hearer at the time of the utterance that the speaker has deliberately and quite

Comment**The co-operative principle****Maxims****Relevance****Quality****Quantity****Clarity****Violating Flouting**

openly failed to observe one or more maxims. To see how Grice's analysis might work in practice, try the next exercise.

EXERCISE

4.4 Suppose you were considering X for a job that needed good writing skills. You have written to his English teacher asking her to assess his performance in this area. You receive the following reply:

'X has regularly and punctually attended all my classes. All his assignments were handed in on time and very neatly presented. I greatly enjoyed having X in my class.'

- What maxim does the teacher seem to flout?
- What implicature would you draw about X's writing skills?
- Why do you think the teacher phrased her response this way?

Comment

(a) The teacher's response appears to flout the maxim of quantity. There is insufficient information about X's writing skills, yet we would assume that as his English teacher, she would have this information. (b) Most people infer that X's writing skills are not very good even though at no point is this explicitly stated. This is a classic example of 'damning with faint praise'. (c) Grice observed that in conversations, we are sometimes faced with a CLASH between maxims. Here the teacher knows that she should give an *informative* answer to the question (quantity). She also knows that she should only say what is *truthful* (quality). The teacher does not want to state baldly that the student's performance was not very good. (For example, she might think that X will see the reference letter.) At the same time she does not want to lie. So, she makes her response in such a way that the reader can infer this without her having to state it. According to Grice, the implicature is made possible by the fact that we normally assume that speakers do not really abandon the co-operative principle.

Clash

Following Grice's reasoning, the inference is worked out like this:

- Since I have good reason to believe that she has information about X's writing skills, the speaker has deliberately failed to observe (flouted) the maxim 'Be informative'.
- But I have no reason to believe that she has really opted out of the co-operative principle. So, she is only being **apparently** uninformative.
- If I draw the inference that X hasn't got very good writing skills, then the speaker is being co-operative. She knows that I am capable of working this out.
- Therefore, she has implied (or 'implicated' to use Grice's term) that the student's writing skills are not very good.

As you can see, this sort of inferencing occurs in stages. In the first stage, the hearer recognizes the apparent irrelevancy, inadequacy, lack of clarity, etc. This in turn triggers the implicature.

EXERCISE

4.5 Speech therapist: So you like ice-cream.
What are your favourite flavours?

Child with a pragmatic disorder: Hamburger . . . fish and chips

(Adapted from Bishop, 1997, p. 183)

Which maxim has the child failed to observe? Would you consider this a case of flouting or violation of that maxim?

Comment

The child, who has not realized that *favourite flavours* should be interpreted as 'favourite flavours of ice-cream' rather than 'favourite flavours in general', has failed to observe the maxim of relevance. He generally has difficulty taking the context into account when making his contribution in a conversation. Because his irrelevance is not deliberate, we would view this as a violation rather than a flouting of the maxim. Had I only labelled the speakers 'A' and 'B', would you have interpreted B's utterance as a joke? Humour based on taking liberties with the co-operative principle is a frequent feature in comic writing. The Marx Brothers, for example, are famous for their anarchic approach to conversation.

(The ship's captain is looking for stowaways, one of whom is Groucho.)

Groucho: Yeah? What do they look like?

Captain: One goes around with a black mustache.

Groucho: Well, you couldn't expect a mustache to go around by itself. Don't you think a mustache ever gets lonely, Captain?

(Anobile, 1972, p. 57)

(Groucho has just become the new head of Huxley College.)

Professor: My dear Professor, I'm sure the students would appreciate a brief outline of your plans for the future.

Groucho: What?

Professor: I said the students would appreciate a brief outline of your plans for the future.

Groucho: You just said that. That's the trouble around here. Talk, talk, talk! Oh sometimes I think I must go mad. Where will it all end?

(Anobile, 1972, p. 101)

SUMMARY

- Unlike presuppositions and entailments, implicatures are inferences that cannot be made from isolated utterances. They are dependent on the context of the utterance and shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer.
- Grice has proposed a way of analysing implicatures based on the co-operative principle and its maxims of relevance, quality, quantity and clarity.
- In Grice's analysis, the speaker's flouting of a maxim combined with the hearer's assumption that the speaker has not really abandoned the co-operative principle leads to an implicature.

FURTHER EXERCISES

4.6 In each of the following decide whether the inference in brackets is a presupposition or an implicature derived from the underlined utterance.

- (a) A: My boyfriend lives in Luton
B: My boyfriend lives in Paris. (I have a boyfriend)
- (b) A: What?
B: Why are you laughing at me? (You are laughing at me)
- (c) A: Why is she eating those?
B: Her father didn't give her any supper. (She didn't have any supper)
- (d) A: Is Mike engaged?
B: He's bought a ring. (Mike is engaged)
- (e) A: You look pleased.
B: I managed to pass the exam. (I tried to pass the exam)
- (f) A: Did you finish that report?
B: I started it. (I didn't finish the report)

4.7 In each case below decide which maxim has not been observed. Then decide whether this was a case of **flouting** or **violation**. Where you think there has been a case of flouting, what implicature might be drawn? Background information is given in square brackets.

- (a) Annie: Mike, did you pass the driving test?
Mike: No. [Mike knows he's passed the driving test]
- (b) Annie: Do you want seconds?
Mike: gmmm uh mmm [Mike's just had his wisdom teeth extracted]

- (c) Annie: I really liked that dinner.
Mike: I'm a vegetarian.
- (d) Teacher: What time is it? [towards the end of a lecture]
Student: It's 10:44 and 35.6 seconds.
- (e) Student A: How are you?
Student B: I'm dead.
- (f) Host: Would you like a cocktail? It's my own invention.
Guest: Well, mmm uh it's not that we don't not drink.

4.8 Return to **Exercise 4.1**, and decide which maxim was flouted by the second speaker in each dialogue.

4.9 Here are three implicatures: 'I don't like it'; 'Steve hates cats'; 'Ed is lazy'. For each of these implicatures write two different dialogues which could lead to that implicature. Each dialogue should involve the flouting of a different maxim. Here are two examples for the implicature 'I'm not going':

- 1 A: We're going to the movies.
B: I've got an exam tomorrow.

Relevance: the speaker's exam is not apparently relevant to a discussion about going to the movies.

- 2 A: Are you going to Steve's barbecue?
B: A barbecue is an outdoor party.

Quantity: stating that a barbecue is an outdoor party is apparently both too informative (since people know that a barbecue is an outdoor party) and not informative enough since B has not directly answered the question.

4.10 Speakers often show they are aware of the co-operative principle when they use 'HEDGES' which indicate that they may be violating a maxim. What maxim is being alluded to in each case?

- (a) I don't mean to change the subject, but there's an enormous wasp in here.
(b) This is a bit convoluted but ...
(c) Well, I think he's honest.
(d) You probably already know this but ...

SUPPLEMENTARY EXERCISES

Hodges

DISCUSSION
QUESTIONS

4.11 Why might speakers call attention to the fact that they may be violating a maxim? Think of some other common hedges that are used in this way.

4.12 Gesture, facial expression and tone of voice cannot be recreated on the printed page, and yet a great deal of the communication in a conversation involves these channels. Take the dialogues in **Exercise 4.1** and see if you could make the second speakers' responses imply 'yes' rather than 'no' simply by using particular gestures, facial expressions or tones of voice to accompany the utterance.

4.13 Blakemore (1992) has pointed out that we generally do not assume speakers to be communicating unless we assume they are rational, or in other words, unless we think they are conforming to certain norms and standards. Do you agree? To start you thinking, here are some sample utterances from two schizophrenic patients. (You might also want to include the data from the Marx Brothers in your discussion.)

Doctor: Good morning.

Patient A: A real magnanimous good morning to you on this first Wednesday of our glorious New Year.

Doctor: Where should we send it?

Patient B: Kindly send it to me at the hospital. Send it to me, Joseph Nemo, in care of Joseph Nemo and me who answers to the name of Joseph Nemo will care for it myself.

(Data adapted from Opler and Menn, 1982)

FURTHER
READING

For more about Grice's theories:

Grice, 1989 (quite advanced) or Yule, 1996, pp. 100-1 for a short extract from Grice.

For a very interesting discussion of children with pragmatic disorders:

Bishop, 1997, Chapters 7 and 8.

MORE ON
IMPLICATURES

5

We look in more detail at different kinds of implicatures and find that some are less dependent on background knowledge of the context than others.

And, after all, what is a lie?

'Tis but the truth in masquerade.

(Byron, *Don Juan*)

EXERCISE

5.1 For each dialogue, answer the accompanying question based on the implicature that you can draw from the second speaker's response. Think about why you drew those implicatures.

- (a) Carmen: Did you get the milk and the eggs?
Dave: I got the milk.
Did Dave buy the eggs?
- (b) Carmen: Did you manage to fix that leak?
Dave: I tried to.
Did Dave fix the leak?
- (c) Faye: I hear you've invited Mat and Chris.
Ed: I didn't invite Mat.
Did Ed invite Chris?
- (d) Steve: What happened to your flowers?
Jane: A dog got into the garden.
Did the dog belong to Jane?

Comment

Most people would draw the implicatures:

- (a) 'Dave did not buy the eggs.'
- (b) 'Dave did not fix the leak.'
- (c) 'Ed invited Chris.'
- (d) 'The dog did not belong to Jane.'

These implicatures are based on the quantity of information offered by the speaker. In (a) and (c) we notice that the first speaker's utterance contains *and*. In (a) Carmen is really asking two questions: *Did you buy the milk?* and *Did you buy the eggs?* Similarly, in (c) Faye mentions two propositions: *You invited Mat* and *You invited Chris*. When only one of the questions or propositions has been mentioned in the response, we normally assume that the speaker is still adhering to the co-operative principle and therefore is implying a response for the second one as well. And, we normally take it to be the opposite of the one mentioned. If Dave had bought the eggs as well, he would have said so. If Ed had not invited Chris as well, he would have said so. In (b) the implicature comes from the word *try*. Trying to fix the leak is an intermediate step to managing to fix the leak. The fact that Dave only mentioned the intermediate step leads us to infer that he did not make it to the final step. The implicature in (d) is based on the use of the INDEFINITE ARTICLE *a/an*. We infer that if the dog had belonged to Jane, she would have referred to it as *my dog*. In a more general sense, when the speaker uses the expression *a/an X* we draw the implicature 'not the speaker's X'.

Our expectations about the quantity of information that speakers will provide in an utterance also lead to other common implicatures, as we will see in the next two exercises.

Indefinite article

EXERCISE

5.2 If you were Jane, what implicatures would you have drawn from each of Steve's responses?

- (a) Jane: Who used all the printer paper?
Steve: I used some of it.
- (b) Jane: I hear you're always late with the rent.
Steve: Well, sometimes I am.
- (c) Jane: Mike and Annie should be here by now. Was their plane late?
Steve: Possibly.

Now look at this dialogue. Would you normally infer that Steve had not kept the cheese in the freezer?

- (d) Jane: This cheese looks funny. The label said to store it in a cool place.
Steve: Yeah, I did.

Comment

Most people draw the following implicatures:

- (a) 'Steve did not use all of the printer paper, only some of it.'
- (b) 'Steve is not always late with the rent, only sometimes.'
- (c) 'Steve did not know for certain that the plane was late.'
- (d) 'Steve did not freeze the cheese.'

EXERCISE

5.3 Now examine those implicatures in light of the following information known only to Steve. Would you say that Steve was lying to Jane in Exercise 5.2? Why?

- (a) Steve has in fact used all the printer paper.
- (b) Steve has been late with the rent every month since he moved in.
- (c) Steve knows for a fact that the plane was late because Mike and Annie called him from the airport.
- (d) Steve had absentmindedly put the cheese in the freezer and thawed it out before dinner hoping that Jane wouldn't notice.

You will recall from Unit 2 that from a semantic point of view, because *all* logically entails *some*, Steve's response in (a) is technically true. The same kind of logic applies to (b)–(d) as well. However, from a pragmatic point of view, Steve's utterances have certainly misled Jane because of the implicatures that people normally draw in these circumstances. Steve's trickery involved what we call SCALAR IMPLICATURES. All of Steve's responses use words that participate in a scale of values:

- Scale of quantity: *some most all*
- Scale of frequency: *sometimes often always*
- Scale of coldness: *cool cold freezing*
- Scale of likelihood: *possibly probably certainly*

We normally assume (following the co-operative principle) that, where speakers have a scale of values at their disposal, they will choose the one that is truthful (maxim of quality) and optimally informative (maxim of quantity). So, we normally draw the implicature 'not any of the higher values on the scale'. In other words, if Steve has chosen the word *sometimes*, it creates the implicatures 'not always' and 'not often'. It appears that in each case Steve has technically adhered to the quality maxim but violated quantity. Nevertheless, most of us would think that from a pragmatic point of view Steve was lying since he knew that anybody would draw those inferences.

Have you noticed that while the implicatures we have been looking at require a previous utterance, they are so 'strong' that they do not

Comment

Scalar implicatures

Generalized conversational implicatures

seem to require any extra knowledge to extract the meaning? These types of implicatures are sometimes called **GENERALIZED CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES**.

EXERCISE

5.4 Look at each of these dialogues and the implicatures which appear in brackets. Then decide what knowledge the speaker and hearer would have to share in order for that implicature to be drawn:

- (a) Tom: Are you going to Mark's party tonight?
Annie: My parents are in town. ('No')
- (b) Tom: Where's the salad dressing?
Gabriela: We've run out of olive oil. ('There isn't any salad dressing')
- (c) Steve: What's with your mother?
Jane: Let's go into the garden. ('I can't talk about it in here')
- (d) Mat: Want some fudge brownies?
Chris: There must be 20,000 calories there. ('No')

Comment

For (a) both parties would have to know about Annie's relationship with her parents. For example, if they both knew that Annie tried to avoid her parents at every opportunity, the implication would be 'Yes'. For (b) both parties would have to have some general knowledge – olive oil is a possible ingredient in salad dressing. But both parties also need to share the knowledge that they only use salad dressing made from olive oil. For (c) there would have to be something in the physical context of the utterance to suggest that someone might overhear Jane's answer. For example, if there was no one else present, Steve might well infer that the problem with Jane's mother has something to do with the garden. For (d) both parties again need some general knowledge – food with a high number of calories makes people put on weight. But both parties would also need to share the knowledge that Chris is trying to lose weight. If they both knew that he was trying to gain weight, the implication would be 'Yes'. Inferences which require this kind of shared knowledge between the speaker and hearer are sometimes called **PARTICULARIZED CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES**.

Particularized conversational implicatures

At this point, you may be wondering about generalized implicatures. They seem so conventional and require so little contextual knowledge that perhaps they are really the same as presuppositions. There is a test that is sometimes used to distinguish presuppositions from implicatures.

EXERCISE

5.5 Here are four dialogues where Annie has 'cancelled' either a presupposition contained in her utterance or an implicature that could be drawn from her utterance (the cancellation comes after the 'dash'). Do you notice a difference between presuppositions and implicatures when they are cancelled?

- (a) Cancelling an existential presupposition:
Mike: What happened?
Annie: Steve's dog wrecked the garden – and in fact, Steve doesn't have a dog.
- (b) Cancelling a 'lexical' presupposition:
Mike: What's up?
Annie: I've stopped smoking – although I've never smoked.
- (c) Cancelling a generalized implicature:
Mike: What's happened to the shampoo?
Annie: I used most of it – actually, I used all of it.
- (d) Cancelling a particularized implicature:
Mike: Are you coming to the party?
Annie: My parents are in town – but I am coming.

When a speaker cancels a presupposition, the results usually sound rather contradictory or incoherent. However, when both generalized and particularized implicatures are cancelled, the results usually sound much more 'normal'.

There is a further level to the analysis of speaker meaning which we have not explored yet. For example, dialogue (c) could also be analysed as Mike's **accusation** followed by Annie's **confession**. In the next two units we will be looking at this level of analysis.

Comment**SUMMARY**

- We have distinguished two types of conversational implicatures: generalized and particularized.
- Generalized implicatures can be drawn with very little 'inside' knowledge. If you heard a tape recording of the conversation but knew nothing about the participants or the physical characteristics of the context, you could still draw those implicatures. They are closely connected to the degree of informativeness that we normally expect a speaker's utterance to provide.
- Scalar implicatures are a special type of generalized implicature where the inference is made by reference to a scale of values, one of which has been chosen by the speaker. The speaker's choice implicates 'not the higher values'.

- Particularized implicatures require not only general knowledge but also knowledge which is particular or 'local' to the speaker and the hearer, and often to the physical context of the utterance as well.
- Both generalized and particularized implicatures differ from presuppositions in that they sound much less contradictory when they are cancelled by the speaker.

FURTHER EXERCISES

5.6 Apply the cancellation test we used in **Exercise 5.5** to decide whether each of the inferences in brackets is a presupposition or an implicature.

- (a) Linda: What's with Jean?
Jen: She discovered that her central heating's broken. ('Her central heating is broken')
- (b) Terry: How do you like your bath?
Phil: Warm. ('I don't like it hot')
- (c) Annie: What do you think of this necklace and bracelet?
Mike: The bracelet is beautiful. ('The necklace is not beautiful')
- (d) Lois: Has the kitchen been painted?
Gabriela: Tom's away. ('No')
- (e) Jane: Have you seen my sweater?
Steve: There's a sweater on the sofa. ('It's not Steve's sweater')
- (f) Mike: How come Mary's all dressed up?
Annie: We're going to the D-E-N-T-I-S-T. ('Mary hates the dentist')
- (g) Austin: It works now.
Barbara: When did Eric fix it? ('Eric fixed it')

5.7 Which of the inferences in **Exercise 5.6** are generalized implicatures? Which ones are particularized implicatures?

5.8 Apply the cancellation test we used in **Exercises 5.5** and **5.6** to decide whether each of the inferences in brackets is a presupposition or an implicature. For the implicatures, decide whether they are generalized or particularized.

- (a) Mike: I heard about the mess.
Dave: Yeah, Steve really regrets sending that e-mail. ('Steve sent that e-mail')

- (b) Patrick: I didn't take it.
Virginia: Why do you always lie? ('You always lie')
- (c) Doris: Did Carmen like the party?
Dave: She left after an hour. ('She didn't like the party')
- (d) Mat: How did you do on those exams?
Chris: I failed physics. ('I didn't fail the others')
- (e) Reporter: Senator, what is the present state of your marriage?
Senator: Well, we, I think have been able to make some very good progress and it's - I would say that it's - it's - it's delightful that we're able to - to share the time and the relationship that we - that we do share. ('The marriage is not in a good state')
- (f) Steve: Did you buy the car?
Ed: It cost twice as much as I thought it would. ('Ed didn't buy the car')
- (g) Maggie: The bathroom's flooded!
James: Someone must have left the tap on. ('It wasn't James who left the tap on')

5.9 For the particularized implicatures in **Exercises 5.6** and **5.8**, what sort of particular or 'local' knowledge is needed to draw that implicature? What sorts of general knowledge do they require? Try writing scenarios where changing the 'local' knowledge would lead to quite different implicatures.

5.10 We have pointed out that generalized implicatures tend to be based on a flouting of the quantity maxim. That is, on the surface they are noticeably less informative than we would expect. What maxim or maxims were flouted in each of the particularized implicatures in **Exercise 5.6**?

5.11 There is a semantic relationship between words called hyponymy. Here are some examples of hyponymy:

<i>Hyponym</i>	<i>Super-ordinate</i>
rose	flower
salmon	fish
hammer	tool

In the relation of **HYPONYM** the meaning of the **SUPER-ORDINATE** term is included in the meaning of the **HYPONYM**. That is, the

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Hyponymy
Super-ordinate
Hyponym

SUPPLEMENTARY EXERCISES

meaning of *rose* includes the meaning of *flower*. We can also say that the hyponym is 'a kind of' the super-ordinate. For example, a rose is a kind of flower. Note also that the entailment relationship between hyponyms and their super-ordinates is one-way (see **Exercise 2.4**). For example, *I picked a rose* entails *I picked a flower*, but *I picked a flower* does not necessarily entail *I picked a rose*. Discuss the types of implicatures that can be drawn in the following dialogues which exploit the relation of hyponymy. Would you class some of these as generalized implicatures?

- (a) Mike: Did you buy her a rose?
Annie: I bought her a flower.
- (b) Jane: There's salmon on the menu.
Steve: I don't like fish.
- (c) Ed: Be careful of that sofa.
Meridyth: It's a piece of furniture, Dad.
- (d) Mat: So you've taken up teaching.
Chris: It's a job.

5.12 In **Discussion Question 3.11** we looked at some conventional meanings for *and*. Look back at the examples given there. Could we characterize *and* as creating different implicatures in each case? Explore the effects of two other CO-ORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS, *but* and *or*. Here are some examples to get you started.

- (a) Tom stayed but Mark left.
(b) Tom stayed but Bill stayed too.
(c) Stop that or I'll leave.
(d) Do you want milk or juice?

5.13 Can AUXILIARY VERBS like *should*, *may*, *might*, *must*, *will* create scalar implicatures? For example, compare *You should wash the dishes* and *You must wash the dishes*.

The idea that presuppositions do not 'survive' cancellation as well as implicatures can be problematic. For more on this debate see:

Simpson, 1993, pp. 133–40.

Grice's work was an important first step in systematically examining how hearers work to derive the ultimate message from the words that are actually uttered. He recognized that, of all the maxims, relevance was probably the most important, although he never really tackled the issue of how speakers and hearers actually assign relevance to particular pieces of information. Sperber and Wilson have

carried this work forward by looking even more systematically at the various kinds of inferencing that take place in normal conversation. They suggest that all four maxims can be subsumed under relevance. See:

Sperber and Wilson, 1986 (quite challenging).

For a 'beginner's' introduction to Sperber and Wilson's theories:

Blakemore, 1992.

Co-ordinating
conjunctions

Auxiliary verbs

FURTHER
READING