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CHAPTER II : THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK II :
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2.1. Preliminaries

It is common knowledge that in linguistic communication users of a language convey most of the communicational content by way of implication rather than by making overt statements. In communication a substantial portion of meaning is generally conveyed by implication and retrieved by inferencing. Encoding and decoding of meaning takes place on both semantic as well as pragmatic levels. Users of a language systematically encode and decode implied meaning by making use of different inference generating mechanisms. The issue of implied meaning is one of the core concerns in pragmatics. Pragmatics is primarily concerned with communication. Communication, in turn, is concerned with meaning or message transmission. It involves generation and transfer of literal as well as implicit meaning. In fact, it is in the nature of communication itself that much of the total signification of utterances is communicated in the form of implicit meaning. Try as you may, you cannot make your utterances entirely explicit. One can imagine the dullness, drabness and redundancy such explicitness would result into. Implicitness is thus an essential feature of communication. And it is this feature that makes communication both an interesting and a challenging enterprise.

In a conversational interaction implicitness results from a number of sources. Entailments, presuppositions and implicatures are some of the most common inference generating mechanisms or tools used for the purpose of encoding and decoding meaning. These inference types could be classified into two categories- semantic inferences and pragmatic inferences. Entailments are semantic inferences. An entailment relation is a logical implication or logical consequence. It results from linguistic structure. Presuppositions are a species of pragmatic inference, distinct from logical implication or entailment. They are inferences regarding background assumptions against which the main import of an utterance is assessed and against which the utterance makes sense. An
implicature may be said to be the extra meaning attached to, but distinct from, the sense of the utterance. The term implicature signifies what a speaker implicates (as opposed to what he actually says) and its approximation arrived at by the hearer by making use of some inferencing mechanism. Conversational implicatures are a special type of pragmatic inferences arrived at by relating the contextual assumptions to the principles and maxims of standard conversational practice.

Entailments, presuppositions and implicatures play vital role in the organisation and management of conversational interaction. Entailments account for the literal meaning of the sentences/sentence parts uttered; presuppositions account for the background assumptions and shared knowledge (world view) against which utterances in conversation make sense; and implicatures account for the additional non-literal but contextually relevant portion of meaning in a conversation. Together, these inferencing mechanisms enable interlocutors to fulfil their conversational goals more effectively.

A proposition expressed by an utterance may be entailed, presupposed or conventionally or conversationally (i.e. non-conventionally) implicated. Since the present study deals with conversational implicatures, and not with any and every kind of inference involved in the encoding and transfer of meaning, it is necessary to identify whether an inference in question is a case of an entailment, a presupposition, a conventional implicature or a conversational implicature. These inference types play vital role in language use and consequently are of great significance in the study of conversation. The present chapter deals with the distinctive features of entailments, presuppositions and implicatures as the major inference generating mechanisms which participants in a conversation know tacitly or explicitly and employ consciously or unconsciously for the purposes of communication. The focus here is on the implicature generating mechanism, a typology of implicatures, ways of identifying and distinguishing different types of implicatures, etc. The purpose, here, is to examine the role of implicatures in communicative activity in general and in conversational
interaction in fiction in particular, and the applicability of the emerging overall pragmatic framework to the analysis of conversations in fiction.

2.2. Entailment

‘Entailment’ is a term from ‘formal logic’. The logical use of the term ‘entail’ derived from Moore’s (1919-20) paper ‘external and internal relations’. He preferred this word to ‘imply’. The term ‘entailment’ refers to an inference which represents a relationship between parts of a sentence’s meaning, such that the truth of the inferred proposition necessarily follows from the truth of the proposition expressed by the original sentence. As the Penguin Dictionary of philosophy (2000: 169) puts it, the term ‘entailment’ as normally used by philosophers nowadays to say that ‘a proposition p entails a proposition q’ is simply an alternative (and often more convenient) way of saying that ‘q follows logically from, or is logically deducible from, p’. However, as Levinson (1983: 174) observes, though most of the systems don’t, some systems, especially those with truth-value gaps or non-bivalence, make a distinction between the notions of ‘entailment’, and ‘logical consequence’.

Entailment is a crucial semantic relation. This relation can be defined in terms of valid rules of inference, or alternatively in terms of the assignment of truth or falsity to the propositions inferred. Levinson (1983:174) defined entailment as follows:

A semantically entails B (written $A \vdash B$) if every situation that makes A true, makes B true (or: in all worlds in which A is true, B is true). A widely held view of entailment is that p entails q if and only if it is logically impossible that both p and not-q.

Entailments reflect a fixed truth relation between propositions expressed by sentences which holds regardless of empirical truth of the propositions. A proposition p is thus said to entail a proposition q iff q is a valid inference from p irrespective of the empirical truth of p and q. It needs to be noted here that entailment is a relation between propositions and not between sentences. Some authors speak of ‘entailment’ as a relation that holds between sentences. But then they are using the term ‘sentence’ either ‘loosely’ or in a very special sense.
Similarly, it is also not a relation between ‘statements’. Saeed (1997: 90), for example, characterizes ‘Entailment’ as follows:

A sentence P entails a sentence q when the truth of the first (p) guarantees the truth of the second (q), and falsity of the second (q) guarantees the falsity of the first (p).

Adapting the logician’s tool, Saeed (1997: 91) shows the truth relations embodied by entailment in a composite truth table as follows:

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When this set of relations hold between p and q, p entails q. The point this truth table establishes clearly is that ‘only the truth of the entailing proposition or the falsity of the entailed proposition have the consequences for the other sentence’.

Thus when p is true, then q is necessarily true; or when q is false, then p is also necessarily false. But when p is false, then we cannot say anything definite about the truth or falsity of q (i.e. q may be true or false); similarly, when q is true, then we cannot say anything definite about the truth or falsity of p (i.e. p may be true or false). Consider, for example, the sentences [1.a], [1.b] and [1.c], where [1.a] entails [1.b] and [1.c]:

1. (a) Booth assassinated Lincoln. [p]
   (b) Booth killed somebody. [q]
   (c) Lincoln is dead. [r]

[1.a] gives rise to inferences like [1.b] and [1.c]. These inferences (b) and (c) are among the several entailments of the original sentence [1.a]. For if one knows [1.a] to be true, then, without being told any more, one knows that (b) and (c) are true. The inference to (b) and (c) are arrived at instantaneously as a result of one’s knowledge of the English language. However, in the case of paraphrase relation where two propositions mutually entail each other the truth of the entailed proposition also has the consequence for entailing sentence, viz. that
truth of the entailed proposition also guarantees the truth of the entailing sentence. This is not the case with respect to entailments resulting from hyponymy relation.

An entailment relation is given to us by linguistic structure. We do not need to check any fact in the world to deduce the entailed proposition from the entailing proposition. In the case of (1) above, the first proposition ‘p’ necessarily implies, or entails the second proposition ‘q’ and the third proposition ‘r’. For if it is the case that ‘Booth assassinated Lincoln’, then it is necessarily the case that ‘Booth killed somebody’ and also that ‘Lincoln died’. Such inferences are known as logical implications or logical consequences. In logical terminology, therefore, ‘entailment’ is said to be a relation that holds between ‘p’ and ‘q’ - where ‘p’ and ‘q’ are variables standing for propositions- such that the truth of ‘q’ necessarily follows from the truth of ‘p’, and the falsity of ‘q’ necessarily guarantees the falsity of ‘p’. When this relation holds, then and only then it can be said that ‘p’ entails ‘q’. The key term here is ‘necessarily’. Thus we can say that a proposition ‘p’ entails proposition ‘q’ whenever the following inference holds: If ‘p’ is true, then ‘q’ must also be true. It needs to be noted, however, that any entailment of p never contains more information than p, and in fact it usually contains less. Normally, if p entails q, then q does not entail p. But it is possible for p and q to entail each other, and in this case we are looking at paraphrases, e.g. (2) entails (3) below.

2. Sally sold a car to Mike.
3. Mike bought a car from Sally.

2.2.1 Lexical and Syntactic sources

2.2.1.1 Lexical sources

a) Hyponymy involves entailment. One sentence may be said to entail another sentence if it necessarily includes the meaning of the other sentence in its meaning just as a super-ordinate term (Hyperonym) includes the meaning of the other word which is its hyponym. The entailment relationship between (a) and (b) in example [1] above, for example, results from lexical source. It derives from the lexical relationship between ‘assassinate’ and ‘die’ – a case of
hyponymy. For, the meaning of ‘assassinate’, in some sense, contains the
meaning of ‘die’. In fact, hyponymy between lexical items is a regular source for
entailment between propositions. The meaning of the sentence ‘The Earth goes
round the Sun’ includes, for example, the meaning of the sentence ‘The Earth
moves’.

b) Similarly, synonymy between lexical items also gives rise to entailment
relation. For example:

4. (a) This car belongs to Arjun.
(b) Arjun owns this car.

The sentences (a) and (b) in [4] above mutually entail each other. Since these
sentences have the same sets of entailments, they may be said to paraphrase one
another. Similarly,

5. (a) My father purchased a big car
(b) My dad bought a big automobile.

The words ‘belong to’ and ‘own’ in [4.a] and [4.b] are synonymous, and so are
the words ‘purchased’ and ‘bought’, and ‘father’ and ‘dad’ in [5.a] and [5.b].
Substituting one synonymous word for another in a sentential frame thus gives
rise to paraphrase relation.

2.2.1.2 Syntactic sources

Just as entailment relation results from lexical sources, it may also result from
syntactic sources. Some syntactic structures mutually entail each other. Consider
the following, for example,

6. (a) IASE organised an international conference on The Non-Native
Phenomena of English.
(b) An international conference on The Non-Native Phenomena of English was
organised by IASE.

The sentences (a) and (b) in [6] entail one another. The active and passive
versions of the same sentence thus mutually entail each other; and so do all other
paraphrase constructions. The entailment relation here results from a syntactic
source.

The question of the precise conditions under which the relation of entailment
holds between propositions has been a subject of much controversy. However,
much of the controversy has been over the issue of the entailments deriving from complex propositions.

2.2.2 Entailment and Presuppositions

In the contemporary semantics discussion entailment has come to be contradicted with presupposition on the ground of the different consequences that follow from either of the sentences being false. The notion of entailment requires that if the entailing sentence is true then the entailed sentence must be true, and if the entailing sentence is false then the inferred sentence may be true or false. Thus if the sentence ‘John possesses a bungalow’ is false, then the notion of entailment requires that ‘John possesses some property’ may be true or false. However, the notion of presupposition requires that irrespective of whether the first sentence is true or false, the inferred sentence must be true. Thus irrespective of whether the sentence ‘John possesses a bungalow’ is true or false, the inference to ‘someone called John exists’ must be true. This can be explained as follows:

If (7) is false, then it follows that its negation (8) is true.

7. John possesses a bungalow.
8. John does not possess a bungalow.

An inference from (7) can be said to be a presupposition only if the inference remains valid (or true) even if (7) is not true. Thus in order for the inference to be a presupposition it is necessary that it must survive in the context of negation of (7), viz. (8). (9) is a valid inference from (7), but it does not survive in the context of the negation of (7). Therefore, (9) is an entailment of (7). On the other hand, (10) is a valid inference from (7), and it survives in the context of the negation of (7), viz. (8). Therefore, (10) could be said to be a presupposition of both (7) and (8).

10. Something or somebody called John exists.

If entailments are a crucial semantic relation, presuppositions, it may be said, are typically a pragmatic relation. As Mey (1993: 8) observes, ‘Presuppositions are pragmatic inferences concerning assumptions underlying a statement’. They
seem to be based more closely on the actual linguistic structure of sentences. However, such inferences cannot be thought of as semantic in the narrow sense, because they are too sensitive to contextual factors. Presuppositions differ from entailments in several respects. For example,

(i) While entailment is a ‘logical meaning’ inherent in the expression (sentence), Presupposition may be said to depend on the knowledge of the facts shared by the speaker and the hearer.

(ii) Entailments are destroyed by negation while Presuppositions are not.

(iii) Entailments are totally independent of any context while Presuppositions are sensitive to the context.

2.3. Presuppositions

The notion of ‘presupposition’ emerged originally from a concern in philosophy with the nature of ‘reference’ and ‘referring expressions’. It arose from the problem faced by philosophers in translating referring expressions in natural language into restricted logical languages. Struggling with this problem, philosophers like Frege (1892), Russell (1902), Strawson (1952), etc arrived at the conclusion that ‘referring expressions’ carry presuppositions to the effect that the ‘referent exists’. The German philosopher Frege (1892, rpt. 1952:71) argued that ‘if anything is asserted there is always an obvious presupposition that the simple or compound proper names used have reference’. Frege sketched a theory of presupposition in terms of the following arguments:

(i) Referring phrases and temporal clauses carry presuppositions to the effect that they do in fact refer

(ii) A sentence and its negative counterpart share the same set of presuppositions

(iii) In order for an assertion or a sentence to be either true or false, its presuppositions must be true or satisfied

Following Frege, Russell (1902) and Strawson (1952) also held that referring expressions do carry presuppositions to the said effect. These inferences are different from entailments because they cannot be said to be the logical consequences of the expressions uttered. Consider the following utterances, for example, where one can infer (12) from (11) and (14) from (13):

11. The M. A. English class has 25 students.

12. The M. A. English class has 20 students.
13. All of the students passed with distinction.
14. Some of the students passed with distinction.

The inferences to (12) and (14) are conventional, and they are part of the truth-conditional content of the expressions from which they are derived, viz. (11) and (13) respectively. In truth-conditional semantics such inferences are called as entailments.

However, (11) and (13) also give rise to inferences like (15) and (16):

15. There exists some entity having the property ‘x’ (where ‘x’ = M.A. English class), and
16. There exists some entity having the property ‘y’ (where ‘y’ = All of the students)

The inferences like (15) and (16) from (11) and (13) respectively also seem to be conventional. But they are certainly not part of the truth-conditional content of the utterances from which they are derived. Rather, they are part of the background assumptions against which the main import of the utterance is assessed. Such inferences are called as ‘Presuppositions’.

The main difference between entailments and presuppositions is that entailments represent a fixed truth-relation to the entailing expression, whereas presuppositions are context-sensitive. Consequently, entailments disappear when the entailing expression is negated or questioned, whereas presuppositions remain unaffected in the said context. We can, therefore, verify whether the concerned inference belongs to the category of entailment or presupposition by applying the negation test. Negation alters the entailments of a sentence, whereas it leaves presuppositions unaffected. In fact, behaviour under negation makes for a basic distinction between presuppositions and entailment. Thus if we negate (11) to obtain (17), (17) does not sustain the inference to (12).

17. The M. A. English class does not have 25 students.

Similarly, negation of (13) to obtain (18) does not sustain the inference to (14).

18. All of the students did not pass with distinction.

The inferences to (12) and (14) may, therefore, be said to be the entailments and not presuppositions of (11) and (13) respectively. Whereas, the inference to (15) is shared by both (11) and (17), and the inference to (16) is shared by both (13)
and (18). Because these inferences survive under negation, (15) may be said to be a case of putative presupposition of (11) and (17), whereas (16) as a case of putative presupposition of (13) and (18). In other words, these are the probable candidates for presuppositionhood of the concerned utterances. Now, whether they are actual presuppositions or potential presuppositions could be determined by applying further tests like that of detachability, defeasibility, etc.

The above-mentioned presuppositions (15) and (16) are inferences based on the general conventions concerning the use of referring expressions. However, it soon emerged that there are several types of presuppositions and that they arise from a variety of lexical and syntactic sources.

Consider the following, for example:

19. All of the students managed to pass with distinction.

From this sentence we can infer (20) and (21)

20. All of the students tried to pass with distinction.
21. All of the students passed with distinction.

And consider the negation of (19) - [i.e. if we negate (19) to obtain (22)]

22. All of the students did not manage to pass with distinction

From (22) we can infer (20) but certainly not (21). In fact, the whole point of saying (22) could be to deny (21). It thus becomes evident that (21) is an entailment, which constitutes at least part of the truth-conditions of (19), whereas (20) is a presupposition of both (19) and (22). The presupposition (20) arises from the word ‘manage’. In other words, the said presupposition is attached to the expression ‘manage’ by virtue of the conventions for the use of the expression ‘manage’. Levinson (1983: 173) notes that as early as 1969, a certain range of presuppositional phenomena had been adduced in the philosophical literature, including the presuppositions of:

(i) singular terms, e.g. definite descriptions, proper names (Frege, 1892)
(ii) quantified noun phrases, e.g. ‘All of John’s children’ can be claimed to presuppose ‘John has children’ (Strawson, 1952)
(iii) temporal clauses (Frege, 1892)
(iv) change-of-state verbs: e.g. ‘Bertrand has stopped beating his wife’ can be claimed to presuppose ‘Bertrand had been beating his wife’ (Sellars, 1954).
It thus emerged that presuppositions was a much more complex and varied phenomenon than was perceived first. Further investigation led to the identification of different sources and to formation of alternative typologies for classification of the presuppositions. George Yule (1996: 27ff) speaks of presuppositions due to lexical and structural sources such as factive, non-factive, counter-factual presuppositions; existential presuppositions and presuppositions generated by wh-questions, etc.

2.3.1 Presupposition triggers
The presupposition generating linguistic items are called presupposition triggers. The following linguistic items (i.e. words, expressions or syntactic structures) may be said to give rise to specific types of presuppositions:

A) Simple or compound referring expressions (i.e. proper names, definite descriptions, quantified noun phrases, etc) give rise to presuppositions of existence e.g.

23. Michael is a staunch vegetarian.
>> Something or someone called Michael exists.

24. The president of USA is a man of action.
>> There is a certain person who is the president of USA.

25. Arjun’s car is the best of its class.
>> Arjun has a car

B) Some lexical items such as factive verbs and verbs of judgment generate presuppositions. Factive verbs like know, realize, regret, etc. and verbs of judgment like blame, approve, etc presuppose the truth of their complement clause, e.g.

26. Lee realized that it was a tough topic.
>> It was a tough topic.

27. George regrets joining activist network.
>> George joined activist network.

28. Karim blamed Salim for instigating Rahim against the authorities.
>> Salim instigated Rahim against the authorities.

C) Change of state verbs like start, begin, stop, etc give rise to a kind of ‘switch’ presupposition. Such a verb describes a new state (or a kind of change in state), and simultaneously presupposes that the newly described state of affairs did not exist prior to the change, e.g.
29. Dilip started attending seminars.
   >> Dilip used not to attend seminars.
30. Dilip stopped attending seminars.
   >> Dilip used to attend seminars.

D) Cleft and pseudo-cleft constructions trigger presuppositions, e.g.
31. It was his arrogance that irritated me.
32. What irritated me was his arrogance.
   >> Something irritated me.

E) Some subordinate clauses like ‘Time adverbial clauses’ and ‘comparative clauses’ also generate presuppositions, e.g.
33. I was awarded a Ph. D. before he had even registered for it.
   >> He registered for Ph. D.
34. He is more nasty than you are.
   >> You are nasty.

These are some of the sources which generate presuppositions. In fact there are very many other surface linguistic structures that give rise to presuppositions. Karttunen, for example, identified thirty-one kinds of presupposition triggers out of which Levinson (1983: 179-184) isolated thirteen sources as representing the core presuppositional phenomena. The above-cited illustrations, however, suffice for our purpose here to indicate the general nature of the phenomena.

Presuppositions, however, are not just any inferences picked out by virtue of some technical definition. There is, as Levinson (1983:180) notes, an intuitive conceptual unity to this set of inferences, namely that they are all inferences regarding the background assumptions against which the main import of an utterance is to be assessed. Consider the following, for example:

35. Charles, who is a renowned wrestler, stopped wrestling from 25th of March 2005.
36. Charles, who is a renowned wrestler, did not stop wrestling from 25th of March 2005.
37. Did Charles, who is a renowned wrestler, stop wrestling from 25th of March 2005.

The utterance of any of these three sentences [35-37] seems to produce a range of shared inferences, such as:
38. Someone called Charles exists.
39. Charles is a renowned wrestler.
40. Charles was a practicing wrestler before 25th of March 2005.
2.3.2 Properties of Presuppositions

Presuppositions share certain common features which may be used as criteria for identifying or defining the phenomena. Presuppositions may be said to possess the following properties:

2.3.2.1 Constancy under negation

Frege (1892) and Strawson (1952) observed that presuppositions survive negation (negation here means the negation of the main verb or the topmost clause in a complex sentence). Frege noted that negation of a sentence/statement sustains its presuppositions. This is to say that a statement and its negative counterpart share the same set of presuppositions. In fact, one major difference between entailment and presupposition is their behaviour under negation, namely that negation alters a sentence’s entailments but it leaves the presuppositions untouched. Consider the following sentence for example:

41. Erica managed to stop in time.

From this we can infer:

42. Erica stopped in time.
43. Erica tried to stop in time.

Now take the negation of (41):

44. Erica didn’t manage to stop in time.

From (44) we cannot infer (42). In fact, the main point of the utterance (44) could be to deny (42). Yet the inference to (43) is preserved and thus shared by both (41) and its negation (44). On the basis of the negation test, then, (42) is entailment of (41), whereas (43) is a presupposition of both (41) and (44). ‘Constancy under negation’ thus provides us with an initial operational test for identifying presuppositions. We can simply take a statement, negate it, and see
what inferences survive. The inferences that survive this initial test may be said to be the potential candidates for presuppositionhood.

However, Levinson argues that constancy under negation is not in fact a rich enough definition to pick out a coherent, homogeneous set of inferences. If we abandon constancy under negation as the acid test of presuppositionhood, substituting behaviour in say ‘if --- then’ clauses, then we might claim that certain particles like ‘any’, ‘even’, ‘just’ are presupposition triggers. The grounds would be that, even though they do not yield inferences that survive negation, the inferences do survive in conditional contexts where entailments do not. Thus the isolation of the range of the phenomena depends crucially on the definition of presupposition adopted. Actually, presuppositions do exhibit a further set of distinguishing characteristics like defeasibility and detachability.

2.3.2.2 Defeasibility

The notion of defeasibility is crucial in pragmatics. Most of the pragmatic inferences exhibit this property. An inference is said to be defeasible if it is possible to cancel it in some situation (or context). Defeasibility turns out to be one of the crucial properties of presuppositional behaviour, and one of the touchstones against which all theories of presupposition have to be assessed. Presuppositions are defeasible in certain discourse contexts, and in certain intra-sentential contexts. This property makes any possible semantic theory of presupposition unacceptable. Defeasibility (or context sensitivity) is one of the properties that distinguishes presuppositions from entailments. A given sentence, for example, always produces the same set of entailments. This, however, does not seem to be true of presuppositions. As Levinson (1983:186) observes, ‘one of the peculiar things about presuppositions is that they are liable to evaporate in certain contexts, either immediate linguistic context or the less immediate discourse context, or in circumstances where contrary assumptions are made’.

Consider the following examples given in Levinson (1983):

45. At least John won’t have to regret that he did a Ph.D.
46. >> John did a Ph.D.
But then if the participants mutually know that John failed to get into a doctoral course, the speaker may use sentence (45) with no consequent presupposition (46) arising. This is so because the presupposition (46) evaporates because the participants mutually know that the putatively presupposed fact does not obtain. This phenomenon of presupposition failure or presupposition cancellation is known as defeasibility feature. Here is another instance of presupposition cancellation:

47. Sue cried before she finished her thesis.
48. Sue died before she finished her thesis.

Sentences (47) and (48) both have the same syntactic structure but the utterance of each seems to produce a different presupposition. The utterance of (47) produces presupposition (49), whereas that of (48) produces presupposition (50) below:

49. Sue finished her thesis.
50. Sue did not finish her thesis.

This is so because in (48) the presupposition (49) is blocked or cancelled by our general knowledge of the world. We know, for example, that dead people cannot complete their incomplete tasks; a dead person therefore, cannot finish her unfinished thesis. The point about defeasibility, thus, is that presuppositions do not always survive. Contrary beliefs held in a context, for example, cause presuppositions to evaporate without any sense of semantic or pragmatic anomaly. The most general level affecting presuppositional behaviour is the context provided by background knowledge. Among other levels is the context of the surrounding syntactic structures. There are many other kinds of contextual defeasibility as well. Besides, there are also many kinds of intra-sentential cancellation or suspension of presuppositions. This feature is known as the projection problem for presuppositions.

2.3.2.3 Detachability

An inference maybe said to be detachable if it is possible to find another way of saying the same thing (or approximately the same thing) that simply lacks the said inference. Presuppositions, unlike implicatures, are attached to the form rather than to the meaning of what is said. They are apparently tied to particular
aspects of the surface structure of utterances. They are therefore detachable. Proper names and definite descriptions, for example, have the presuppositions of existence attached to them; verbs of judgment and factive verbs have the presuppositions of the truth of their complement clauses attached to them, etc. There seems to be a conventional association between the surface organization of sentence constituents and particular presuppositions. The presupposition of a cleft sentence, for example, can be specified by forming a proposition by taking the material after the relative clause marker and inserting an appropriate variable or indefinite existential expression like ‘something’ or ‘somebody’, etc. In fact, detachability is one of the properties which distinguishes presuppositions from implicatures. For implicatures, as we shall see, unlike presuppositions, are attached to the semantic content and not to the surface form of the expressions used. The point about presuppositions, here, is that it is possible to express the same truth-conditional content of an utterance containing a presupposition in ways where no such presupposition arises. Consider, for example, the inference that attaches to the expression ‘managed to’. This inference exhibits detachability feature. It is carried because of what is said, and not by virtue of the manner of expression. For example, (51) below seems to express the truth-conditional content specified in (52). Besides, by virtue of the use of the expression ‘managed to’, (51) presupposes (53).

51. The paramilitary forces managed to rescue the victims of flood.
52. The paramilitary forces rescued the victims of flood.
53. The paramilitary forces tried to rescue the victims of flood.

However, it is possible to express the same truth-conditional content as (52) by using an expression which lacks the presupposition (53). The presupposition (53), since it is attached to the word ‘manage’, is thus detachable. In other words, it could be avoided by using a substitute expression which expresses the same truth-conditional content without generating the said presupposition.
2.3.2.4 survival in a range of linguistic and non-linguistic contexts

Presuppositions distinguish themselves by their ability to survive in various linguistic contexts. For, presuppositions survive not only negation, but also in a range of other contexts where entailments do not. They survive, for example, in modal contexts (i.e. in embedding under modal operators like ‘possible’, ‘there is a chance that’, etc; under deontic modalities like those expressed by ‘ought’ and ‘should’). They also survive in the context of compound sentences formed by the connectives ‘and’, ‘or’, ‘if ... then’ (and their equivalents), and in complex sentences with certain complement taking verbs or sentential operators which allow the presuppositions of the component parts to ascend to become presuppositions of the whole. However, it is not always the case that presuppositions of component parts survive or ascend to become presuppositions of the whole. The fact that some presuppositions survive the context while others don’t is known as the projection problem for presuppositions.

It emerges from the above discussion that presuppositions share a number of common properties. For example:

(i) They are background assumptions.
(ii) They are tied to aspects of surface structure.
(iii) They survive in a number of linguistic and non-linguistic contexts.
(iv) Unlike entailments, they are defeasible.

These features shared by presuppositions may be used as criteria to distinguish and differentiate presuppositions from entailments on the one hand and implicatures on the other.

2.4. Implicatures

The term ‘implicature’ was introduced first by the British philosopher H. Paul Grice in a series of lectures he delivered at Harvard University in 1967. These were partly published under the title ‘Logic and Conversation’ in 1975. Grice introduced the notion of ‘implicature’ primarily for the purpose of explaining the phenomenon of how in a conversational interaction speakers mean more than what they actually say. The term ‘implicature’ was intended to stand in contrast
to what is ‘said’ or expressed by truth conditions of expressions, and to cover non-truth-conditional pragmatic inferences.

Etymologically, the term ‘implicature’ refers to the phenomenon, whereas the term ‘implicatum’ refers to the entity implicated. ‘Implicata’ means the entities putatively implicated by a single utterance. The term ‘implicature’ contrasts with terms like logical implication, entailment and logical consequence, which are generally used to refer to inferences derived solely from logical or semantic content. Grice was careful to restrict the use of the term ‘implicate’ to speaker intended meaning which is not part of ‘what is said’. For, primarily, it is the speakers who implicate, while it is the sentences, statements and propositions that enter into logical relations.

In the Gricean framework implicature is conceived as a species of inference, distinct and different from entailment and presupposition. Entailment is a purely semantic relation known as logical consequence, whereas the very notion of implicature was conceived in order to account for the extra meaning attached to utterances in interactional situations. Implicatures share some of the properties of presuppositions (especially features concerning defeasibility), but they differ from presuppositions in several respects. Presuppositions, for example, are inferences regarding background assumptions against which the main point of an utterance is assessed. A presupposition is a proposition that is assumed to be true by virtue of the conventions concerning the use of the expression that gives rise to the said inference. The term ‘implicature’, on the other hand, stands for what is implicated, rather than assumed in the context of use of the expressions. Another difference between conversational implicatures and presuppositions is that implicatures are attached to the semantic content of an utterance (and are therefore non-detachable), whereas presuppositions seem to be built into the linguistic structure of sentences that give rise to them (and are therefore detachable). A conversational implicature, for Grice, is part of communicational content that is non-conventionally implicated. It signifies what a speaker implicates (as opposed to what he actually says) and its approximation arrived at by the hearer by making use of some inferencing mechanism. An implicature
may thus be said to be the extra meaning attached to, but distinct from, the sense of the utterance. Implicatures cover a tremendously vast and extremely vital area in communication.

2.4.1 Total signification of an utterance: A Gricean view

In ‘logic and conversation’ (1975, rpt. 1989: 41) Grice identified three elements of meaning which together may be said to constitute the total signification of an utterance. These are- (i) what is said, (ii) what is conventionally implicated, and (iii) what is non-conventionally implicated. Grice uses the expressions (i), (ii), and (iii) as technical terms to signify specific types of inferred propositions derived from an utterance.

2.4.1.1 What is Said

Grice (1975, rpt. 1989: 25) used the word ‘say’ to signify the case where what somebody has said is ‘closely related to the conventional meaning of the words (sentence) he has uttered’. As Levinson (1983: 97) observes, Grice uses the phrase ‘what is said’ as a technical term for the ‘truth conditional content’ of an expression, which may in fact be somewhat less than the full conventional content. The entire conventional content consists of all possible senses in all possible situations of use of the expressions used by the speaker in an utterance, while what is said refers to the disambiguated semantic representation of the proposition expressed by the speaker on a given occasion (which includes assignment of proper sense and reference). Grice (1975, rpt. 1989: 25) illustrates his usage of the term ‘what is said’ as follows:

Suppose someone to have uttered the sentence He is in the grip of a vice. Given the knowledge of the English language, but no knowledge of the circumstances of the utterance, one would know something about what the speaker had said, on the assumption that he was speaking Standard English, and speaking literally. One would know that he had said, about some particular male person or animal x, that at the time of the utterance (whatever that was), either (1) x was unable to rid himself of a certain kind of bad character trait or (2) some part of x’s person was caught in a certain kind of tool or instrument (approximate account, of course). But for a full identification of what the speaker had said, one would need to know (a) the identity of x, (b) the time of utterance, and (c) the meaning, on the particular occasion of utterance, of the phrase in the grip of a vice (a decision between (1) and (2)). [These two types of meaning together maybe said to constitute the conventional content of the utterance ‘he is in the grip of a vice’.]
‘What is said’ may thus be said to be ‘what is entailed’ by the use of a certain expression. The hearer’s knowledge of the meanings of the words used helps him to arrive at the conventional meaning of an utterance. In other words it helps him to determine ‘what is said’ in the Gricean sense of the term. As Grice’s illustration shows, knowing what the speaker said in producing a particular utterance is first a matter of knowing what range of possible senses and references could have been intended, and, second, knowing which sense and reference was intended on that occasion. The understanding of ‘what is said’, thus, involves a choice from among several possible meanings of the constituent linguistic items used in the given expression.

Grice thus suggests that determining ‘what is said’ would depend on the decision concerning which sense and reference from among all possible ones (i.e. from the entire conventional content) is intended on the given occasion, and that any account of implicatures would depend on the proposition the hearer assumes the speaker has expressed by way of ‘what is said’. A careful examination of the process involved in retrieving the proposition expressed by the speaker reveals that the hearer is, here, faced with choices in which he has to make use of the same pragmatic framework as he does for deriving implicatures. Consider the following utterance, for example, where the linguistic clue for arriving at ‘what is said’ (i.e. the full proposition expressed by the speaker in the utterance of the expression in question) is very skeletal:

54. Not in here.

In fact, in understanding ‘what is said’ what the hearer does is that he builds from such linguistic clues a complete proposition - that is, a representation of the state of affairs that could be presented as true. Thus, for example, in a situation in which an attendant brings a parcel belonging to the sports department into the Librarian’s office with a request to keep it there for a few weeks, the Librarian’s utterance of (54) would be understood as expressing the proposition in (55).

55. The attendant should not keep the parcel in the Librarian’s office.
What the hearer/analyst has done in (55) here is to supplement the skeletal utterance in (54) with the missing details. In fact, even when the speaker utters a complete sentence, as in (56), the meaning of the words used falls short of what the hearer takes the speaker to have ‘said’ in a variety of ways.

56. There are too many marks in this book.

(Diane Blakemore’s (1992) example)

Is the speaker here drawing attention to the kind of marks that would ruin the appearance of the book, for example, or is he referring to the grades given to students after examinations? He has said there are too many of them. But too many for what? And what book is he referring to? Deriving a full proposition from an utterance like this requires the information demanded by questions of this sort. The proposition so derived has the status of what is technically known as ‘what is said’. This is sometimes referred to as ‘explicature’ (Sperber and Wilson (1986), Diane Blakemore (1992)).

An explicature is thus a representation of ‘what is said’. It is a full proposition making explicit ‘what is said’ by supplying and clarifying the contextual information missing in the actual utterance. While planning and processing an utterance in face-to-face interaction, the speaker tries to be brief without sacrificing clarity. He achieves this by omitting contextually evident information which he thinks is easily accessible to his hearers without much apparent effort. In deriving an explicature the hearer / analyst fills in the said gaps by supplying contextually appropriate information thus making more explicit the contextual framework and thereby restricting and channelising the process of further interpretation. Thus (55) above, in an appropriate context (i.e. when uttered in a particular situation on a particular occasion), may be said to be an explicature derived from (54).

In determining the explicature the analyst makes explicit the sense and reference of the given utterance and establishes the relevant contextual framework by supplying the required information, which, in face-to-face interaction, the interactants leave out as superfluous and redundant because they think it is contextually evident, easily deducible, shared knowledge- using devices like
ellipsis, substitution, etc. Deriving an explicature involves a choice on the part of the analyst. Thus the analyst moves one step ahead in the direction of interpretation by defining how, of all possible contextual frameworks, the one provided by him is the most appropriate one: and thereby setting up and specifying the tone and the line of argument for further, higher level interpretation. Deriving an explicature thus entails supplying appropriate contextual framework for utterance interpretation. In his choice in deriving an explicature the analyst is guided by the same rationality oriented pragmatic principles and heuristic mechanism as is used in deriving implicatures. Building up context for an utterance depends largely upon the intuition of the hearer. If the hearer’s intuition fails to capture right context, it is very likely to mislead the hearer into wrong interpretation of the utterance.

2.4.1.2 What is conventionally implicated

In some cases the conventional meaning of words used, besides helping to determine what is said, also determines ‘what is implicated’. For some words, besides their conventional meaning, also have an additional implicature conventionally attached to them. Consider the following utterance (repeated here for convenience), for example:

57. He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave.
   (Grice’s example (1975, rpt. 1989: 25))

Here, the speaker may be said to implicate (i.e. to commit himself, by virtue of the meaning of the words he uses, to its being the case) that ‘the referent’s being brave is a consequence of, or follows from, his being an Englishman’.

This implicature seems to result from the conventional meaning attached to the use of the word ‘therefore’. However, if we want to distinguish between ‘what is said’ and ‘what is implicated’ here. we may say that the speaker has ‘said’ (in the favoured sense) that he is an Englishman, and that he is brave. It may be said that the speaker has indicated and so implicated (rather than ‘said’), by virtue of the meaning associated with the word ‘therefore’, that ‘he is brave’ follows from his being an Englishman’. Grice calls the meaning so implicated as a case of ‘what is conventionally implicated’.

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2.4.1.3 What Is non-conventionally implicated

Utterance meaning (i.e. the total signification of an utterance) also includes yet another type of meaning, which is not part of the conventional or truth-conditional content of the expression used, but which is systematically implicated and inferred by the users of a language. Grice (1975, rpt. 1989: 25) illustrates it as follows:

Suppose that A and B are talking about their mutual friend C who is presently working in a bank. A asks B how C is getting on in his job, and B replies, 'Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he has not been to prison yet'. At this point, A might very well inquire what B was implying, what he was suggesting, or what he meant by saying that C had not been to prison. The answer might be any one of such things as that 'C is the sort of person likely to yield to the temptation provided by his occupation', or that 'C's colleagues are really very unpleasant and treacherous people' and so forth... It is clear that whatever B implied, suggested, meant in this example, is distinct from what B said, which is simply that C had not been to prison yet.

Grice calls the meaning so implicated as a case of 'what is non-conventionally implicated'.

Grice, however, explicitly stated that it is not necessary for every utterance to have all the three elements. 'In any given case', he says, 'one or more of these elements may be lacking. For nothing may be said although there is something which a speaker makes as if to say; and what is non-conventionally implicated maybe (or may not be) conversationally implicated' (Grice, 1975, rpt. 1989: 41).

For example, in day-to-day communication one comes across several utterances where the literal face-value meaning exhausts the entire communicative content. In fact, as already stated in Chapter-1, it is quite normal for an utterance to have the same sense and force. It is thus perfectly natural that utterances may not carry implicatures. In other words, it is not necessarily the case that every utterance carries an implicature. Besides, within conversationally implicated propositions, it is wrong to assume that the speaker always has a specific goal or intention, and that he or she specifically means something paraphrasable in a single proposition. Sometimes the speaker’s intentions are very pointed or focused, whereas on other occasions they may be very vague. There is, therefore, no need for the hearer always to assume that the speaker wanted or intended the
hearer to understand something specific, or intended him to draw some particular conclusion. And there is also no need for the hearer even to think that the speaker could/should have expressed his thought more precisely. Consider, for example, the mini-dialogue in (58):

58.  A: What shall we do this evening?
    B: I’m really tired.
    (Diane Blakemore, 1992: 10)

Obviously, B is intending to convey something more than the information that he is really tired. But what? That he doesn’t want to do anything? That he doesn’t want to do anything energetic? That he can’t be bothered thinking about it? Although the hearer isn’t expected to derive just any conclusion from B’s response, it seems that there is no one single conclusion that he can derive. The challenge, here, is to give a precise account of something that is very imprecise. More particularly, it is to give an account of the processes involved in interpreting utterances produced by speakers whose intentions range from the very specific to the very vague.

The problem of deriving exact conclusions or arriving at exact meaning becomes more acute in the case of literary texts where the author relies on figurative language for his effect. In such cases it is difficult to pin down exactly what the speaker means. Consider Emilia’s utterance in (59) cited by Diane Blakemore (1992: 9), for example:

59.  ‘Tis not a year or two but show us a man,
    They are all but stomachs and we all but food;
    They eat us hungerly, and when they are full,
    They belch us.
    (Othello. III. iv)

Obviously, Emilia does not mean that men are stomachs and women food. At least not literally. But then what does she mean? Proposition (60) below, perhaps, sums up her meaning.

60. Women are exploited by men.

But if she meant this, why did she say what she said? For (stylistic) effect, perhaps. But what is this effect? If it is not part of what Emilia communicated, then (60) would be an adequate paraphrase of (59). And obviously it is not.
Emilia did not just mean that women are exploited by men. The problem is that it is impossible to spell out what she meant without distortion or loss of meaning. There is no single proposition that Emilia meant.

2.4.2 Conventional Implicatures and Conversational Implicatures

As meaning could be implicated in two ways, viz. (i) by means of conventional devices, and (ii) by means of non-conventional devices, Grice postulated that there are two basic kinds of implicatures, viz. (i) ‘Conventional Implicatures’ and (ii) ‘Conversational Implicatures’. Conventional Implicatures are non-truth-conditional inferences that are not derived from the super-ordinate conversational principles like the maxims, but are simply attached by convention to particular lexical items or expressions; whereas, Conversational Implicatures are inferences arrived at by relating the contextual assumptions to the principles and maxims of standard conversational practice.

2.4.2.1 Conventional implicatures

In communication there are cases where the implicated proposition derives solely from the conventional features of the words employed in an utterance. Grice (1975, rpt. 1989: 25) terms the meaning so implicated as conventional implicature. Levinson (1983: 127) notes that Grice cited as examples of conventional implicature only two expressions, viz. (i) ‘the word ‘but’ has the same truth-conditional (or truth-functional) content as the word ‘and’, with the additional conventional implicature to the effect that there is some contrast between the conjuncts (Grice, 1961)’; and (ii) ‘the word ‘therefore’ which Grice holds contributes nothing to the truth conditions of the expressions it occurs within (Grice, 1975: 44)’. In the utterance (57), viz. ‘He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave’, for example, the speaker implicates that ‘his being brave follows from his being an Englishman’. This implicature seems to result from the conventional meaning attached to the use of the word ‘therefore’. As Gazdar (1979: 38) says the utterance of the following sentences (61) and (62) would have the same truth-conditions and differ only in that (62) conventionally
implicates a proposition involving some sort of contrast, unexpectedness, or the like. Levinson terms this as the implicature of adversativity.

61. Mary got pregnant and John was pleased.
62. Mary got pregnant but John was pleased.
(Gazdar’s (1979:38) example)

This implicature arises solely because of the particular (non-truth-conditional) properties of the word ‘but’ and cannot be given some higher order explanation in terms of conversational principles.

The other examples that have been suggested are the meanings of ‘even’ (Kempson, 1975; Karttunen & Peters, 1979) and ‘yet’ (Wilson, 1975). Similarly, it has been observed that the use of the definite article (also of personal pronouns, demonstratives, etc) conveys the speaker’s understanding that there is some referent that is to be identified uniquely in the contextual knowledge shared by speaker and hearer. Leech (1983: 90) points out, for example, that when s uses the phrase ‘the x’, h infers from this that-

63. There is some ‘x’ that can be uniquely identified as the same ‘x’ by s and h.

Since the element of definiteness expressed by ‘the’ and the other expressions of definiteness is essential to the meaning of these expressions, rather than derived from that meaning by means of conversational principles, Leech classes these inferences in the category of conventional rather than conversational implicature. However, Leech also notes that conversational implicatures can also result indirectly from the use of ‘the’. For example, although ‘the x’ will normally be used in a context where hearer is aware of ‘which x’ is meant, there are some cases where, the speaker causes the hearer to adopt an assumption of unique reference which hearer probably did not hold before the speaker’s utterance. For example, from a sentence like:

64. Would you like to see the post card I got from Helen last week?

the hearer may infer, if hearer did not know it before, that there is a unique post card such that speaker received it from Helen last week. We can say that (64) entails (65).

65. Speaker got a postcard from Helen last week
but also that (64) implicates (because of the uniqueness implicature associated with ‘the’) that

66. There exists only one such postcard.

Levinson (1983: 128) argues that ‘a very large number of deictic expressions seem to have conventional implicatures as a central meaning component’. He cites as the examples of this sort the discourse-deictic items as in (67), and socially deictic items used in address as in (68):

67. however, moreover, besides, anyway, well, still, furthermore, although, oh, so, etc
68. sir, madam, mate, your honour, sonny, hey, oi, etc.

Keenan (1971: 51) treated the inferences concerning relationship holding between speaker and addressee as examples of pragmatic presuppositions. He observed, for example, that the use of the pronoun ‘tu’ ‘seems to presuppose that the addressee is an animal, child, socially inferior to the speaker, or personally intimate with the speaker’. However, Levinson treats the use of honorifics like ‘T / V’ pronouns as cases of conventional implicatures. For, ‘vous’, he says, ‘when used to a singular addressee, conventionally but non-truth-conditionally indicates that the addressee is socially distant from, or socially superior to, the speaker’. The discourse-deictic items as in (67), and address forms as in (68) above, he says, exhibit the properties Grice expects of conventional implicatures.

For, the utterance initial particle ‘oh’, he says, is generally produced (at least in one distinctive usage) by the speaker just after the other speaker has announced some news. It is thus a conventional signal in English for indicating that the news has been received and recognised, but in itself it has no propositional content that could be analysed truth-conditionally. However, as Levinson (1983: 128) says, conventional implicatures are not a very interesting category. In fact, the driving force of Gricean analysis is his theory of conversational implicatures. And it is this category with which the present study is primarily concerned.

2.4.2.2 Conversational implicatures

Conversational implicatures are a special kind of pragmatic inferences. Such inferences cannot be thought of as semantic because they are based squarely on
certain contextual assumptions concerning the cooperativeness of participants in a conversation, rather than being built into the linguistic structure of the expressions that give rise to them. These inferences belong to the third Gricean category (iii) namely, the category of ‘what is non-conventionally implicated’. Gazdar (1979: 41) notes that Grice himself never gives an explicit definition of conversational implicature. Instead what he offers is a circumspect characterisation following which one might consider an implicature to be ‘a proposition that is implied by the utterance of a sentence in a context even though that proposition is not a part of, nor an entailment of, what was actually said’. Conversational implicature here means ‘what is implicated by virtue of its association with conversational principles’. (Henceforth, following the general convention, unless there is a specific mention of other categories of implicatures, as shorthand we shall use the term ‘implicature’ to signify ‘conversational implicatures’.)

2.4.3 Conversational Implicatures and Conversational Principles

A conversational implicatum is, by definition, a condition that is not included in the original specifications of the expression’s conventional meaning. The conversational implicata are, therefore, not part of the meaning of the expressions to the employment of which they would attach. These are inferences based on both the content of what has been said (i.e. semantic content or ‘sense’ of the utterance) and some specific assumptions and expectations regarding the cooperative nature of ordinary verbal interaction. These are inferences that are arrived at by relating the contextual assumptions to the principles and maxims of standard conversational practice. What is implicated by way of a conversational implicature is ‘what it is required that one assume a speaker to think in order to preserve the assumption that he is observing the CP (and perhaps some conversational maxims as well), if not at the level of what is said, at least at the level of what is implicated’. Since the present study proposes to deal with Conversational implicatures alone, it is necessary here to concentrate on this particular kind of inference.
The context in which the utterance is situated plays important role in both the production and interpretation of the utterance. Since talk exchanges occur in definite social settings, the additional (implicated) meaning seems to be systematically embedded in the conversation and is understood and interpreted by the hearer as appropriate in the given context. We can arrive at this implied meaning by locating the context of an utterance and by making elaborate and extensive inferencing in accordance with the CP and the maxims.

Conversational inference, for Gumperz (1977) is the ‘situated’ or context bound process of interpretation by means of which participants in a conversation assess others’ intentions, and on which they base their responses. It is different from a linguist’s assignment of meaning to utterances or classification of speech acts, as well as from the social scientists’ measurement of attitudes, which are all static and fixed. Analysis of such processes requires different and more subtle methods of study which examine ‘meaning as a function of the dynamic pattern of utterances and responses as they occur in conversation’ (cf. Jaworsky and Copland, 1999). Linguistic analysis of conversation involves the labelling of utterances by other factual utterances. Participants in a conversation, on the other hand, implicitly or indirectly illustrate their understanding of what it said through verbal and non-verbal responses; by the way they build on what they hear, rather than through talking about it in abstract terms.

2.4.3.1 Conversational Principles: observance and non-observance

Conversational Principles are not prescriptive rules. Despite their imperative form their maxims and sub-maxims, these principles represent communicative values prevalent in a society rather than impositive criteria of human behaviour. A speaker may be said to be observing the conversational principles if he behaves in accordance with the norms of standard conversational practice. Speakers in general are aware of these norms. This awareness is reflected in their conscious and unconscious choices of strategies in actual communication. Theoretically speaking, a speaker is free to adopt or discard the principles and the maxims. And though normally people tend to adopt the conversational
principles, they are often seen to discard them in the interest of their personal goals. However, deviation from the norms of the conversational principles is treated as ‘marked behaviour’ and is therefore liable to be held ‘accountable’. In fact, these principles are so strong that despite of the apparent violations of these principles or of some of their maxims, participants in a conversation assume that they are being observed at some deeper level and the conversation proceeds on these assumptions. Deviation from these norms activates the inferencing faculty and thereby begins the search for possible explanation(s) that would account for any such deviation. Grice (1989: 30) stated various ways in which a speaker may fail to fulfil a maxim as follows:

(i) He may quietly and unostentatiously violate a maxim; if so, in some cases he will be liable to mislead.

(ii) He may opt out from the operation both of the maxim and of the cooperative principle; he may say, indicate, or allow it to become plain that he is unwilling to cooperate in the way the maxim requires. He may say, for example, I cannot say more; my lips are sealed.

(iii) He may be faced by a clash: He may be unable, for example, to fulfil the first maxim of Quantity (Be as informative as is required) without violating the second maxim of Quantity (Have adequate evidence for what you say).

(iv) He may flout a maxim; that is, he may blatantly fail to fulfil it.

2.4.3.2 Cooperative Principle: observance and non-observance

A speaker may be said to be observing the CP and its maxims if he makes informative, truthful, relevant, and clear and precise contribution in accordance with the general purpose or goal of the conversation. Take the following short conversational exchange, for example.

69. A: I need a drink.
B: Try the Bell.

Participants A and B, here, can be said to be observing the CP and its maxims only if the following assumptions hold:

(i) A, for example, must have some point in saying that U. That he must be sincerely in need of a drink. (Otherwise his utterance would have no point. It would be insincere.)

(ii) B must be thought of as giving sufficient amount of relevant, truthful information in a clear, unambiguous way.
B may be thought of as being non-cooperative if he blatantly violates the maxims, i.e. if he deliberately gives wrong or irrelevant information for the purpose of deceiving, misleading, etc. the hearer. For example, if B knows that the Bell is closed, or that Bell is the name of a Greengrocer’s, etc., and is deliberately sending A on a wild goose chase.

A maxim may be said to be unfulfilled if the speaker adopts strategies like violating, flouting, or suspending the maxim, or if the speaker opts out (i.e. if he refuses to comment). Violation of a maxim may be (a) deliberate, or (b) inadvertent. Deliberate violation of the CP is uncommon, and occurs only in such special cases as sarcasm, joking, or deliberate unpleasantness. More likely is the inadvertent flouting of the maxims—as would happen if B genuinely did not know that the Bell was closed and accidentally sent A on a wild goose chase.

### 2.4.4 Sources of Implicatures

According to Grice conversational implicatures come about in three ways, viz.

(i) By observing, or following the maxims
(ii) By breaking (or violating) the maxims, and
(iii) By flouting (or exploiting) the maxims.

Accordingly, Grice (1989: 32) classified conversational implicatures into three groups on the basis of the speaker’s attitude toward the maxims. These are as follows:

(i) Implicatures arising from the observance of the maxims,
(ii) Implicatures arising from violation of a maxim, and
(iii) Implicatures arising from the flouting or exploiting of a maxim.

(a) The first category (i) includes implicatures arising from the observance of the maxims (i.e. cases where no maxim is violated or at least in which it is not clear that any maxim is violated). These are cases where the speaker implicates that which he must be assumed to believe in order to preserve the assumption that he is observing the maxim of relation. Grice (1989: 32) illustrates this category with the following examples:

70. A (To a passer-by): I’ve run out of petrol.
   B: There’s a garage round the corner.

71. A: Smith doesn’t seem to have a girlfriend these days.
B : He has been paying a lot of visits to New York lately.

In both these examples, the speaker B implicates that which he must be assumed to believe in order to preserve the assumption that he is observing the maxim of relation. Besides, there seems to be no violation of any maxim. In (70), for example, due to the obvious connection between B's remark and A's remark both with respect to 'what is said' and between 'what is said' and the adjacent remarks, there does not seem to be any infringement even of the supermaxim of manner- Be Perspicuous. The speaker B here seems to be implicating that the garage is quite close by, and that it is, or at least may be, open, and that it has, or at least may have, petrol to sell. Similarly, (71.B) seems to implicate that Smith has, or may have, a girlfriend in New York. Levinson (1983) calls implicatures of this sort as standard implicatures. The following could be cited as another instance of standard implicatures (example (69) repeated here for convenience):

72. A: I need a drink.
   B: try the Bell.

If B in the example [72] above is assumed to be observing the CP, several implicatures arise out of his response, e.g.

73. 'The Bell' must be a place that sells drinks, that
74. It must be open (as far as B knows), that
75. It must be nearby, etc.

Levinson (1983: 105) cites the following as instances of Standard Quantity Implicatures.

76. John has two PhDs.
77. +> I believe he has, and have adequate evidence that he has.
78. Does your farm contain 400 acres?
79. +> I don't know that it does, and want to know if it does.

These implicatures are based on amplification of communicational content of the utterance.

(b) In the second category (ii), we have implicatures arising from violation of a maxim. As stated above, there may be said to be three ways in which a conversational maxim can be said to be violated- (a) deliberate and conscious violation of a maxim (as in case of an attempt to mislead or deceive the addressee(s), (b) inadvertent violation of a maxim (as in case of a violation
resulting from the speaker’s beliefs based on wrong or inadequate knowledge or information), and (c) an apparent violation of a maxim which may be explained by the supposition of a clash with another maxim. The second (Gricean) category of implicatures (ii), however, covers only the third type of violation of a maxim (c), namely cases where a maxim is violated but its violation may be explained by the supposition of a clash with another maxim. Grice (1989: 32) cites the following as an example of the implicatures arising from violation of a maxim. Suppose that two friends, A and B, who are on their tour to France and are talking about a mutual acquaintance C:

80. A: Where does C Live?
   B: Somewhere in the south of France.
Here B seems to violate the first maxim of Quantity- ‘Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purposes of the talk exchange. This infringement of the maxim can be explained only by the supposition that B is aware that to be more informative would be to say something that infringes the second maxim of Quality- ‘Don’t say that for which you lack adequate evidence’. B, therefore, may here be said to implicate that he does not know in which town C lives.

(c) The third category (iii) covers cases that involve exploitation, or deliberate flouting, of a maxim for the purpose of getting in a conversational implicature by means of something of the nature of a figure of speech. In such cases, though some maxim appears to be violated, it is violated only at the level of ‘what is said’. The hearer, here, is entitled to assume that the maxim, or at least the overall cooperative principle, is observed at the level of what is implicated. In Grice’s (1989: 30) words, a maxim is flouted if the following condition obtains: ‘on the assumption that the speaker is able to fulfil the maxim and to do so without violating another maxim (because of a clash), is not opting out, and is not, in view of the blatancy of his performance, trying to mislead, the hearer is faced with a minor problem: How can his saying what he did say be reconciled with the supposition that he is observing the overall Cooperative Principle? This situation is one that characteristically gives rise to a conversational implicature.’
Cases of irony, metaphor, etc may be said to result from this kind of flouting or exploiting of a maxim. Grice cites as an illustration a case of an ironical statement, where A says to B, `C is a fine friend', when A and B both know that C has cheated A.

81. C is a fine friend.
82. C is not a good friend, and, perhaps, not a friend at all.

Since A and B both know that what is said in (81) is not true, that this is obviously not the case, the statement (81) here may be said to implicate the contrary of what is said, viz. (82).

2.4.5 Types of implicatures

It emerges from the discussion above that there are different types of implicatures. Different pragmaticists and theoreticians, focusing on different aspects, have classified implicatures in different ways and come up with different typologies of conversational implicatures. Grice, as cited above, distinguished two types of implicatures- conventional implicatures and conversational implicatures. He dismissed the category of conventional implicatures as ‘not a very important category’ and proceeded to consider conversational implicatures. He classified conversational implicatures into three classes depending upon their behaviour with respect to the CP and its maxims, viz. (i) Implicatures arising from the observance of the maxims, (ii) Implicatures arising from violation of a maxim, and (iii) Implicatures arising from the flouting or exploiting of a maxim. Grice also classified conversational implicatures along another dimension as generalised conversational implicatures and particularised conversational implicatures. Within generalised conversational implicatures, Gazdar distinguished two types of generalised Quantity implicatures- scalar Quantity implicatures and clausal Quantity implicatures. Levinson (1983: 126) says that there are two types of conversational implicatures- (i) those that are derived from a simple assumption that the speaker is observing the maxims (which he labelled as ‘standard implicatures’), and (ii) those derived in more complex ways on the basis of the speaker flouting or exploiting a maxim. Sperber and Wilson argue that the
distinction is so fundamental that two different kinds of reasoning are employed, both of which cannot be subsumed within a single theory of implicature. They argue that while the standard implicatures are deductions from a single maxim of Relevance, background assumptions and what is said, the ‘figures of speech’ typically invoke images and associations of a quite different kind. They treat ‘figures of speech’, which are exploitations of more straightforward ways of talking, as a special kind of utterances.

2.4.5.1 Particularised implicatures

Particularized conversational implicatures are ‘cases in which an implicature is carried by saying that p on a particular occasion in virtue of special features of the context, cases in which there is no room for the idea that an implicature of this sort is normally carried by saying that p’ (Grice, 1989: 37). Thus if the following exchange takes place in given circumstances for example:

83. A: Oh, where are all the snacks I brought for breakfast?
   B: Sam looks quite happy.

B’s utterance may be taken to implicate that perhaps Sam might have eaten all the snacks. Similarly, in the following exchange:

84. A: Where is my box of chocolates?
   B: Children were playing in your room.

(Smith and Wilson’s (1979: 175) example)

B’s utterance may be taken to implicate that perhaps the children might know, or might have eaten the chocolates.

2.4.5.2 Generalized implicatures

A generalized conversational implicature, according to Grice (1989: 37) is a case ‘where one can say that the use of a certain form of words in an utterance normally (i.e. in the absence of special circumstances) carries a certain implicature or a type of implicature’. It is an inference in which no special knowledge is required in the context to calculate the additional conveyed meaning. Grice (1989: 38) observed, for example, that an expression involving a phrase with an indefinite article of the type ‘a/an x’, normally carries a generalized conversational implicature to the effect that the ‘x’ does not belong to the speaker. (i.e. ‘a/an x’ +-> ‘not the speaker’s x’). He cited the following
inferences connected with indefiniteness as instances of generalized conversational implicature:

85. X is meeting a woman this evening  
86. \(\rightarrow\) the person to be met was someone other than X’s wife, mother, sister, or perhaps even close platonic friend.  
87. X went into a house yesterday and found a tortoise inside the front door  
88. \(\rightarrow\) the house does not belong to X. (Grice’s (1989: 38) examples)

Grice attributes this implicature to the ‘failure to fulfil the first maxim of Quantity’, namely that the speaker has chosen to use a less informative expression ‘an X’ in place of the more specific and informative expression ‘the X’. It is calculated on the principle that if the speaker was capable of being more specific (i.e. more informative, following the quantity maxim), then he would have used the more specific expressions like ‘my wife’, ‘my mother’, ‘my house’, etc. Grice (1989: 38) provided the following generalisation concerning the linguistic phenomena involving the expressions like ‘a garden’, ‘a car’, ‘a college’:

When someone, by using the form of expression ‘an x’, implicates that the ‘x’ does not belong to or is not otherwise closely connected with some identifiable person, the implicature is present because the speaker has failed to be specific in a way in which he might have been expected to be specific, with the consequence that it is likely to be assumed that he is not in a position to be specific.

Grice, however, points out that sometimes there would normally be no such implicature (as in (i)), and sometimes there would be a reverse implicature, (as in (ii)) below.

89. I have been sitting in a car all morning.
Here the expression ‘a car’ does not carry the implicature ‘the car does not belong to the speaker’. In fact, it does not have any consequence with respect to whether or not the car belongs to the speaker.

90. I broke a finger yesterday.
The expression ‘a finger’, here, does not carry the usual implicature to the effect that ‘the finger’ referred to in the utterance does not belong to the speaker. On the contrary, it carries a reverse implicature that ‘the speaker broke his own finger’.
Secondly, the use of ‘a(n)’ (and of other indefinite determiners such as some, few, and several) is associated with the previously unmentioned denotata. As a result, the indefinite article and other expressions of indefiniteness generate inferences to the effect that when the speaker uses an expression of the form ‘a(n) x’ he implicates that the hearer is not in a position to uniquely identify which ‘x’ is indicated by the referring expression. Leech (1983: 90) explains this phenomenon with the following example:

91. I won a prize today

Here the expression ‘a prize’ generates a negative inference that the hearer cannot be expected to know which prize is intended. Unlike the conventional implicature of definiteness carried by the definite article and other expressions of definiteness, one arrives at this inference via the maxim of Quantity. The reasoning could be stated as follows: ‘Since the speaker avoided using the more specific and informative expression ‘the prize’, the speaker does not believe that the hearer has enough knowledge to identify uniquely the prize concerned’. Since, we arrive at the inference via maxims of the CP, it may be categorized as generalised conversational implicature.

2.4.5.2.1 Generalized Quantity implicatures

Horn (1972: 112) observed that the choice of an expression from a quantitative scale gives rise to specific types of inferences. Expanding and improving upon Horn’s (1972) treatment of Quantity implicatures, Gazdar (1979: 58-59) distinguished two types of generalised implicatures arising from quantitative scales- (i) scalar Quantity implicatures and (ii) clausal Quantity implicatures. Following Gazdar (1979) Levinson (1983: 132- 147) provides an extensive account of these two types of generalized Quantity implicatures.

2.4.5.2.1.1 Scalar implicatures

Scalar Quantity implicatures are implicatures that arise from the use of scalar predicates on a linguistic scale. Scalar predicates are contrastive linguistic expressions belonging to the same grammatical category expressing values on a quantitative scale. These can be arranged in a linear order by degree of informativeness or semantic strength. Arranged sequentially, these expressions
form a scale which has the general form of what Levinson (1983: 132) calls ‘an ordered set’ (indicated by angled brackets) of linguistic expressions or scalar predicates - e₁, e₂, e₃, ...en, as in - < e₁, e₂, e₃, ...en> - where if we substitute e₁, or e₂ etc, in a sentential frame A we obtain the well-formed sentences A(e₁), A(e₂), etc; and where A(e₁) entails A(e₂), A(e₂) entails A(e₃), etc, but not vice versa. Levinson argues that there is a general predictive rule for deriving a set of logical inferences (i.e. entailments) from such scales. namely ‘if a speaker asserts that a higher or stronger point (leftward item in the ordered set of alternates) obtains, then it logically follows that a lower or weaker point (i.e. a rightward item in the ordered set) on a scale obtains’. Leech (1983: 85) describes the notion of semantic strength in terms of two propositions p and q as follows:

If p entails q and q does not entail p, then p is stronger than q.

Thus, if we take the quantifiers ‘some’ and ‘all’ as representing an ordered pair on a scale of ‘operator strength’, then we can say that ‘A proposition p containing ‘all’ is stronger than an otherwise equivalent proposition q containing ‘some’’. In fact, neither Horn nor Gazdar define the notion of ‘quantitative scale’. Owing to the overwhelming problems involved in the task, Gazdar, like Horn, simply assumes that ‘the scales are, in some sense, ‘given to us’’. He, however, mentions the following examples of quantitative scales given by Horn (1972):

92. < all, most, many, some, few, ... >
    < necessarily, probably, possibly, ... >
    < ... ten, nine, eight, ... >
    < must, should, may, ... >

These examples give some idea of what Horn and Gazdar meant by a ‘quantitative scale’. Expanding upon Horn’s list of ordered sets Levinson (1983: 134) gave the following similar instances:

93. < and, or >
    < n ...5.4.3.2.1 >
    < excellent, good >
    < hot, warm >
    < always, often, sometimes >
    < succeed in Ving, try to V, want to V >
    < necessarily p, p, possibly p >
The choice of a word which expresses one value from a scale of values always communicates some information. For example, as stated above, the choice of a word which expresses the higher value from a scale entails a proposition containing the lower value from the same scale, but not vice versa. Thus ‘a \(\rightarrow\) b’ but \(\neg(b \rightarrow\) a). Besides generating regular logical inferences (i.e. entailments), the ordered set also gives rise to an implicational scale which gives rise to different types of quantity implicatures. A large number of generalized conversational implicatures are commonly communicated on the basis of this implicational scale. These are known as scalar implicatures. The basic intuition underlying the scalar implicatures is that ‘when any form on a scale is asserted, the negative of all forms higher on the scale is implicated’. Levinson argues that ‘given any such scale, there is also a general predictive rule for deriving a set of Quantity implicatures, namely if a speaker asserts that a lower or weaker point (i.e. a rightwards item in the ordered set of alternates) on a scale obtains, then he implicates that a higher or stronger point (leftwards in the ordered set) does not obtain’. He formulated the general rule for deriving scalar implicatures from scalar predicates as follows:

Given any scale of the form \(<e_1, e_2, e_3, ... e_n>\), if a speaker asserts \(A(e_2)\), then he implicates \(\neg A(e_1)\), if he asserts \(A(e_3)\) then he implicates \(\neg A(e_2)\) and \(\neg A(e_1)\). and in general, if he asserts \(A(e_n)\), then he implicates \(\neg (A(e_{n-1}))\), \(\neg (A(e_{n-2}))\) and so on, up to \(\neg (A(e_1))\)

(Levinson, 1983: 134)

This can be explained with reference to Harnish’s (1976: 362) Quantity-Quality Maxim, viz. ‘Make the strongest relevant claim justifiable by your evidence’. By virtue of this maxim, the speaker is expected to make the strongest justifiable claim. Making a weaker claim, when it is possible for the speaker to make a stronger claim which would be more informative for the requirements of the hearer, would be a violation of this maxim. On the basis of this reasoning, Leech
(1983: 85) formulates a general rule that ‘the weaker proposition implicates that s believes the negative of the stronger proposition’. The choice of a lower value on the scale, therefore, gives rise to the implicature that the higher value does not obtain, or at least that the speaker is not aware that the higher value obtains. Thus in the following utterance (94)

94. I am studying linguistics and I have completed some of the required courses by choosing the expression ‘some’, the speaker creates an implicature to the effect that ‘he has not completed all of the required courses’. That this is an implicature rather than a logical inference is evident from the fact that the inference can be cancelled by the addition of a clause containing the information contrary to the inference, as in (95)

95. In fact, I have completed all of the required courses. However, if the scalar implicature is to be actually inferred, the expression that gives rise to it must be entailed by some complex proposition of which it is a part. Thus the utterance of

96. John says that some of the boys went

(Levinson’s (1983) example)
does not commit the speaker to knowing ‘Not all of them went’, because some occurs in a complement clause that is not entailed by matrix clause. This constraint, as well as the defeasibility feature in general, establishes the usefulness and the need of the distinction made by Gazdar (1979) between potential and actual implicatures.

Levinson makes it clear that the rules stated above embody a claim that the semantic content of lower items on a scale is compatible with the truth of higher items obtaining, and the inference that higher items do not in fact obtain is merely an implicature. Thus ‘some’ is compatible with ‘all’ and it therefore does not include as part of its semantic content ‘not all’, the latter being a scalar implicature regularly associated with some (but cancellable as implicatures always potentially are).’ As these inferences are derived from the maxims of the conversational principles, they are conversational, rather than conventional, implicatures.
2.4.5.2.1.2 Clausal implicatures

Clausal implicatures are inferences that are generated by the use of a complex proposition containing a weaker expression in preference to a stronger one such that it does not commit the speaker either to the truth or falsehood of the embedded proposition(s). Levinson (1983: 136) gives a slightly simplified version of Gazdar’s (1979) formulation of the notion of clausal implicature as follows:

If s asserts some complex expression p which (i) contains an embedded sentence q, and (ii) p neither entails nor presupposes q, and (iii) there’s an alternative expression r of roughly equal brevity which contains q such that r does entail or presuppose q; then, by asserting p rather than r, s implicates that he doesn’t know whether q is true or false, i.e. he implicates \( Pq \& P\neg q \).

The underlying intuition, according to Levinson, is that ‘if a speaker uses some linguistic expression that fails to commit him to some embedded proposition, in preference to another available stronger expression that would so commit him, then the speaker may be taken to implicate that he is not in the (epistemic) position to make the stronger statement’. Thus if the speaker uses (97) instead of (98),

97. I believe John is away
98. I know John is away

(Levinson’s (1983: 136-137) examples)

by choosing a weaker expression ‘believe’ in place of the equally easily accessible stronger one ‘know’, the speaker may be taken to implicate that it is possible, for all that the speaker knows, that John is in fact not away. For the use of the stronger expression ‘know’ as in (98) would commit him to the truth of the embedded proposition, viz. ‘John is away’.

Levinson (1983: 136-137) illustrates and explains Gazdar’s notion of clausal implicature further by citing the case of how the choice of a disjunction in preference to a conjunction gives rise to implicatures. He points out that if a speaker uses the expression (99)

99. The Russians or the Americans have just landed on Mars

the complex proposition made thereby entails that one or the other party has landed on Mars, but it leaves the question of just which one of the two parties
has landed on Mars unanswered. Since one could have chosen a stronger expression that did entail one or both of the disjuncts, one can be taken not to be in a position to utter the stronger expression. The uttering of a disjunction implicates that the speaker does not know which disjunct is true, because the choice of a disjunction has the consequence that neither of the embedded propositions is entailed (or presupposed) by the whole. Thus the speaker’s choice of a disjunction (i.e. a weaker expression) in (99) above gives rise to several implicatures such as:

100. It is possible that the Russians have landed on Mars
101. It is possible that it is not the Russians who have landed on Mars
102. It is possible that the Americans have landed on Mars
103. It is possible that it is not the Americans who have landed on Mars.

This could be explained by arguing that the use of a disjunction (which is a weaker expression from the quantitative scale < and, or >) in preference to a conjunction (which is a stronger expression from the same quantitative scale) generally indicates that the speaker is not in the (epistemic) position to make a stronger statement which would commit him to the truth of either the one or the other or both of the embedded propositions. The speaker has chosen to utter (99) in preference to (104), the saying of which would commit him to one or both the parties (i.e. the Russians and the Americans) landing on Mars.

104. The Russians and the Americans have landed on Mars.

Levinson gives the following generalisation which captures this phenomenon:

A statement of the form ‘p or q’ generates the set of implicatures: \{Pp, P∼p, Pq, P∼q\} i.e. it is epistemically possible that p, also that not p, also that q, also that not q.

Levinson observes that a sentence of the form p or q has these implicatures by reference to the availability of other sentences like p and q or simply p or q which are stronger or more informative because they do entail p or q or both.

Similar pairs of ‘stronger’ and ‘weaker’ constructions are illustrated in (105):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(a) stronger form</th>
<th>(b) weaker form</th>
<th>(c) implicatures of (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>105.</td>
<td>‘p and q’</td>
<td>‘p or q’</td>
<td>{Pp, P∼p, Pq, P∼q}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘since p, q’</td>
<td>‘if p then q’</td>
<td>{Pp, P∼p, Pq, P∼q}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘a knows p’</td>
<td>‘a believes p’</td>
<td>{Pp, P∼p}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘a realized p’</td>
<td>‘a thought p’</td>
<td>{Pp, P∼p}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘a revealed p’</td>
<td>‘a said p’</td>
<td>{Pp, P∼p}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘necessarily p’</td>
<td>‘possibly p’</td>
<td>{Pp, P∼p}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is necessary here to note that the items that occurred in the list of scales in (93) above that give rise to scalar implicatures could reappear here with additional and slightly different clausal implicatures. For example, the utterance of ‘possibly p’ carries the scalar implicature ‘not necessarily p’; but since possibly p in contrast to ‘necessarily p’ does not entail p, there will also be a clausal implicature from the utterance of ‘possibly p’ to the effect that the speaker does not know whether p is or is not the case (i.e. the set of implicatures \{Pp, P \neg p\} will arise). Or again, utterances of the form p or q will have the scalar implicature K \neg(p \& q) and the clausal implicatures \{Pp, P \neg p, Pq, P \neg q\}. So under rules (121) and (126) even the more simple complex sentences may give rise to multiple Quantity implicatures.

2.4.6 Properties of Implicatures

Implicatures possess certain common features, which may be construed as tests for identifying and separating them from other types of inferences. Grice (1967, rpt. 1989: 39) argued that presence of conversational implicature could be established by applying certain tests to the implied proposition. He specified five features that conversational implicatures must possess (or might be expected to possess). Levinson (1983:114-118) named these features as (i) defeasibility (or cancellability), (ii) non-detachability, (iii) calculability, (iv) non-conventionality, and (v) indeterminacy and/or multiplicity of meaning. Levinson further claimed that properties (i) to (iv) taken together as necessary conditions ‘are only jointly sufficient for an inference to be considered an implicature’.

2.4.6.1 Defeasibility

An inference is defeasible if it is possible to cancel it by adding some additional premise to the original ones. The notion of defeasibility is crucial in pragmatics since most pragmatic inferences exhibit this property. A putative conversational implicature that p is explicitly cancellable if, to the form of words the utterance of which putatively implicates that p, it is possible to add ‘but not p’, or I do not mean to imply that p’, and it is contextually cancellable if one can find situations
in which the utterance of the form of words would simply not carry the implicature (Grice. 1989:44).

The notion of defeasibility is crucial in pragmatics since most pragmatic inferences exhibit this property. Defeasibility could, therefore, be stated as a test for differentiating implicatures from entailments, e.g.

106. The M. A. English class has 25 students.
107. The M. A. English class has 20 students. [Entailment]
108. The M. A. English class has 25 students and no more. [Standard Quantity implicature]

Implicatures are suspendable by mention in an if-clause. Thus the implicature [108] above is suspended in [109] below:

109. The M. A. English class has 25 students, if not more.

Entailments, being non-defeasible, cannot be suspended in this way. Thus we cannot say [110]

110. ? The M. A. English class has 25 students, if not 20.

Implicatures are directly and overtly deniable without a sense of contradiction:

111. The M. A. English class has 25 students, in fact 30 (or ‘and may be more’)

The implicature to [108] above is denied here

Entailments cannot be denied in this way. For example, we cannot say [112]

112. ? The M. A. English class has 25 students, in fact none (or ‘and may be none’).

Implicatures can just disappear when it is clear from the context of utterance that such an inference could not have been intended as a part of the utterer’s full communicative import, e.g. if one of John’s neighbour says [113] to the committee inspecting a college with respect to the adequate number of students where the required number for granting affiliation is 25 students:

113. Oh sure. The M. A. English class has 25 students, all right.

he surely does not imply [108].

Implicatures are thus defeasible and can drop out in certain linguistic and non-linguistic contexts. They appear to be quite unlike logical inferences, and cannot directly be modelled in terms of some semantic relation like entailment.

Defeasibility, or context sensitivity, as we have seen, is a general feature of pragmatic inferences. Implicatures, unlike entailments, share this property with presuppositions. An inference is defeasible if it is possible to cancel it by adding
some additional premise to the original ones. Consider the following, for example:

114. There are fifty delegates attending the seminar.
115. ➞ There are not more than fifty delegates attending the seminar.

Utterance (114) may be said to implicate (115) (an instance of scalar Quantity implicature). Implicatures can however be suspended or overtly denied without a sense of contradiction. Consider the following, for example:

116. There are fifty delegates attending the seminar, if not more.
117. There are fifty delegates attending the seminar; fifty-five, in fact.
118. There are fifty (and may be more) delegates attending the seminar.

In (116) the implicature to (115) seems to be suspended by mention in an if-clause, whereas utterance (117) seems to implicate (118) rather than (115). Besides, an implicature may just disappear (or not arise at all) in a context where it is clear both to the speaker and the addressee that such an inference could not have been intended. Implicatures are thus defeasible, and can drop out in certain linguistic and non-linguistic contexts.

Implicatures are thus defeasible and can drop out in certain linguistic and non-linguistic contexts. They appear to be quite unlike logical inferences, and cannot directly be modelled in terms of some semantic relation like entailment.

2.4.6.2 Non-detachability

An inference maybe said to be non-detachable if it is not possible to find another way of saying the same thing (or approximately the same thing) which simply lacks the said inference. The property of non-detachability serves to distinguish implicatures from presuppositions. In fact, it could be used as a test for differentiating implicatures from presuppositions. For presuppositions, unlike implicatures, are attached to the form rather than to the meaning of what is said. They are therefore detachable. Consider the following, for example:

119. Sachin didn’t manage to score a century
120. Sachin tried to score a century.
The presupposition to (120) is due to the expression ‘managed to’, and if we want to avoid conveying the presupposition (120), we can do so by finding alternative ways of communicating the same truth conditional content that would lack the said presupposition. We can say (121), for example, in place of (119), and thereby avoid the presupposition (120).

121. Sachin didn’t score a century.

The utterance (121) seems at least to be semantically and truth conditionally equivalent to (119), but it lacks the inference to (120). Presuppositions, in contrast to implicatures, seem to be detachable.

Implicatures are attached to the semantic content, rather than to the ‘linguistic form of what is said. We cannot therefore, detach implicatures from an utterance simply by changing the words of the utterance for synonyms. Imagine a situation, for example, where two friends A and B both know that their common friend C has recently made a mess of things. Now, if A says to B:

122. C is a genius

he may be said to implicate (123).

123. C is foolish

This implicature (123) (vide ironic interpretant), exhibits non-detachability feature. It is attached not to ‘what is said’ but to the semantic content of the utterance (122). It, therefore, continues to exist even if we replace the utterance by any other synonymous expression as in (124):

124. (i) C is extraordinarily brilliant.
(ii) C is an exceptionally clever person
(iii) C is a distinguished scholar.
(iv) C is a mental prodigy, etc.

A conversational implicature, according to Grice, exhibits a fairly high degree of non-detachability. However, this feature is not a necessary condition of the presence of a conversational implicature. For (i) it does not appear if the implicature depends on the manner in which what is said has been said; and (ii) it is also subject to the limitation that there may be no alternative way of saying what is said, or no way other than one which will introduce peculiarities of manner, such as by being artificial or long-winded. Neither is it a sufficient
condition, for (i) the implicatures of utterances which carry presuppositions (e.g. he has Left off beating his wife) will not be detachable.

Now, should a question arise whether a presupposition implied by an utterance is entailed or conversationally implicated, in either case the implication will be non-detachable. Detachability feature is useful primarily for distinguishing between certain conventional implicatures and non-conventional implicatures. The test may fail, for example, when a speaker uses a word or form of words in a loose or relaxed way. (For example, examining a light blue tie in different lights; or the use of the word ‘see’ as in Macbeth- ‘he saw Banquo’ where we know that Macbeth hallucinated. we can quite safely say that Macbeth saw Banquo, even though Banquo was not there to be seen. Now we should not conclude from this that ‘an implication of the existence of the object said to be seen’ is not part of the conventional meaning of the word ‘see’. It is very much a part of it. Nor should we conclude that there is one sense of the word which lacks this implication.) An implicature is, thus, standardly non-detachable. There are however, certain implicatures (especially those arising under the maxim of manner) that are specifically linked to the form of the utterance (Levinson, 1983:116).

2.4.6.3 Calculability

The third distinguishing feature of implicatures is that they are calculable. The presence of a conversational implicature, according to Grice (1967, rpt. 1989:31), must be capable of being worked out. For an implicature may be intuitively grasped, but as Grice says, “unless the intuition is replaceable by an argument, the implicature (if present at all) will not count as a conversational implicature; it will be a conventional implicature”. For every putative implicature, thus, it should be possible to construct an argument of the type suggested by Grice for deriving it. It should be possible to show, for example, how from the conventional meaning (or the sense of the utterance) on the one hand, and the cooperative principle on the other, it follows that an addressee would make the inference in question to preserve the assumption of cooperation.
2.4.6.4 Non-conventionality

An implicature is not part of the conventional meaning of the utterance which generates it. It is by definition non-conventional. For as Grice says, you need to know ‘conventional force’ of an utterance before you can calculate its implicatures in a context. Implicatures cannot, therefore, be part of that meaning. Besides, it is possible for an utterance to be true even if its implicature is false, and vice versa as in the following example:

125. Herb hit sally
126. > Herb didn’t kill sally by hitting her.

Here (125) seems to implicate (126) by maxim of Quantity [an instance of a scalar implicature]. For if Herb had killed Sally by hitting her, to say just (125) would in fact be to withhold information in a non-cooperative way. But then a speaker may, with an intention to mislead the addressee, say (125) even in a situation where (125) is true and (126) is false. The additional information (subtly) incorporated in the implicature (126) is thus not part of the conventional meaning of the utterance (125).

2.4.6.5 Potential indeterminacy / Multiplicity of meaning

As Levinson (1983:118) observes, ‘an expression with a single meaning can give rise to different implicatures on different occasions, and indeed on any one occasion the set of associated implicatures may not be exactly determinable’. Consider the following, for example:

127. John is a machine. (Levinson’s example)

An utterance of (127), could be taken to mean any one or more than one (and perhaps all) of the following:

128. (i) John is efficient.
     (ii) John lacks emotional touch.
     (iii) John never stops working.
     (iv) John puffs and blows, etc.

Implicatures may, thus, in some cases (as in metaphorical usages and tautologies) have a certain indeterminacy which is incompatible with the stable determinate senses usually assumed in semantic theories. Conversational implicatures can be calculated, denied, suspended, cancelled, and reinforced.
None of these properties apply to ‘conventional implicatures’. Conventional implicatures, like lexical presuppositions, are associated with certain words (e.g. but, yet, etc), and they result in additional conveyed meanings when those words are used, e.g. ‘p but q’ $\rightarrow p \& q$ (p is in contrast to q).

Besides these five properties, implicatures may be said to possess other properties as well. Levinson, for example, observes that implicatures are freely reinforcible (Sadock’s claim), and that ‘generalized conversational implicatures’ seem to be universal in nature, etc.

However, it is hard to decide whether what is putatively implicated is a conversational implicature or a conventional implicature (or ‘a case in which what was originally a conversational implicature has become conventionalised’). Grice (1989: 42) made it clear that though ‘the conversational implicatures must possess, or might be expected to possess, these five features’, they were not intended to serve as a decisive test, in terms of some or all of these features, to settle the question regarding the presence (or otherwise) of a conversational implicature. He says, “I very much doubt whether the features mentioned can be made to provide any such knock down test”- i.e. a test ‘to decide whether a given proposition P, which is normally part of the total signification of the utterance of a certain sentence, is on such occasions a conversational (or more generally a non-conventional) implicatum of that utterance, or is, rather, an element in the conventional meaning of the sentence in question’. For all conversational implicatures are cancellable, but unfortunately, one cannot regard the fulfilment of the cancellability test as decisively establishing the presence of a conversational implicature.

However, at least some of these features, he says, ‘are useful for providing a more or less strong prima facie case in favour of the presence of a conversational implicature’. Some of these features may also be useful in deciding whether the concerned implied proposition falls in the category of entailment, presupposition, or implicature, etc.
2.5 Working Out a Conversational Implicature: Apparatus

Grice argued that the presence of a conversational implicature must be capable of being worked out. For, according to him, even if an inference can be intuitively grasped, unless the intuition is replaceable by an argument, the inference will not count as a conversational implicature. According to Grice (1989: 30-31) the hearer would require the following data for working out a conversational implicature:

(i) the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references that may be involved;
(ii) the Cooperative Principle and its maxims;
(iii) the context, linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance;
(iv) other items of background knowledge; and
(v) the fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants and both participants know or assume this to be the case.

2.6 Working Out a Conversational Implicature: General Pattern

Grice provided the general pattern for working out a conversational implicature as follows:

He has said that p; there is no reason to suppose that he is not observing the maxims, or at least the Cooperative Principle; he could not be doing this unless he thought that q; he knows (and knows that I know that he knows) that I can see that the supposition that he thinks that q is required; he has done nothing to stop me thinking that q; he intends me to think, or is at least willing to allow me to think, that q; and so he has implicated that q.

Thus, in the Gricean framework, one may be said to have conversationally implicated that q by or in saying (or making as if to say) that p, provided that -

(i) he is presumed to be observing the conversational maxims, or at least the Cooperative Principle;
(ii) the supposition that he is aware that, or thinks that, q is required in order to make his saying or making as if to say p (or doing so in those terms) consistent with this presumption; and
(iii) the speaker thinks (and would expect the hearer to think that the speaker thinks) that it is within the competence of the hearer to work out, or grasp intuitively, that the supposition mentioned in (2) is required.

Grice (1989: 30-31) Logic and Conversation

If we apply this general pattern for working out a conversational implicature to Grice’s initial example given in section 2.4.1.3 (1975, rpt. 1989: 30-31), viz. to B’s remark in (129) below, viz. ‘C has not yet been to prison’ said in the situation where ‘A and B are talking about a mutual friend, C, who is now working in a bank. A asks B how C is getting on in his job, and B replies, Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn’t been to prison yet’.

This interaction could be (crudely) idealized for the present purpose as follows:

129. A : How is C getting on in his Job?
   B : Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn’t been to prison yet.

B’s response, here, could be interpreted in several different ways. For example, B could be implying that ‘C is potentially dishonest’, that C is the sort of person likely to yield to the temptation provided by his occupation, that C’s colleagues are really very unpleasant and treacherous people, etc. However, certainly what B meant in this case is distinct from what B said, which was simply that ‘C had not been to prison yet’. If we suppose that B meant by his utterance that ‘C is potentially dishonest’, the implicated meaning would have the status of a conversational implicature only when it is capable of being worked out. In other words, it has to be capable of being argued out by relating the speaker’s utterance to the context and the conversational principles and their maxims. In view of the general pattern for working out a conversational implicature, the implicature in the present case, viz. that ‘C is potentially dishonest’ could be argued out as follows:

B has apparently violated the maxim ‘Be relevant’ and so may be regarded as having flouted one of the maxims conjoining perspicuity, yet I have no reason to suppose that he is opting out from the operation of the Cooperative Principle: (2) given the circumstances, I can regard his irrelevance as only apparent if, and only if, I suppose him to think that C is potentially dishonest; (3) B knows that I am capable of working out step (2). So B implicates that C is potentially dishonest.

(Grice, 1989: 30-31)
Understanding utterances is, thus, not simply a matter of knowing the meaning of the words uttered and the way in which they are combined. It also involves drawing inferences on the basis of non-linguistic information and the assumption that the speaker is following the principles and maxims of standard conversational interaction. As Diane Blakemore argues, hearers make use of this pragmatic interpretative mechanism both for the recovery of the proposition which specifies ‘what is said’ as well as for the one that specifies ‘what is implicated’. For non-linguistic contextual information plays important role in disambiguation of sentences and reference assignment. And in the use of this information the hearer is guided by the same pragmatic principles which are needed for the recovery of implicatures. Any account of implicatures would necessarily involve as a first step a decision concerning what proposition the speaker has expressed (or has made as if to express). The said proposition would have the status of ‘what is said’. In order to arrive at this proposition, in the first place, the speaker would require adequate knowledge of English language (i.e. the knowledge of the meanings of the words used and of the conventions for their use). Secondly, the speaker would have to assess the different possibilities of meaning emerging from the expression the speaker has actually used and arrive at a decision concerning which of these meanings are relevant in the given context. This would involve processes like reference assignment and disambiguation of the utterance. The following illustration would clarify the processes involved in implicature analysis. Here the speaker B doesn’t actually say that he didn’t enjoy his holiday. Nevertheless, this is what the hearer will derive from his answer. It is interesting, however, to see how the hearer arrives at this inference.

130. A: Did you enjoy your holiday?
    B: The beaches were crowded and the hotel was full of bugs.

   (Diane Blakemore’s (1992: 58) example)

As stated above, the meanings of the words a speaker utters provide the hearer with a clue to understand what he intends to say. Sometimes this clue, as in is very skeletal. But even when this clue is in the form of a full sentence, much
remains to be explicated. The hearer of (130), for example, would have to supply the information like the identity of the beaches the speaker B is referring to and what these beaches were crowded with; and likewise, which hotels he meant and what does he mean by bugs. It is only by filling in this information that the hearer would be in a position to specify what the speaker has ‘said’ on this occasion. For example, the hearer takes the speaker to be referring to the beaches at his holiday resort and saying that they were crowded with other holiday-makers (rather than with jellyfish or seals). He also assumes that the speaker meant that his hotel was full of insects (rather than hidden microphones). These assumptions are due to the inter-sentential linguistic coherence and the hearer’s world knowledge (i.e. the encyclopaedic knowledge about ontological status of the world around) and not simply and solely due to his knowledge of the English language, i.e. due to the meanings conventionally associated with the words used. The fully filled in proposition the hearer would then arrive at would be something like (131) below:

131. The beaches at the holiday resort that the speaker went to were crowded with people and the hotel where he stayed was full of insects.

The hearer assumes that (131) is the proposition that the speaker intended to express because in an ordinary conversation about holidays and hotels, the assumption that one’s comfort can be affected by the presence of insects is rather more readily accessible than, say, the assumption that microphones may have been hidden in one’s room. The hearer is entitled to assume that this is the interpretation intended by the speaker, because, by the maxim of relevance, a speaker who had intended to express some other proposition could have saved the hearer the effort of having first to consider (131) as a possible interpretation before going on to consider another. In other words, a speaker who was aiming at optimal relevance and who intended to express some other proposition should not have produced that utterance.

Obviously, the proposition (131) derived from the speaker’s utterance (130) does not exhaust the meaning of (130). The proposition (131) simply covers word/sentence meaning of the utterance (130). In Gricean parlance (131)
expresses only ‘what is said’. In fact, the total signification of an utterance includes ‘what is said’ as well as what communicative value the speaker intended to assign to ‘what is said’. The utterance under consideration, here, seems to convey the speaker-intended meaning by way of implicature. The speaker B here seems to implicate a proposition which the hearer roughly understands as (132):

132. The speaker did not enjoy his holiday.

Now, (132) is an implicature recovered by the hearer on the basis of contextual information (crowded beaches and bugs are unpleasant) and the assumption that the speaker is providing a relevant answer to A’s query. There is a fundamental difference between the way in which the hearer of B’s utterance in (130) derives the assumption in (131) and the way in which he derives the assumption in (132). While (131) goes beyond the meanings of the words uttered, it is nevertheless directly dependent on those meanings in a way that (132) is not. The assumption in (131) is obtained by fleshing out a linguistically encoded semantic representation; whereas the assumption in (132) is inferred from the fleshed-out semantic representation (i.e. from the assumption in (131) which is a fully filled in blueprint delivered by the grammar) on the basis of contextual information and the presumption that the utterance is relevant or that speaker is observing the cooperative principle. In fact, (132) is derived only after the hearer has derived (131). This is to say that the recovery of an implicature hinges on the hearer’s understanding of what the speaker has said.

2.7 Conclusion

It thus emerges from the discussion above that in actual communication utterance interpretation takes place so quickly and so spontaneously that the hearer is usually not aware of how he retrieved the communicated message. However, a close look at the interpretive mechanism in slow motion might provide a clue to understand the whole process. The ultimate aim of implicature analysis is to arrive at the communicative value of utterances used in communication. Obviously, what the speaker communicates is ‘a meaning’ or meanings. But then meaning is a vast, multi-dimensional and slippery domain. It
can be viewed from several angles. From the point of view of communication it is useful to classify meaning into two categories, viz. sentence meaning and speaker intended meaning, or, alternatively, sentence meaning and utterance meaning. Since there is often a gap between what is said and what is communicated, we need to differentiate between two types of propositions communicated by utterances – (i) the propositions specifying what is actually said by virtue of the words used by the speaker, and (ii) the propositions specifying the thought or the message the speaker intended to communicate by using (i) as his vehicle. The first category includes propositions which state or represent what is variously known as ‘what is said’ or ‘explicature’; while the latter category covers propositions containing a representation of what is communicated as distinct from what is said, and these propositions stand for the meaning implicated by the speaker, carried by the utterance, and understood by the hearers approximately as it is intended by the speaker. These propositions are known as implicatures, and it is with these propositions that the present study is primarily concerned.

One of the significant properties of linguistic communication is that a single utterance may convey a whole variety of propositions. In the Gricean framework, for example, it is postulated that utterances may express two types of propositions, viz. (i) the propositions expressed by way of ‘what is said’, and (ii) those expressed by way of ‘what is implicated’. In implicature analysis ‘what is said’ serves as the vehicle, whereas the latter is the target meaning. For in linguistic communication in general, what is ultimately important is the speaker intended meaning. If the speaker’s meaning is overtly encoded in the utterance itself, the process of utterance interpretation ends with the proposition derived by way of explicature. In other words, the speaker-intended meaning in such utterances is identical with ‘what is said’. However, in most utterances the speaker-intended meaning is not identical with ‘what is said’. In such cases the speaker is said to implicate rather than overtly state his meaning. These are typically the utterances that carry implicatures. An implicature may, therefore, be said to be the speaker intended additional meaning attached to and carried by
an utterance. This meaning is deciphered by the hearer(s) making use of the conversational principles and the other apparatus required for the purpose of implicature analysis. In other words, it is derived by relating ‘what is said’ to the different maxims of the cooperative principle using the context of the utterance as the link for developing propositions which serve as premises required for the reasoning process by means of heuristic analysis. Such meaning may consist of a single proposition (often accompanied by an overlay of several propositions) or of several distinct and different propositions. Often it is not clear whether the speaker means the one or the other, or some or all of the propositions involved. In implicature analysis, therefore, the challenge is to give a precise account of something that is very imprecise. For speakers’ intentions do range from very specific to the very vague; and obviously, it is the latter that pose a problem for the analyst.