

XIII GRICE: IMPLICATURE

The temptation to multiply senses, and the effects on this on the attempt to give a straightforward account of the semantics of English. The meaning of 'and': They had a child and got married. They got married and had a child. The meaning of the indicative conditional.

Conversational and Conventional Implicature

Conventional implicatures: 'therefore'; 'but'.

Conversational implicature: not residing in the lexical meaning of the words involved.

The Cooperative Principle

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage of the conversation at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you find yourself. In particular:

Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as required
 ? Do not make it more informative

Quality Don't say what you believe to be false
 Don't say that for which you lack evidence.

Relation Be relevant (subsumes the second quantity rule?)

Manner Avoid obscurity, ambiguity, prolixity, disorderliness.

Why? Contractual basis? Precondition for any communication?

Could there be societies in which these maxims are not met? (In particular, *manner* seems less secure)

The origins of conventional implicatures

Conventional Implicature arising from apparently flouting (not just violating) one or more of these maxims, whilst still being cooperative. The need for an *argument* in cases of a conversational implicature.

Other features of conventional implicatures

Cancellability (unlike conventional implicature)

Nondetachability (unlike conventional implicature)

Implicature is not part of the meaning (unlike conventional implicature)

Implicature is not part of what is said, or part of the truth conditions (like conventional implicature)

Does this help with the Kripke explanation of the Donnellan cases?

Indicative Conditionals

How do we understand the indicative conditional in English?

Problem: if the indicative conditional is interpreted as the material conditional, then from B we can infer If A then B; and from not-A we can infer If A then B, for arbitrary B.

Grice's response: the problem is that, if you are in a position to assert B, you shouldn't assert the weaker If A then B.

Problem: but that is so regarding the inference B to A or B. Yet that doesn't seem an incorrect inference. Moreover, whilst in some cases the explanation citing conversational implicatures does seem to do the job, in others it doesn't. Contrast:

I'll come to the party if my ex-wife is there (and I'll come if she isn't)

I'll come to the party if I sustain serious injuries on the way (since I won't)

Jackson's response: the conditional brings a conventional implicature that $P(A \rightarrow B/A)$ is high. (The indicative conditional indicates the robustness of the corresponding material conditional with respect to its antecedent.)