POLITENESS: ALWAYS IMPLICATED?
Manuel Padilla Cruz

Manuel Padilla Cruz holds a PhD in English Linguistics and is currently an Associate Professor at the Department of English Language (University of Seville). His research interests include cognitive, social, historical, interlanguage and cross-cultural pragmatics. He is a member of the Research Group "Intercultural Pragmatic Studies (English-Spanish): Pragmatic and Discourse Aspects" (P.A.I. HUM 640) and has co-edited the volumes *Current Trends in Intercultural, Cognitive and Social Pragmatics* (2004) and *Studies in Intercultural, Cognitive and Social Pragmatics* (in press).

Contact information:

Manuel Padilla Cruz
Departamento de Filología Inglesa (Lengua Inglesa)
FACULTAD DE FILOLOGÍA
c/ Palos de la Frontera, s/n.
41004 Sevilla
Tlfno. : 954 55 15 50
Fax: 954 55 15 16
e-mail: mpadillacruz@us.es

POLITENESS: ALWAYS IMPLICATED?
Manuel Padilla Cruz

Abstract
Based on the relevance-theoretic distinction between *explicit* and *implicit* communication, and the notion of *explicature* of an utterance and its different types (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 1993, 2002), this paper argues that (im)politeness may also be communicated explicitly, and not only implicitly as has been normally claimed in the extant literature. The fact that certain linguistic expressions and paralinguistic features have a *procedural* meaning that does not affect the truth-conditional content of the utterance where they occur but leads the hearer to obtain a propositional-attitude description can be exploited by the speaker in order to communicate her (im)polite attitude explicitly, as part of the explicit content of that utterance. The hearer will in turn rely on such expressions and features so as to recover a description of the speaker's attitude and, hence, information about (im)politeness.

Keywords: relevance theory, (im)politeness, implicatures, explicatures, lower/higher-level explicatures, explicit/implicit communication.

1. Introduction

Relevance-theoretic research (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 2002) has shown that, when interpreting an utterance, the hearer has to develop its *logical form* into a full-fledged propositional form by means of pragmatic processes. The result of such processes is the derivation of the *explicature* of the utterance. Among the pragmatic processes involved in the derivation of the explicature of an utterance is the identification of the speech act that the speaker is performing and her attitude towards the propositional content of the utterance. In order to do so, the hearer may rely on certain linguistic expressions and paralinguistic features that have a *procedural* meaning that helps him obtain information about the speaker's attitude. The attitudes that the speaker may intend to communicate can be very rich and varied, so it is reasonable to think that the hearer may infer information about the speaker's (im)politeness at this point of the interpretive process.

Traditionally, politeness has been assumed to be communicated implicitly as an implicature that the hearer has to recover when he realises that the speaker's linguistic behaviour deviates from 'efficient' communication. However, according to Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995) and Wilson and Sperber (1993, 2002), the recovery of the explicature of an utterance amounts to the recovery of its explicit content and, therefore, belongs to the explicit side of communication. For this reason, this paper will argue and illustrate from a relevance-theoretic viewpoint that hearers may make judgements about the (im)politeness of individuals or specific acts when recovering the explicatures of utterances. This would lead to reject the statement that politeness is only communicated as an implicature and admit that it can also be communicated explicitly, as part of the explicit content of utterances.

2. Politeness implicated

Since the publication of Grice's (1969, 1975) and Searle's (1969) works, politeness has been considered to be communicated implicitly in much of the extant literature. Accordingly, politeness is an *implicature* that the hearer has to recover in order to understand the reasons why the speaker communicates her messages in a manner that does not apparently meet the standards associated with 'efficient' communication

captured by the *Cooperative Principle* and its four maxims of *quantity*, *quality*, *relation* and *manner* (Grice, 1969, 1975). Thus, Searle (1969) stated that the main reason why the speaker may select indirect speech acts may be her intention to be or seem polite. Similarly, Grice (1969, 1975) acknowledged that in those circumstances in which the speaker does not seem to abide by the Cooperative Principle and its maxims and conveys an implicit content her behaviour must be influenced by the operation of other conversational principles such as 'be polite'.

Leech (1983: 80) also admits that, even if the Cooperative Principle helps to explain in some cases the relation between sense and force of utterances, in other cases it in itself cannot explain why people are indirect and the relation between sense and force of non-declarative types of utterances. That is the reason why he complemented the Cooperative Principle with his *Politeness Principle* and why Lakoff (1973, 1977) proposed her *rules of politeness*.

Likewise, for Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987: 95) politeness is also the reason why speakers deviate from apparently efficient communication, and that deviation triggers an implicature: "Linguistic politeness is therefore implication in the classical way" but, more importantly, "[…] politeness has to be communicated and the absence of communicated politeness may, ceteris paribus, be taken as absence of the polite attitude" (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 5). These authors also claim that "Politeness is implicated by the semantic structure of the whole utterance (not sentence), not communicated by 'markers' or 'mitigators' in a simple signalling fashion which can be quantified" (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 22). According to Watts (1989: 136), politeness is then a conventionalised marked behaviour.

The assumption that politeness is an implicature raises several questions, such as what is really communicated when the speaker wants to communicate her polite attitude, if that indeed constitutes a message, what the content of that message is, whether politeness is always communicated or it is only communicated in certain situations (Fraser, 2005: 67). In fact, it has been pointed out that politeness is taken for granted or anticipated and that it is the default norm for most communicative exchanges (e.g. Escandell Vidal, 1996; Fraser, 1990: 233, 2005: 66; Jary, 1998a, 1998b). This view of politeness coincides with what Watts (1989: 135) calls *politic behaviour*, a non-marked behaviour aimed at the establishment or maintenance of equilibrium in social relations. Consequently, it is only the breach of that default norm or politic behaviour that is noted and evaluated as impolite by interlocutors: "Competent adult members comment on the absence of politeness where it is expected, and its presence where it is not expected" (Kasper, 1990: 193). If this is true, "[…] then it is hard to see how the claim that the use of [politeness] forms/strategies always communicates politeness can be maintained" (Jary, 1998a: 2).

In fact, Jary (1998a: 9) thinks that the (im)politeness of any utterance or behaviour is the result of the speaker's intentionality and her reasons to use certain utterances or behave in a particular way. As regards the speaker's intentionality, her assumptions about her social relationship with the hearer influence her own (linguistic) behaviour and this, in turn, evidences if such assumptions are compatible or incompatible with those of the hearer's. If the speaker's behaviour is compatible with the hearer's assumptions, it is not *relevant*[1] enough for the hearer to pay attention to it and, hence, will not be marked in terms of politeness. On the contrary, if the speaker's (linguistic) behaviour is incompatible with the hearer's assumptions, it will be relevant enough for the hearer to pay attention to it because it evidences that the speaker is being more (im)polite that expected[2]. Regarding the speaker's reasons to use an utterance, her intention may be to communicate to the hearer that she is being more (im)polite than

what he would have expected. However, the hearer will only interpret the speaker's linguistic behaviour in that way if he recognises that it is sincere. If the hearer recognises that the speaker's behaviour is insincere, he may attribute the speaker other intentions, such as that of flattering. In a similar way, the hearer will only conclude from a behaviour that differs from his expectations about (im)politeness that the speaker is impolite and has the intention of offending him if he can attribute to her that intention and recognises that she is being sincere to him.

This paper will not question the validity of the statement that politeness is communicated implicitly, as it can in fact be communicated in this way in some circumstances. What it will argue from a relevance-theoretic standpoint (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 2002) is that the hearer can also retrieve information about (im)politeness when pragmatically enriching the linguistic material obtained from the decoding of an utterance, i.e. when recovering its explicit content. This is so because the occurrence of certain linguistic expressions and some paralinguistic features may guide him to obtain a very specific description of the speaker's attitude when interpreting an utterance. For this reason, the following section briefly summarises some of the claims about utterance interpretation made by this cognitive pragmatic model.

3. Relevance theory and utterance interpretation

Relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 2002) is based on a property of inputs to cognitive processes: their *relevance*. This property is defined in terms of *positive cognitive effects* – strengthening or contradiction of previously held information and contextual implication of assumptions from the interaction of new information with old information – and the *cognitive* or *processing effort* needed to achieve these effects. *Ceteris paribus*, the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved by processing an input in a context of available assumptions, and the smaller the processing effort required, the greater the relevance of such input to the individual processing it.

Moreover, relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 2002) also proposes two general principles:

a) a *Cognitive Principle of Relevance*, according to which human cognition tends to be oriented to the maximisation of relevance;

b) a *Communicative Principle of Relevance*, according to which ostensive stimuli generate a presumption of their own optimal relevance.

Relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 2002) does not conceive communication as a mere encoding-decoding process, but as an *ostensive-inferential* activity, in which inference intervenes not only in the recovery of utterance meaning, but also of speaker's meaning.

3.1. Understanding utterances

Relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 2002) portrays utterance interpretation as a three-stage process in which decoding and inference work together. In order to process and understand an utterance, the first thing that the hearer has to do when hearing it is to decode it. The output of this process is a *logical form*, i.e. a set of structured concepts (Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 10). However, that logical form is not fully propositional because its truthfulness cannot be tested. Therefore, the hearer has to develop that logical form into a full-fledged propositional form by means of inferential processes in which he has to resort to contextual information.

The development of a logical form into a fully propositional form requires that the hearer disambiguates the sentence uttered, since syntactic structures may correspond to different semantic representations, all of which are grammatically valid (e.g. Carston, 1988, 1992, 1993; Wilson and Sperber, 1998; Blakemore and Carston, 1999). For example, when hearing an utterance such as (1) with two possible interpretations, the hearer has to decide whether it is the planes which are flying or the act of flying planes that can be dangerous:

(1) Flying planes can be dangerous.

Additionally, the hearer also has to assign reference to referential expressions, such as personal pronouns or proper names occurring in the utterance (e.g. Blakemore, 1992; Wilson and Sperber, 1993), and restrict the meaning of some lexical items. These *primary* pragmatic processes, known as *saturation* (e.g. Carston, 2001; Récanati, 2001), require that the hearer decides to which 'John' the speaker is referring in (2) and which 'house' is being alluded to in (3), or what 'coming soon' in (2) exactly means – whether it means five, ten or more minutes, sooner than expected, sooner than usual etc. – and to what extent the house in (3) is 'very expensive' – whether it is very expensive for everybody, whether it is more expensive than other similar houses, whether it is very expensive for its location, etc.[3]:

(2) John will come soon.

(3) That house is very expensive.

Finally, the hearer has to recover information about the speech act performed by the speaker and her attitude towards the propositional content communicated. This involves a further development of the propositional form of the utterance, since it must be embedded in an assumption schema that indicates to the hearer the speech act that the speaker is performing or her attitude towards that propositional content (Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 182; Wilson and Sperber, 1993: 5):

(4) [The speaker thinks/says/believes/regrets/is happy that [X]]

The result of these processes is the derivation of the *explicature* of the utterance, which is a combination of the information linguistically encoded in the utterance with contextual information that the hearer has to infer (Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 181). The more contextual information the hearer has to use in order to obtain the explicature of an utterance, the *weaker* that explicature is and, the other way around, the less contextual information the hearer has to use to obtain its explicature, the *stronger* its explicature is (Wilson and Sperber, 2002: 619).

In the last stage of utterance interpretation the hearer will have to derive the *implicatures* of the utterance. These are assumptions that the hearer can deduce when combining the assumptions that an utterance makes manifest with other contextual information he may have access to. Implicatures are implicit contents and their recovery is a process that belongs to what Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995) consider to be *implicit communication*. On the contrary, the explicature of an utterance constitutes its explicit content, so its recovery falls directly within what they term *explicit communication*.

3.2. Lower- and higher-level explicatures

The propositional form of an utterance constitutes its *lower-level* explicature. However, as mentioned above, that propositional form can be further embedded in an assumption schema that indicates to the hearer the speech act that the speaker is performing and her attitude towards the proposition that the utterance communicates. When the hearer embeds the propositional form of an utterance within an assumption schema, he obtains its *higher-level* explicature.

For the hearer to obtain the higher-level explicature of an utterance, he can rely on some morphological marks, such as verbal mood, which provides him with a description of the speech act that the speaker is performing (5) (e.g. Jary, 2002; Sperber and Wilson, 1995: 180; Wilson and Sperber, 1988); sentential adverbials, such as illocutionary (6), attitudinal (7) or evidential (8) adverbials (e.g. Ifantidou, 1992; Itani, 1990; Tanaka, 1998); syntactic constituents, such as parenthetical or comment clauses (9) (e.g. Ifantidou, 1993; Itani, 1990), or discourse particles, such as 'please' (10) and *hearsay* particles, which show the speaker's commitment to the content expressed (e.g. Blass, 1989, 1990; Itani, 1990, 1998):

(5) Give me a glass of water!

(6) *Seriously*, I need a glass of water.

(7) *Unfortunately*, I missed the train.

(8) *Clearly*, Jane did not buy the paper.

(9) Mary forgot the umbrella, *I suppose*.

(10)   Can you stop talking, *please*?

These grammatical components of an utterance encode concepts that are not constituents of the proposition expressed by the utterance, but of its higher-level explicature. According to Wilson and Sperber (1993: 21), they are linguistic expressions that have a *conceptual* meaning that does not contribute to the truth-conditional content of the utterance where they occur, but constrain the hearer's recovery of its higher-level explicature. Therefore, these linguistic expressions have a *procedural*[4] meaning that facilitates the hearer's comprehension of utterances by guiding him in the identification of the speech act that the speaker is performing or her attitude towards what she communicates, i.e. in understanding the speaker's meaning.

Moreover, in addition to those grammatical components, the hearer can also rely on certain suprasegmental or prosodic features of the utterance, such as intonation, lexical or sentence stress, which encode a procedural meaning that lead him to retrieve some type of syntactic, semantic or conceptual representation about the speaker's attitude (Escandell Vidal, 1998; Fretheim, 1998; House, 1989; Imai, 1998; Narbona Reina, 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001; Wilson and Wharton, 2005). Besides, the hearer can also rely on the occurrence of interjections, which also encode a procedural meaning that allows him to recover a speech-act or propositional-attitude description that is related to the expression of feelings of delight, surprise, regret, amusement, etc. (Wharton, 2003a). Likewise, facial expressions and gestures have a procedural meaning that enable the hearer to retrieve propositional-attitude descriptions similar to those he can retrieve from an interjection (Wharton, 2003b). These linguistic expressions and paralinguistic components of an utterance interact with contextual and discourse assumptions and thus contribute to the recovery of the speaker's meaning.

According to Grice (1975), the explicit content of an utterance was its semantic content and corresponded to 'what is said', so that any inferred information was an implicature and corresponded to 'what is implied'. Nevertheless, as has been observed, the relevance-theoretic conception of utterance interpretation (Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 2002) presents the recovery of speaker's meaning as more liable to the intervention of inference, and implies a shift from the initial Gricean twofold distinction to a threefold process in which the hearer must recover (i) the semantic content of the utterance, which constitutes its logical form; (ii) what is said, which involves the inferential enrichment of that logical form in order to obtain its explicature, and (iii) what is communicated, which includes its implicatures (Récanati, 1991)[5]. Furthermore, since the intervention of inference and the presence of some (para)linguistic material enable the hearer to retrieve a description of the speech act that

the speaker is performing or of her attitude when recovering the explicature of an utterance, it is rather likely that he also infers information about (im)politeness when recovering the speaker's meaning by relying on that type of material, as discussed in the next section.

4. Politeness explicated

When interpreting an utterance, the hearer can develop its higher-level explicature in different ways and with different degrees of complexity. Thus, from an utterance such as (11), the hearer may only recover a description of the speech act the speaker is performing (12), a representation of the speaker's degree of conviction about its propositional content (13) or a description of the speaker's attitude (14):

(11)   Peter is late.

(12) $Mary_a$ says that $Peter_x$ is $late_y$ at $time_t$.

(13) $Mary_a$ firmly believes that $Peter_x$ is $late_y$ at $time_t$.

(14) $Mary_a$ complains/regrets that $Peter_x$ is $late_y$ at $time_t$.

Higher-level explicatures are conceptual representations that indicate certain states of affairs and may contradict or imply other mental representations. Even if they have a truth-conditional content on their own, this content does not affect the truth-conditional content of their respective utterance (Wilson and Sperber, 1993: 22).

As has been illustrated, the hearer can embed the fully propositional form of an utterance within an assumption schema describing the speaker's attitude towards the proposition that she communicates. Hence, it is reasonable to think that the hearer is also able to develop the explicature of an utterance so as to infer the speaker's (im)polite attitude when uttering it. In order to do so, he will have to carry out an inferential process in which he will have to combine assumptions of a different nature. Following the interpretive steps described by Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995) and Wilson and Sperber (2002) in the previous section, in the case of an utterance such as (15), produced in a *deference politeness system* (Scollon and Scollon, 1983, 1995)[6] where *neutral* phatic utterances are normally expected (Laver, 1974, 1975, 1981), the hearer will decode it and obtain its logical form, which he will then enrich so as to recover its explicature (16). Once he has carried out these tasks, he will insert the explicature in an assumption schema, which will provide him with information about the speaker's attitude (17). When doing so, he may access contextual information regarding the fact that in a politeness system like the one in which the speaker and he are interacting, neutral phatic utterances are normally expected from participants who do not know each other well or do not have an intimate relationship and, hence, are considered correct or appropriate in that sort of social relationship:

(15)   The bus seems to be delayed.

(16)   The bus_x seems to be delayed at $time_t$ with respect to $time_y$.

(17)   a. The speaker has said that the bus_x seems to be delayed at $time_t$ with respect to $time_y$.

b. The speaker has said *in a polite manner* that the bus_x seems to be delayed at $time_t$ with respect to $time_y$.

For the hearer to embed the lower-level explicature of an utterance into a higher-level one describing the speaker's (im)polite attitude, he will have to access different *contextual sources* (Yus Ramos, 1997-1998, 2000). Among them, his encyclopaedic or cultural information about aspects or expectations about interaction in specific politeness systems plays a crucial role. Similarly important are the speaker's non-verbal behaviour, since her gestures and facial expression may help the hearer identify her attitude; the hearer's biographical knowledge about the speaker, where he will find

assumptions about her normal behaviour, her way of communicating specific attitudes, etc.; the hearer's general knowledge about what can be polite in certain circumstances, or other linguistic cues, such as intonation, lexical or sentence stress or tone of voice. Concerning tone of voice, Brown and Levinson explained that, for instance, a creaky voice "[…] can implicate calmness and assurance and thence comfort and commiseration" (1987: 268) because of the low speech energy with which it is produced, while high pitch "[…] may implicate self-humbling and thus deference" (1987: 268) when used by an adult to another adult because of its natural association with the voice quality of children. However, following Wilson and Wharton's (2005) proposal, these types of tone of voice can be said to encode a procedural meaning that would lead the hearer to recover the attitudes associated with them when obtaining the higher-level explicature of an utterance.

Similarly, the placement of sentence stress upon particular elements of an utterance may contribute to the recovery of information about the speaker's (im)polite attitude. Thus, in a compliment such as (18), the placement of sentence stress upon the adjective may guide the hearer to infer that the speaker is intensifying or exaggerating her interest, approval or sympathy with him (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 104-106) and, by doing so, she is addressing some of his positive face-wants and, hence, intends to be polite:

(18)　　What a wónderful sweater!

Likewise, gestures of prayer and supplication encode a procedural meaning that would permit the hearer to recover a description of the speaker's attitude when processing the utterance such gestures accompany.

The access and usage of these contextual sources may demand a greater level of inference from the hearer and, consequently, involve an increase in his cognitive effort, for he will have to expand his interpretive context so as to include the assumptions present in such sources. However, that increase of cognitive effort will be compensated by the recovery of a higher-level explicature containing a description of the speaker's attitude or (im)politeness.

In addition to tone of voice, prosody and gestures, there are other linguistic expressions which encode a procedural meaning that contributes to the recovery of higher-level explicatures and a conceptual meaning does not affect the truth-conditional content of the utterance where they occur. As mentioned above, relevance-theoretic research has shown that linguistic elements such as mood indicators, illocutionary, attitudinal or sentence adverbials, parenthetical or comment clauses and hearsay particles encode concepts that are not part of the proposition expressed by an utterance, but of its higher-level explicature. Therefore, the speaker may also resort to some of these linguistic expressions in order to communicate politeness.

In their complete classification of linguistic strategies that allow the speaker to perform *face-threatening acts* and communicate her intention to be polite, Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) paid a special attention to *hedges*. These are linguistic expressions which mitigate and soften the propositional content of FTAs. These authors distinguished four types of hedges, three of which are linguistic: illocutionary force hedges, hedges addressed to the maxims of the Cooperative Principle and hedges addressed to politeness strategies. With this last type of hedges, the speaker signals that she is aware of the fact that she is threatening the hearer's face, and suggests that what she says on the record might have been said off the record (Brown and Levinson, 1987: 171-172):

(19)　　*Frankly*, I must leave now.

Some of the hedges addressed to politeness strategies are attitudinal and illocutionary adverbials, and comment or parenthetical clauses. As already mentioned, Ifantidou (1992) and Itani (1990) have shown that such adverbials have a conceptual meaning that

does not affect the truth-conditional content of the utterance where they occur, but contributes to the recovery of information about the speaker's attitude. Likewise, Ifantidou (1993) has argued that parenthetical clauses encode concepts that are constituents of the higher-level explicature of an utterance. For this reason, it is reasonable to think that a speaker can resort to those linguistic expressions in order to communicate her intention to be polite towards the hearer and that the hearer in turn can use them to develop the higher-level explicature of the utterance where those expressions occur so as to recover a description of the speaker's attitude or intention to avoid any possible face-threat.

Accordingly, with an utterance such as (20) with the attitudinal adverb 'honestly', produced as a refusal to a previous invitation or offer to go to the cinema, the hearer could embed its lower-level explicature (21) within the higher-level explicature (22). But he could further enrich that higher-level explicature with contextual information about the speaker's intention to avoid a possible face-threat (23):

(20)   *Honestly*, I must finish this paper.
(21) $Peter_x$ must finish the $paper_y$ at $time_t$.
(22) $Peter_x$ is telling me honestly that he must finish the $paper_y$ at $time_t$.
(23)   a. $Peter_x$ is telling me honestly because he wants to avoid any face loss that he_x must finish the $paper_y$ at $time_t$.
        b. $Peter_x$ is telling me honestly because he wants to be polite that he_x must finish the $paper_y$ at $time_t$.

Similarly, when hearing (24) with a parenthetical clause, uttered as a critique of Susan's late arrival, after recovering its lower-level explicature (25), the hearer could embed that lower-level explicature within a higher-level explicature (26). Then, he can further enrich its higher-level explicature with information about the speaker's (im)polite attitude, which he will obtain from the different contextual sources he accesses (27):

(24)   Susan is a little bit late, *I think*.
(25) $John_2$ thinks that $Susan_x$ is $late_y$ at $time_t$.
(26) $John_2$ says that he_2 thinks that $Susan_x$ is $late_y$ at $time_t$.
(27)   a. $John_2$ says because he_2 wants to be polite that he_2 thinks that $Susan_x$ is $late_y$ at $time_t$.
        b. $John_2$ says because he_2 wants to avoid any face loss that he_2 thinks that $Susan_x$ is $late_y$ at $time_t$.

As has been seen, the occurrence of the (para)linguistic material discussed allows the speaker to communicate (im)politeness as part of her meaning, and not exclusively as an implicature that the hearer will recover as a result of the interaction of different contextual assumptions when he notes that the speaker's linguistic behaviour deviates from specific standards attributed to 'efficient' communication. Hence, a hearer's evaluation about the (im)politeness of another individual can be the output of the development of a logical form that he carries out so as to infer the speaker's meaning. Accordingly, hearers may infer information about (im)politeness when recovering the higher-level explicatures of utterances, since it is at this stage of the interpretive process that they retrieve a description of the speaker's attitude. Since the recovery of explicatures belongs to the explicit side of communication, it can be concluded that (im)politeness can be communicated explicitly.

5. Conclusion

This paper has argued that linguistic expressions, such as illocutionary, attitudinal or evidential adverbials, comment and parenthetical clauses, prosodic elements and paralinguistic material play a crucial role in verbal communication. They have a

conceptual meaning that is not part of the truth-conditional content of utterances and a procedural meaning that contributes to the recovery of higher-level explicatures. Therefore, speakers can resort to them in order to communicate their intention to be polite or to avoid any possible face-threat. Hearers will in turn use them when developing the propositional form that they obtain after decoding and enriching the logical form of an utterance because such material constrains the description of the speaker's attitude that he will recover. As a consequence, it can be concluded that hearers may infer information about (im)politeness when recovering the higher-level explicatures of utterances. Furthermore, since the explicature of an utterance is part of its explicit content, it can also be concluded that hearers may infer information about (im)politeness when obtaining the explicit content of utterances and, hence, that (im)politeness can also be communicated explicitly.

Notes
1. See section 3 for a definition of *relevance*.
2. Jary (1998a: 9) illustrates his ideas in a diagram with five interpretive routes that the hearer may follow in order to recover information about the speaker's (im)politeness.
3. In relevance-theoretic terms, what the hearer has to do is to construct an *ad hoc* concept (e.g. Wilson, 2003).
4. *Conceptual* meaning refers to mental representations, whereas *procedural* meaning alludes to mental instructions about how to process utterances or their constituents parts (e.g. Sperber and Wilson, 1986, 1995; Wilson and Sperber, 1993). Linguistic expressions typically having procedural meaning are discourse markers.
5. In a similar manner, Bach (1994) distinguishes between *what is said*, the *implicitures* and the *implicatures* of an utterance.
6. A deference politeness system is characterised as a social relation in which there is no power difference between speaker and hearer, but there is social distance between them. This is reflected in the formula [-P, +D].

References
Bach, K. (1994) Conversational impliciture. *Mind & Language* 9: 124-162.
Blakemore, D. (1992) *Understanding Utterances*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Blakemore, D. & Carston, R. (1999) The pragmatics of *and*-conjunctions: the non-narrative cases. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 11: 1-20.
Blass, R. (1989) Pragmatic effects of co-ordination: the case of 'and' in Sissala. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 1: 32-51.
Blass, R. (1990) *Relevance Relations in Discourse: A Study with Special Reference to Sissala*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Brown, P. & Levinson, S. C. (1978) Universals of language usage: politeness phenomena. In E. Goody (ed.) *Questions and Politeness*. 56-324. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Brown, P. & Levinson, S. C. (1987) *Politeness. Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Carston, R. (1988) Implicature, explicature, and truth-theoretic semantics. In R. M. Kempson (ed.) *Mental Representations. The Interface between Language and Reality*. 155-181. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Carston, R. (1992) Conjunction, explanation and relevance. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 4: 151-165.
Carston, R. (1993) Conjunction, explanation and relevance. *Pragmalingüística* 1: 79-98.

Carston, R. (2001) Relevance theory and the saying/implicating distinction. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 13: 1-35.

Escandell Vidal, M. V. (1996) Towards a cognitive approach to politeness. *Language Sciences* 18: 629-650.

Escandell Vidal, M. V. (1998) Intonation and procedural encoding: the case of Spanish interrogatives. In V. Rouchota & A. H. Jucker (eds.) *Current Issues in Relevance Theory*. 169-203. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Fraser, B. (1990) Perspectives on politeness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 14: 219-236.

Fraser, B. (2005) Whither politeness. In R. T. Lakoff & S. Ide (eds.) *Broadening the Horizon of Linguistic Politeness*. 65-83. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Fretheim, T. (1998) Intonation and the procedural encoding of attributed thoughts: the case of Norwegian negative interrogatives. In V. Rouchota & A. H. Jucker (eds.) *Current Issues in Relevance Theory*. 205-236. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Grice, H. P. (1969) Utterer's meaning and intentions. *Philosophical Review* 78: 147-177.

Grice, H. P. (1975) Logic and conversation. In P. Cole & J. Morgan (eds.) *Syntax and Semantics. Vol. 3: Speech Acts*. 41-59. New York: Academic Press.

House, J. (1989) The relevance of intonation? *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 1: 3-17.

Ifantidou, E. (1992) Sentential adverbs and relevance. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 4: 193-214.

Ifantidou, E. (1993) Parentheticals and relevance. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 5: 193-210.

Imai, K. (1998) Intonation and relevance. In R. Carston & S. Uchida (eds.) *Relevance Theory. Applications and Implications*. 69-86. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Itani, R. (1990) Explicature and explicit attitude. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 2: 52-64.

Itani, R. (1998) A Relevance-based analysis of hearsay particles: with special reference to Japanese sentence-final particle *tte*. In R. Carston & S. Uchida (eds.) *Relevance Theory. Applications and Implications*. 47-68. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Jary, M. (1998a) Relevance theory and the communication of politeness. *Journal of Pragmatics* 30: 1-19.

Jary, M. (1998b) Is relevance theory asocial? *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses* 11: 157-169.

Jary, M. (2002) Mood in relevance theory: a re-analysis focusing on the Spanish subjunctive. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 14: 157-187.

Kasper, G. (1990) Linguistic politeness: current research issues. *Journal of Pragmatics* 14: 193-218.

Lakoff, R. T. (1973) The logic of politeness; or, minding your p's and q's. *Papers from the Ninth Regional Meeting*. 292-305. Chicago, IL: Chicago Linguistic Society.

Lakoff, R. T. (1977) What you can do with words: politeness, pragmatics, and performatives. In A. Rogers *et al.* (eds.) *Proceedings of the Texas Conference on Performatives, Presuppositions, and Implicatures*. 79-105. Arlington, TX: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Laver, J. (1974) Communicative functions of phatic communion. *Work in Progress* 7: 1-17.

Laver, J. (1975) Communicative functions of phatic communion. In A. Kendon, R. M. Harris and M. R. Key (eds.) *Organisation of Behaviour in Face-to-face Interaction*. 215-238. The Hague: Mouton..

Laver, J. (1981) Linguistic routines and politeness in greeting and parting. In F. Coulmas (ed.) *Conversational Routine. Explorations in Standardized Communication Situations and Prepatterned Speech*. 289-304. The Hague: Mouton.

Leech, G. (1983) *Principles of Pragmatics*. London: Longman.

Narbona Reina, B. (1997) La colocación del acento en las estrategias de cortesía. In M. Martínez Vázquez (ed.) *Gramática y pragmática*. Huelva: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Huelva.

Narbona Reina, B. (1999) Visión pragmática de la acentuación en inglés: aplicaciones metodológicas. In J. Becerra Hiraldo et al. (eds.) *La enseñanza de segundas lenguas*. Granada: Universidad de Granada.

Narbona Reina, B. (2000) La función pragmática del acento en la expresión de las emociones. *Estudios de Lingüística Inglesa Aplicada* 1: 93-106.

Narbona Reina, B. (2001) La acentuación en los pares pregunta-respuesta en el inglés empresarial: relevancia o cortesía. In B. Narbona Reina (ed.) *Trabajos de Investigación 2000*. Osuna: Fundación Pública de Estudios Universitarios Francisco Maldonado.

Récanati, F. (1991) The pragmatics of what is said. In S. Davies (ed.) *Pragmatics: A Reader*. 97-120. New York: Oxford University Press.

Récanati, F. (2001) What is said. *Synthese* 128: 75-91.

Scollon, R. & Scollon, S. W. (1983) Face in interethnic communication. In J. C. Richards & R. W. Schmidt (eds.) *Language and Communication*. 156-190. London: Longman.

Scollon, R. & Scollon, S. W. (1995) *Intercultural Communication. A Discourse Approach*. Cambridge: Blackwell.

Searle, J. (1969) *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sperber, D. & Wilson, D. (1986) *Relevance. Communication and Cognition.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Sperber, D. & Wilson, D. (1995) *Relevance. Communication and Cognition*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Tanaka, K. (1998) The Japanese adverbial *yahari* or *yappari*. In R. Carston & S. Uchida (eds.) *Relevance Theory. Applications and Implications*. 23-46. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Wharton, T. (2003a) Natural pragmatics and natural codes. *Mind and Language* 18: 447-477.

Wharton, T. (2003b) Interjections, language and the 'showing-saying' continuum. *Pragmatics and Cognition* 11. 39-91.

Wilson, D. (2003) Relevance theory and lexical pragmatics. *Rivista Italiana di Linguistica* 15. 273-291.

Wilson, D. & Sperber, D. (1988) Mood and the analysis of non-declarative sentences. In J. Dancy, J. Moravcsik & C. Taylor (eds.) *Human Agency: Language, Duty and Value*. 77-101. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Wilson, D. & Sperber, D. (1993) Linguistic form and relevance. *Lingua* 90: 1-26.

Wilson, D. & Sperber, D. (1998) Pragmatics and time. In R. Carston & S. Uchida (eds.) *Relevance Theory. Applications and Implications*. 1-22. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Wilson, D. & Sperber, D. (2002) Relevance Theory. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 14: 249-287.

Wilson, D. & Wharton, T. (2005) Relevance and Prosody. *UCL Working Papers in Linguistics* 17: 424-454.

Yus Ramos, F. (1997-1998) Irony: context accessibility and processing effort. *Pragmalingüística* 5-6: 391-410.

Yus Ramos, F. (2000) On reaching the intended ironic interpretation. *International Journal of Communication* 10: 27-78.