

# **PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH THE NOTION OF IMPLICATURE**

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**To my parents**  
**Margarita and Kostas Koutoupis**

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## **ABSTRACT**

As the title suggests, the primary concern of this study is with problems arising from a very widely used notion in the recent literature of linguistics and philosophy, the notion of implicature. As this concept was introduced and developed by the philosopher H.P. Grice, the main part of the study will understandably be centred around his work. Grice distinguished between two main types of implicature, the conventional and the conversational.

In the first part we will be concerned with, what Grice called, conventional implicature, and in particular with the linguistic items generating it, as described in his work. Thus the aim of this part of the study will be to investigate the nature of conventional implicature, and to ask whether they can be justifiably claimed to be non-consequential for truth-evaluation and invariable, as Grice argues. Grice's account in this respect will be found to be partly implausible, as regards his treatment of 'therefore', and partly inadequate, as it fails to take into account the wide ranging function of 'but' — his paradigm of conventional implicature — but treats its variable meaning aspects as invariable, conventional implicature. In view of the intriguing linguistic behaviour of "but"<sup>1</sup>, the main contributions to this topic in the literature will be reviewed.

In the second part of the study our primary aim will be to consider in detail linguistic phenomena that come under the rubric of conversational implicature in the literature — with an emphasis on Grice's examples — with a view to detecting common characteristics that can be taken as the parameters along which these phenomena can be defined as a homogeneous class. It will be concluded that they cannot. More stringent criteria will be proposed for membership in a narrowly defined class of conversational implicature. Two classes of background knowledge and assumptions will be described and shown to bear significantly on language production and understanding and, in particular, on the production and understanding of linguistic facts that have been called conversational implicatures. It will be concluded that the term 'conversational implicature' has been misused and abused. The view taken here will be that background knowledge schemes must be taken into account and represented in a language theory, though the difficulties facing such an enterprise are well understood and acknowledged.

However, the overall conclusion will be that Grice's proposal effects a cut and dried demarcation between a neat but narrowly defined truth-functional semantics, on the one hand, and an unexplicated pragmatics, on the other, that would, however, include the most intriguing aspects of language use. This view of language is not very revealing and, hence, uninteresting and unappealing.



## INTRODUCTION

In recent years some philosophers have called attention to the concept of contextual implication in their attempt to solve philosophical problems by analysing the meanings of words and by analysing the relations between linguistic forms and the world. In particular, the notion of contextual implication figures prominently in Nowell-Smith, 1957, who was the first to flesh it out. He defines contextual implication as follows:

I shall say that a statement p contextually implies a statement q if anyone who knew the normal conventions of the language would be entitled to infer q from p in the context in which they occur.

(p. 72)

A detailed exposition of contextual implication is offered by Hungerland, 1960, who rejects the inductive interpretation of the paradigm of contextual implication (to say p is to imply that one believes that p), and, instead, proposes an explicatory model according to which "a speaker in making a statement contextually implies whatever one is entitled to infer on the basis of the presumption that his act of stating is normal" (pp.255, 224).

However, Grice was the first, and, until now, the only philosopher to develop a fully-fledged theory of contextual implication considered from the point of view of the philosopher of language, although, originally, in his earlier writings, his immediate concern lay with the problem of formulating a theory of Perception, rather than with advancing a theory of implication, per se; Later on, however, in a series of lectures, Grice developed a very influential theory of discourse, in which the notion of implication has a prominent role.

As our primary concern in this study is with the concept of implication, or implicature as it was later baptized by Grice, we think it will prove useful to give a brief sketch of Grice's theory of Conversation. We may, therefore, first turn to his account of 'what is said'<sup>1</sup>.

## 1. Grice's account of 'what is said'

Grice distinguishes between two identifications of 'what is said'. A full identification, for which one would need to know "(a) the identity of  $x^{\wedge}$ , (b) the time of utterance, (c) the meaning on the particular Occasion of utterance" (Grice, 1975, p.44) the words, or sentence uttered; and a partial one, for which none of the above factors are needed.

Although Grice's definition of a partial identification of 'what is said' is closely related to the conventional meaning of words (or sentences), yet it is not identified with it. He writes:

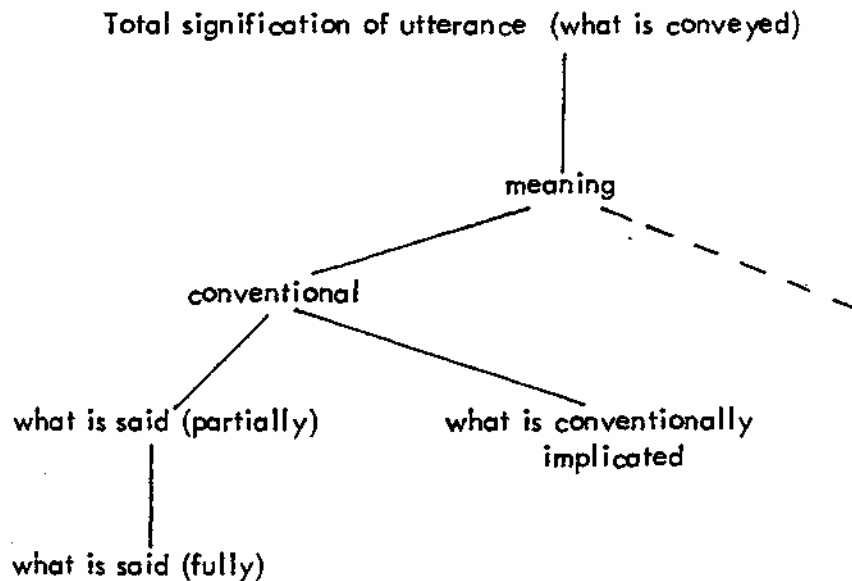
In the sense in which I am using the word 'say', I intend what someone has said to be closely related to the conventional meaning of the words (the sentence) which he has uttered.

(*ibid.*, p.44)

However, the partial identification of what is said seems to be indistinguishable from the conventional meaning of words or sentences. The reason for his distinction, apparently, lies in the fact that he wants to leave room within the bounds of conventional meanings for his concept of conventional implicatures. Conventional implicatures have to be part of the conventional meaning of words. Therefore, a partial identification of what is said is identifiable with only a part of the conventional meaning and bears a part — whole relationship to it.

The question that arises is what is the utility of a distinction between two identifications of what is said. Wouldn't the definition of a full identification of what is said still leave room within the bounds of the conventional meaning for accommodating conventional implicatures deriving from it? Grice does not seem to give any justification for this distinction. A graphic representation of his concept of 'what is said' would be as in figure 1.

Figure 1



The only grounds for singling out a partial identification of what is said seems to be the fact that we have a rough understanding of what is said, as well as of what is conventionally implicated, without having any knowledge of the factors determining the full identification of what is said. For if I overhear someone saying (1)

(1)<sup>^</sup> Robin is very fond of seals, therefore he ordered one,

I have a rough understanding of what is said and what is implicated (conventionally), though I do not know who is the referent of 'Robin', nor whether what is meant by the word 'seal' is the sea mammal, or the engraved stamps, or the sealing wax. I still understand, though, that the person referred to as Robin ordered either a sea mammal, or an engraved stamp, or a sealing wax, as a result of his being fond of it. This relation of consequentially is what Grice calls the conventional implicature attaching to the word 'therefore'.

Another hitch in his account seems to be the following: In order to determine factor (c), the meaning, on the particular occasion of utterance, of the phrase

used, you need to know more than what is specified in factors (a) and (b), i.e. the identity of references in the sentence uttered, and the time of utterance. For imagine a situation in which I say to my friend (2) at a specific time t,

(2) Queen Elizabeth II is very fond of seals/- given that the identity of the reference is quite clear and the time is also specified, my friend couldn't, on the grounds of the identification of these two parameters alone, decide between the two interpretations (2a) and (2b) of (2):

(2a) Queen Elizabeth II is very fond of sea mammals (2b) Queen Elizabeth II is very fond of engraved stamps.

(similar examples are pointed out in Lehnert, 1980)

More circumstances of the utterance need to be known for identifying precisely the conventional meaning of the words used, i.e. for a full identification of 'what is said', as Grice conceptualises it.

However, enough has been said about Grice's account of 'what is said'. His main contribution to a theory of discourse has been his proposal that talking be seen as a co-operative enterprise, with an accepted purpose and direction, a case of "purposive, indeed rational, behaviour" (Grice, op. cit., p.47), governed by the Cooperative Principle and its maxims, to a sketch of which we will now turn.

## 2. The Cooperative Principle and its maxims

The Cooperative Principle (henceforth CP) specifies that our conversational contributions are governed by a rationale that would run as follows:

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk-exchange in which you are engaged.

(*ibid.*, p.45)

Four categories are distinguished within the CP, which he calls Quantity,

Quality, Relation and Manner. Further subsidiary maxims fall under these categories:

Quantity ('M.Quant'): (1) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange)

(2) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Quality ('M.Qual'): Supermaxim: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

(1) Do not say what you believe to be false.

(2) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

Relation ('MR'): Be relevant.

Manner ('MM'): Supermaxim: Be perspicuous.

(1) Avoid obscurity of expression.

(2) Avoid ambiguity.

(3) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).

(4) Be orderly<sup>1</sup>.

We will now turn to Grice's account of conversational implicatures and their connection with the CP and its maxims. We will draw attention to certain problems that can be raised with his account of the CP in section 6.5, though.

### 3. Conversational implications

Grice's, 1975, notion of conversational implicature is intimately connected with the CP. He characterizes it as follows:

A man who, by (in, when) saying (or making as if to say) that  $p$  has implicated that  $q$ , may be said to have conversationally implicated that  $q$ , provided that: (1) he is to be presumed to be observing the conversational maxims, or at least the cooperative principle, (2) 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

(3) 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.

(*ibid.*, pp.49-50)

A conversational implicature, therefore, is worked out on the assumption that the CP is observed. However, it is mostly generated via an apparent violation of it. A participant in a talk-exchange may fail to fulfil a maxim in a variety of ways. He may "quietly and unostentatiously violate a maxim", or he may "opt out from the operation both of the maxim and of the CP" (*ibid.*, p.49). He may be faced with a clash of two maxims, when, for instance, he cannot give the requisite information on a matter ('M.Quant.')

or if he lacks adequate evidential grounds for it ('M.Qual.'). Furthermore, he may "flout a maxim; that is, he may blatantly fail to fulfil it". In this latter case, when it is clear that the speaker is neither trying to mislead, nor is he faced with a clash of maxims, and, on the assumption that he is in a position to fulfil the maxim, then the hearer is faced with a problem: he wants to reconcile the speaker's saying what he did with the supposition that the CP is observed. It is this situation, Grice says, that characteristically gives rise to the generation of a conversational implicature; "and when a conversational implicature is generated in this way", Grice writes, "I shall say that a maxim is exploited" (*ibid.*, p.49).

Grice distinguishes between two classes of non-conventional, conversational<sup>2</sup> implicatures: generalized conversational implicatures and particularized conversational implicatures. In cases of particularized, conversational implicature, "an implicature", Grice says, "is carried by saying that p on a particular occasion, in virtue of special features of the context". In these cases, he adds, "there is no room for the idea that an implicature of this sort is normally carried by saying that p" (*ibid.*, p.56).

On the other hand, the absence of these characteristics seems to define the class of general conversational implicatures. For example, the generalized, conversational implicature attaching to conditional and disjunctive statements is that

there are non-truth-functional grounds for making them. So in the case of 'p V q' expressions, there is an implicature that the speaker is not in a position to make a stronger statement, if the assumption is that he is observing the CP. For if he were in a position to say that p, then, according to the maxim of Quantity he would say so. But to choose this form of expression, he conversationally implicates that he lacks sufficient evidential grounds for saying p, or for saying q and he, thus, avoids a clash with the maxim of Quality. Likewise, in cases of use of 'if p then q' forms, the generalized conversational implicature thereby generated is that there are non-truth-functional grounds, i.e. that q is inferable from p, or that p is a good reason for q. Grice, therefore, is in a position to maintain that, accepting this explanation for the non-truth-functional aspects of meaning of such locutions enables us to handle disjunctive, conditional and conjunctive statements in terms of their logical counterparts, 'p v q', 'p->q', 'p & q'.

However, Grice admits that non-controversial examples of generalized, conversational implicatures are hard to find, "since it is all too easy to treat a generalized, conversational implicature as if it were a conventional implicature" (*ibid.*, p.56). Moreover, although a conversational implicature is a condition that is not specified within the boundaries of the conventional force of an utterance, Grice admits that "it may not be impossible for what starts life ... as a conversational implicature to become conventionalized" (*ibid.*, p.58). It is quite obvious that Grice here refers to generalized, conversational implicature, since in most cases of particularized conversational implicature, the implicature is carried through in virtue of contextual features which are not germane to the utterance, per se, of the sentence. Whereas, in cases of generalized implicature, the implicature is carried in virtue of the use of a certain form of words in an utterance. It is immediately evident that there is tension in the distinction between, and specification of, these two types of implicature, the conventional and the non-conventional conversational generalized implicature<sup>3</sup>.

Furthermore, it will be shown in a later section of this study, that the vehicles carrying the implicature — a test Grice proposes for identifying the vehicles of implicature — in cases of conventional implicature are identical to the ones in cases

of generalized, conversational implicature. Although generalized implicatures can be cancelled<sup>4</sup>, they exhibit a high degree of non-detachability. Grice actually considers the viability of treating non-truth-functional aspects of the meaning of 'or' in terms of conventional implicatures. But then he adds:

... if a model case for a word which carries a conventional implicature is 'but', then the negative form 'It is not the case that A or B', if to be thought as involving 'or' in the strong sense [non-truthfunctional], should be an uncomfortable thing to say, since 'It is not the case that A but B' is uncomfortable.

(Grice, 1978, p.117)<sup>5</sup>

However, in a lengthy discussion of the linguistic behaviour of 'but' in later sections of this study, it becomes clear that 'but' cannot be cited as an indisputable "model case of a word which carries a conventional implicature", as Grice would have it.

There are grounds, therefore, for viewing non-conventional generalized conversational implicature, attaching to such locutions as 'if p then q', 'p v q' and 'p & q', as belonging on an equal footing with conventional implicature. On the assumption that they both carry distinct aspects of meaning from the logical meaning of the words, it could be proposed that they both be accounted for within a unitary framework (cf. Karttunen and Peters, 1979, p.48). This would result in a more economical and elegant account.

In this study, therefore, as far as conventional implicatures are concerned, we will be primarily concerned, not with generalized, conversational implicatures, but with the more intriguing class of particularized conversational implicatures. As for another type of generalized, conversational implicature that, according to Grice, attaches to the use of the definite and indefinite article, it will be dealt with in chapter 9. Grice's account of conversational implicature raises a number of issues, some of which, however, will be taken up in the second part of this thesis. Before turning to detailed consideration of conventional implicature, it would be worth mentioning two kinds of tests, which Grice proposed for the identification of implicatures.



#### 4. Detachability and cancellability tests

Two features that could characterize conversational implicatures are detachability and cancellability. Grice is not very explicit as to what the doctrine should be, neither does he claim that any of these two tests is decisive for determining the presence of implicata. He writes that all conversational implicatures are cancellable, and, apparently, he is inclined to claim that they should be non-detachable, too. It looks as though, ideally, the doctrine should prescribe that: (a) all conversational implicatures must be cancellable; and, (b) all conversational implicatures must be non-detachable.

An implicature is not detachable insofar as one cannot find another form of words to make exactly the same assertion that would not carry the same implicature. It is cancellable inasmuch as one can withhold commitment from the implicature carried by what he has said, without thereby annulling what was said. An implicature can be cancelled, either explicitly, by the addition of a clause of the form 'but not p' or 'I do not mean to imply that p', or contextually, when the context is such that no implicature is carried by the same locution.

Unfortunately, however, neither of the two tests is considered to be a necessary, or a sufficient condition for the presence of an implicature. For example, non-detachability cannot be a necessary condition because an implicature may be carried in virtue of the manner of expression, and, in that case, it is detachable. Taking into consideration that entailments are also non-detachable, it is clear that detachability cannot be a sufficient condition for conversational implicature, either. The cancellability test can fail, too, because of our loose use of language. For example, we may use locutions, such as 'It is green now', when all we actually mean is that it looks green.

Grice argues, however, that the implicature is not detachable in so far as it is not possible to say the same thing in another way which would not carry the implicature. He cites the verb 'try' as an example of this instance. He writes:

One would normally implicate that there was a failure, or some chance of failure, or that someone thinks / thought there to be some chance of failure, if one said 'A tried to do x'; this implicature would also be carried if one said 'A attempted to do x', 'A endeavoured to do x', 'A set himself to do x'.

(Grice, 1978, p. 115)

However, the question that is raised in this connection is why such meaning aspects should be treated as conversational implicatures rather than be regarded as part of the meaning proper of the word, or at most as conventional implicatures (cf. Karttunen and Peters, 1975, 1977) if the existence of such a class of implicatures is to be conceded. In the same vein then, one could say that the verb 'chase' implicates that the entity identified as its direct object is moving fast, or when we say 'She bought a cardigan', we thereby imply that there was somebody to sell the cardigan, or, further, when we say 'She sold five beakers today', the implicature attaching to the word 'sold' is that there was at least one person to whom she sold the beakers, and so on (cf. Fillmore, 1971a). One, then, wonders what the conventional meaning of these words is. Besides, such a proliferation of implicate would be intolerable on the assumption that implicatures are to be treated as informal inferences, as indeed they are by Grice, and, hence, not to be handled within a formal framework.

Another class of implicatures are what Grice calls conventional implicatures, hinted at in section 1. As has been seen, conventional implicatures derive from the conventional meaning of the words, and, yet, they are not part of what is said. Therefore, they are not truth-functional aspects of meaning, neither will an account of them be included in a semantics proper in Grice's view. In Part One our concern is with this poorly described class of implicatures, the conventional implicatures, and, in particular, with the implicatures attaching to 'but' and 'therefore' — these two words being the main examples of conventional implicatures in Grice's account — to a consideration of which we may now turn.

**PART I****CONVENTIONAL IMPLICATURES**

## 1. "THEREFORE": A CASE STUDY

### 1.1 'Therefore', 'but', and truth-functionality

It is well known that not all the connectives of natural language have their analogues in a formal logical system. Moreover the ones that do are not considered to be adequately represented.

As we will be concerned here with the conjunctions 'but' and 'therefore', the question that immediately arises is why they are not represented in formal systems;<sup>1</sup> 'and', however, is represented in logic, apparently, because its formal counterpart '&' affords truth-functionality and precision. The following passage explains why 'and', but not 'but', or 'because', has a logical counterpart:

'&' is truth-functional; and truth-functions are especially readily amenable to formal treatment -notably, they allow the possibility of a mechanical decision procedure. This is no doubt why the formal logician has an analogue of 'and' but none of 'because' or 'but' ; 'and', in at least a large class of uses, is truth-functional, whereas the truth-value of 'A because B' depends not only on the truth-values of 'A' and 'B', but also on whether B is a reason for A, and the truth-value of 'A but B' also upon whether the combination of A and B is surprising.

(S. Haack, 1978, p.34)

Strawson, 1952, finds "the logician's neglect of these conjunctions, in spite of their distinctive meaning ... intelligible". He points out that the reason the logician has selected, for example, 'and' to be represented in a formal system and not other conjunctions, is not a fear of reduplication:

The words 'but', 'although', 'nevertheless', for example, are not mere stylistic variants on 'and'. Their use implies at least that there is some element of contrast between the conjoined statements or attributes; and, sometimes, that the conjunction is unusual or surprising. But this kind of implication, though it must not be neglected when we are discussing the meanings of words, is not readily expressible in an entailment — or inconsistency — rule.

(ibid., Chapter 2, part II, section 12)

While, however, it is quite clear that truth-functionality is desirable, it has yet to be proved that the logical constants are capable of covering most, if not all, of the uses of their natural language counterparts<sup>2</sup>. To do so, they must admit of readings that will correctly represent other connectives of natural language that have no formal analogues, like 'but' and 'therefore'. However, if a formal system is to afford greater generality and precision, conjunction in natural language must be viewed as truth-functional, i.e. the truth-value of the compound sentence must depend on the truth-values of the conjuncts and not as intensional, i.e. as depending on the meaning of the conjuncts. But it is well known that the connectives in natural language are not merely truth-functional and that, as a consequence, there are discrepancies.

### 1.2 Grice's proposal of conventional implicatures: 'therefore'

In part of his work Grice is concerned with these discrepancies in meaning between the logical connectives and their counterparts in natural language. He holds that such divergences in meaning are apparent and no more than the consequence of lack of due attention to the conditions attaching to conversation:

I wish ... to maintain that the common assumption of the contestants that the divergences do in fact exist is (broadly speaking) a common mistake, and that the mistake arises from an inadequate attention to the nature and importance of the conditions governing conversation.

(Grice, 1975, p.43)

In an attempt to remedy this state of affairs he proposes that part of what is understood in many utterances is no more than what is 'implicated'. These 'implicatures' carry what can be characterized as the non-truth-functional meaning of the connectives of natural language.

In what follows we will concern ourselves with a poorly described class of implicatures, which Grice calls conventional implicatures. Grice does

not give a full account of what this class of implicatures is, how they can be defined, what their main characteristics are or how they differ from his other class of implicatures, the conversational, or how they are distinguished from what is said, as he acknowledges in his William James Lectures:

The nature of conventional implicature needs to be examined before any free use of it, for explanatory purposes, can be indulged in.

(Grice, 1978, p.117)

The notion of conventional implicature needs attention; the relation between what is conventionally implicated and what is said needs characterization.

(Grice, Lecture V, p. 19)

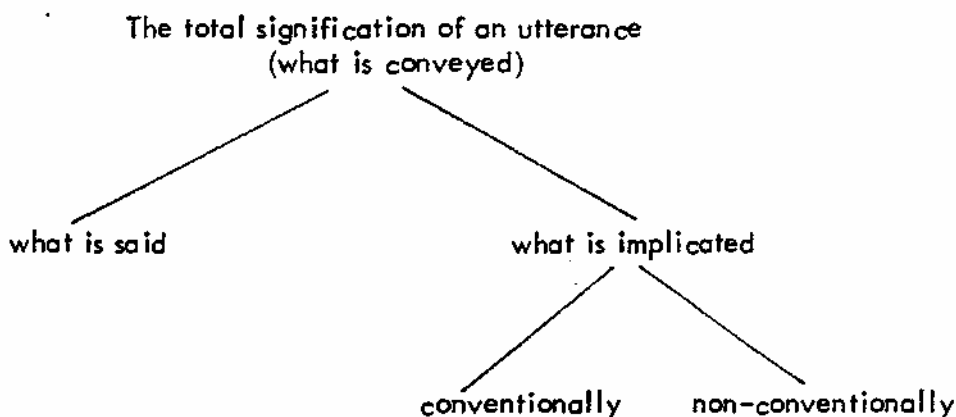
According to his account, while conventional implicatures derive from the conventional meaning of the lexical items used, they are not part of what is 'said', i.e. the logical content that determines the truth conditions of the sentence. They comprise those aspects of the meaning of words that are non- truth-conditional:

In some cases the conventional meaning of the words used will determine what is implicated, besides helping to determine what is said.

(Grice, 1975, p.44)

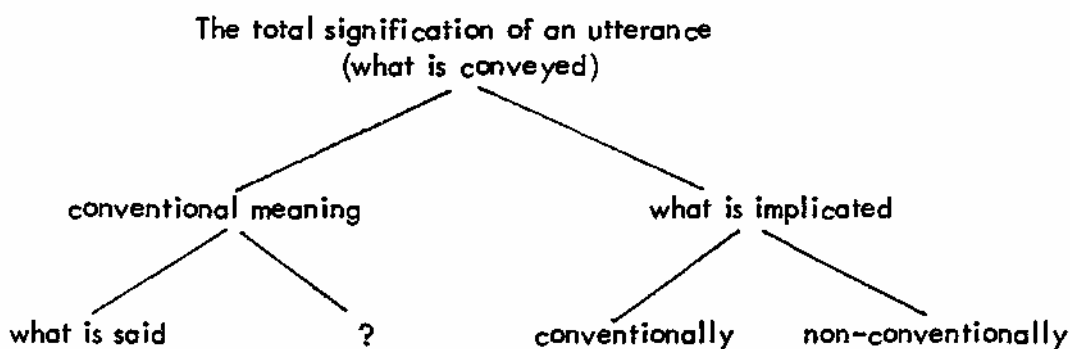
However, it should be remarked in passing that what is claimed in this quotation does not seem to be in line with Grice's account of conventional implicatures elsewhere. (See Grice, 1978, p. 113). This could be represented in a tree diagram as follows:

Figure 2



If we want to bring in a reference to the conventional meaning of an utterance, then the tree diagram would be as in figure 3:

Figure 3

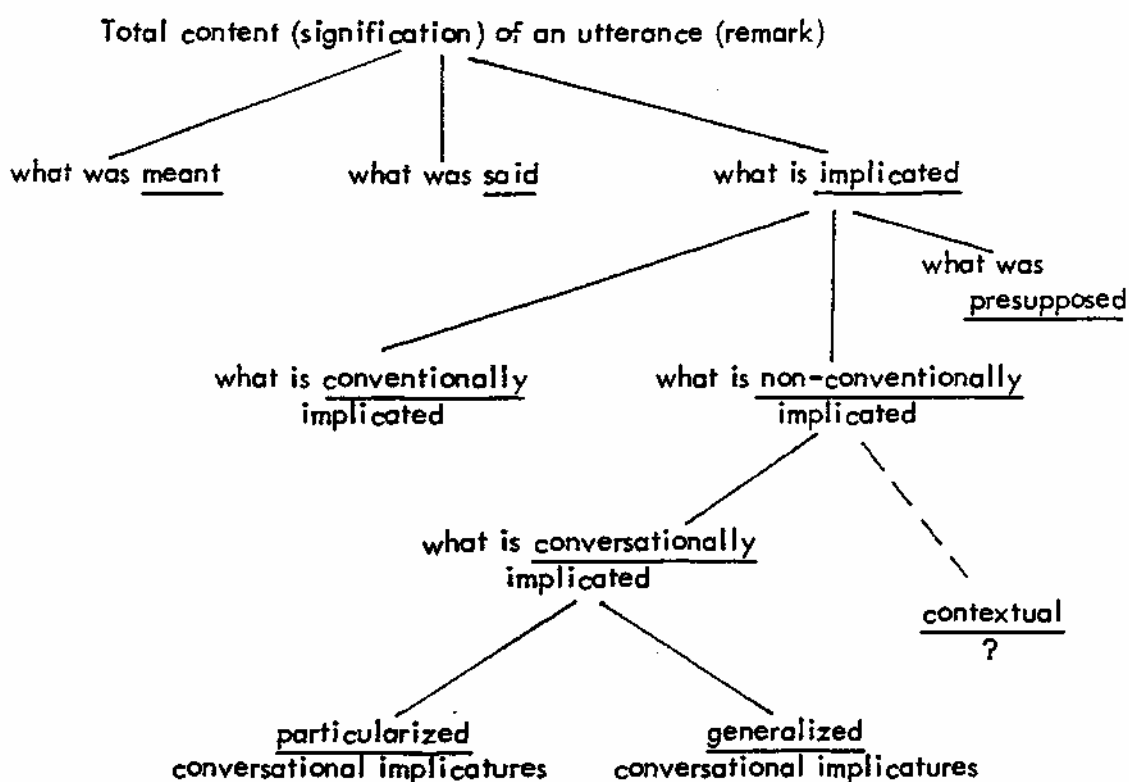


In both diagrams, however, it is not clear if there is any interrelation, let alone a close one, between the conventional meaning of the utterance and what is conventionally implicated or, assuming that there is such an interrelation, how it is to be represented. By contrast, what the diagram shows is that the conventional meanings of the words of the utterance do not have a direct bearing, as the system assumes, on what is conventionally implicated. The claim, however, is that the

conventional meaning of the words determines what is conventionally implicated, and this connection must be represented in a tree diagram by way of a dominating relation.

R. Harnish, 1977, offers a similar diagram in which, again, 'what is meant' and 'what is said' do not seem to bear any determining relation to what is conventionally implicated, though he notes that his schematization, figure 4, is meant to be only suggestive.

Figure 4



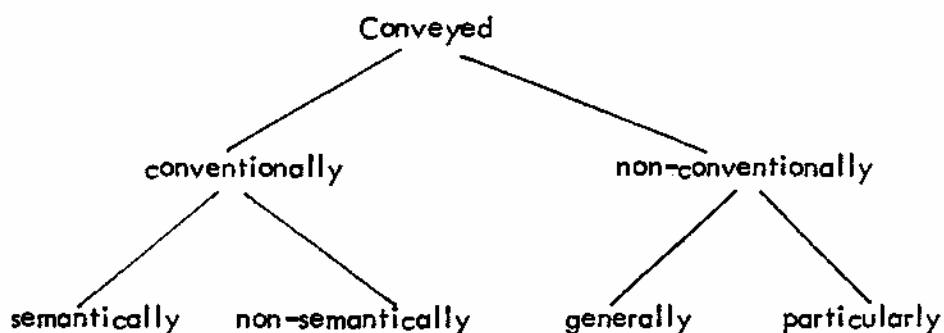
(*ibid.*, p.331)

Moreover, in his diagram, what is said does not seem to be part of what is meant as is the case in Grice's theory. Neither is what is conventionally implicated represented as being dominated by what is meant.



Sadock, 1978, on the other hand, rejects a tree diagram along these lines, and prefers an altered version, as in figure 5, "because of the close similarity between what is said and what is conventionally implicated, and because of the similarity between conversational and  $\eta$  on conversational, non-conventional implicature".

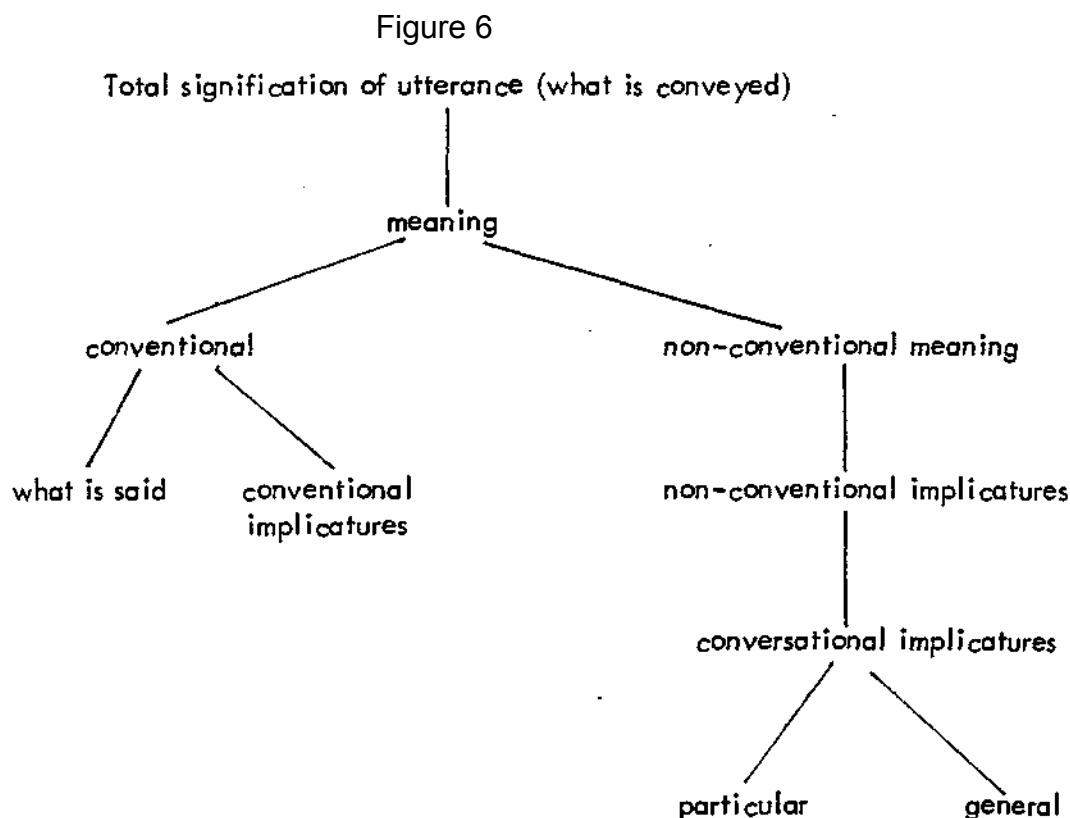
Figure 5



(*ibid.*, p.284)

In this schematization the crucial relationship between the conventional meaning of the words and what is conventionally implicated is brought out. Although Sadock does not make any further comments, it is quite clear that the conventional implicatures would belong to what is conventionally non- semantically conveyed in an utterance.

Another diagram along lines suggested in Grice's account again (1978, p.113) would look like the one offered in Sadock, 1978.



In this schematization conversational implicatures are seen as dominated by the parent node of non-conventional meaning. However this diagram is inconsistent with figure 2, which again is derived from Grice, 1978, as is clear below:

I wish to make [a distinction] within the total signification of a remark: a distinction between what the speaker has said ... and what he has 'implicated' (e.g. implied, indicated, suggested, etc.), taking into account the fact that what he has implicated maybe either conventionally implicated (implicated by virtue of the meaning of some word or phrase which he has used) or non-conventionally implicated (in which case the specification of the implicature falls outside the specification of the conventional meaning of the words used).

(p.54)

In so far as 'but' and 'therefore' are concerned, Grice suggests that they are formalisable by means of the logical constant '&' on the assumption that the  $\eta$  on-truth-functional aspects of their meanings are accounted for in terms of implicatures. As regards 'therefore', Grice, 1975, gives the following account:

If I say (smugly) "He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave", I have certainly committed myself, by virtue of the meaning of my words, to its being the case that his being brave is a consequence of (follows from) his being an Englishman. But while I have said that he is an Englishman, and said that he is brave, I do not want to say that I have said (in the favored sense) that it follows from his being an Englishman that he is brave, though I have certainly indicated, and so implicated, that this is so.

(pp.44-45)

He goes on to say that implicatures of this kind are conventional, apparently, because they are closely related to what is said. They are a regular feature of what is said in the sense that what is conventionally implicated cannot be intelligibly contradicted. Were one, for example, to utter: "He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave though I do not think there is any causal connection between the two", he would, no doubt, leave his audience mystified. However, Grice wants to claim, although they cannot be intelligibly contradicted, such an explicit cancellation would fall short of rendering the utterance false were it the case that, indeed, he was English and brave.

He therefore regards the utterance of (3),

(3) He is an Englishman; he is therefore brave,

as the utterance of two sentences conjunctively connected with the connective '&':

(4) p&q

Thus the utterance of (3) can be written as (5):

(5) He is English & He is brave.<sup>3</sup>

In other words Grice claims that (3) should be regarded as a conjunction, i.e. a truth-functional compound statement in which '&' is a truth-functional connective. Therefore, the truth-conditions of (3) should be equivalent to the truth-conditions of (5), which are represented in the following truth-table:

p	&	q
t	t	t
t	f	f
f	f	t
f	f	f

As for the meaning of consequentiality that is conveyed by 'therefore', Grice wants to claim that it is a matter of conventional implicatures, i.e. that it does not play any role in the determination of the truth-value of the utterance.

### 1.3 The enthymematic form of Grice's example of 'therefore'

However for such a claim to be validly made, it must not be the case that the truth or falsity of one conjunct will affect the truth-value of the other; that is, the truth-values of the two connects must be independently determined, if Grice's system of conventional implicatures is to be salvaged. As Quine, 1952, put it, "the logical connectives by which components are joined in compounds must be thought of as insulating each component from whatever influences its neighbors might have upon its meaning" (p.49). Moreover, the contents of one of the two connects must not be inferable on the basis of the contents of the other (see below). Our grounds for asserting one conjunct must not be our belief in the truth of the other; i.e. the reason for asserting q must not lie in our belief that p is true.

We will now proceed to examine Grice's example (3) of conventional Implicature, which is repeated here for convenience:

(3) He is an Englishman, he is therefore brave.

Grice holds that the semantics of (3) are accountable for within the framework of formal logic with the proviso that what is taken to have been asserted are the propositions that he is an Englishman and that he is brave. To be able to do that, however, any logical connection between the two conjuncts should be dispensed with in a formal semantics. What this requirement entails is that the proposition 'he is brave' should not be assertible in virtue of the assertibility of the proposition 'he is an Englishman'.

The first thing that comes to notice in (3) is that it has the form of an informal argument which is elliptically formulated<sup>4</sup>; (3) is a 'hidden' syllogistic argument whose form is that of an enthymeme, i.e. an argument with one of its two premises suppressed. Although we often use categorical syllogisms in everyday discourse, it is useful to remember that they are very rarely explicitly stated in their complete form. More often, what can be 'understood' without being explicitly expressed can be left out. It is then left to the hearer to supply the assumed premise that was left by the speaker unexpressed, and on the basis of which the argument will be comprehended.

The Enthymeme must consist of few propositions, fewer often than those which make up the normal syllogism. For if any of these propositions is a familiar fact, there is no need even to mention it; the hearer adds it himself. Thus, to show that Dorieus has been victor in a contest for which the prize is a crown, it is enough to say "For he has been victor in the Olympic games", without adding "And in the Olympic games the prize is a crown", a fact which everybody knows.

... we must not carry its reasoning too far back, or the length of our argument will cause obscurity: nor must we put in all the steps that lead to our conclusion, or we shall waste words in saying what is manifest.

(Aristotle's Rhetoric, 1357a16, 1395b25, quoted in C. L. Hamblin Fallacies, 1970, p.71)

All wood et al., 1977, note that, in everyday speech, premises from which

conclusions are drawn in reasonings may be left unexpressed. They add that such hidden premises can be viewed as background knowledge shared by speaker and listener. It is not evident, though, that this is indisputably the case. It is arguable whether what is left unexpressed is viewed as background knowledge shared by both or all participants in a conversation, or whether it is not more accurate to say that it is so regarded by the speaker alone.<sup>5</sup> In fairness to Allwood *et al.*, however, it should be noted that what seems to be the case is that the premises that are not commonly stated, but assumed, are statements of great generality or laws or quasi-law statements. In so far as such general statements are concerned, it can be justifiably claimed that they can be regarded as background knowledge shared by both speaker and listener. It should be remarked, though, that the degree of the probability of 'sharedness' is inversely proportional to the degree of the probabilistic nature of the statement that constitutes the assumed premise. In any case it is quite clear in the example at issue that the premise that is left unexpressed, but on the assumption of which the utterance of (3) is intelligible, is (6):

(6) All Englishmen are brave<sup>6</sup>.

#### 1.4 Two interpretations of the example

##### 1.4.1 Explanatory interpretations

It is essential here to make clear what the utterance of (3) may constitute. It may be uttered as an argument, but it may equally well be uttered as an explanation. In the latter case, the proposition 'he is brave', is viewed as a well known and established fact, whose truth is taken for granted. 'He is brave' comprises the explanandum for which an explanation is sought. What the speaker does in this case is to propose a causal connection between two factual (true) states of affairs. The speaker asserts that he is an Englishman and that he is brave and he, in addition, suggests that there is a causal connection between the truth of the two propositions. The truth of both propositions is regarded as well established, and what is suggested is that p, 'he is an Englishman',

can be seen as the grounds explaining q, 'he is brave': 'p', therefore a is very similar to 'q' because pj.

The intelligibility of this utterance as an explanation, again, depends on the assumption of the general statement (6) as in the case of arguments. Ayer, 1972, notes that every causal statement, to be acceptable, should be backed by some true generalization. Quine and Ullian, 1970, point out that in explanations, as in arguments, we do not render explicit what we think is well-known to our audience:

We leave the obvious unstated. But an obvious premise, even if unstated, may still be part of an argument; and so may an unstated belief constitute part of an explanation.

(Ch. VIII)<sup>7</sup>

Proposition (6) which is assumed to be 'in the mind' of the speaker, and the proposition 'he is an Englishman' are not put forward as evidence or grounds\* for inferring the proposition 'he is brave'. Rather these two propositions are offered as the proposed explanation of a factual state of affairs, or of what is presumed to be an unproblematic truth.

Now, if we are to look on the second clause of (3) as the explanandum, then (3) can be viewed as an implication. In seeking to establish the explanatory significance of the antecedent for the latter clause, we cannot invoke a universal law to the effect that all Englishmen are invariably brave. What we can appeal to is, at best, a generalisation whose content is roughly that of (6).

Seen in this light (6) may be a general statement<sup>8</sup> or even be attributed the lofty status of a 'probabilistic-statistical' law<sup>9</sup> which renders the explanation probabilistic in character. Hempel, 1968, notes that psychological generalizations maybe understood as expressing "not strict uniformities, but strong tendencies, which might be formulated by means of rough probability statements" (p.66). Granted, then, that the deducibility requirement is not

o sine qua non for all explanations, that is, is not a necessary condition, it follows that we can offer explanations whose truth or falsity will not depend on their deducibility from true premises. The premises can be true and yet the explanation may be false. Hospers, 1956, notes that "the deductive requirement will let good and bad explanations alike slip through like water through a sieve". It may be the case, then, that while all propositions in an explanation, both premises and conclusion, can be true, there may be no causal connection between the corresponding states of affairs. Ayer, 1972, notes that "every causal statement could be represented as offering an explanation of the truth of one proposition in terms of the truth of another" (P. 134).

The construal of (3) along these lines lends support to Grice's account of conventional implicatures<sup>10</sup>. In uttering (3), Grice holds, a speaker implicates that there is a causal connection<sup>11</sup> between the two states of affairs; should it, however, turn out that this causal connection did not hold, and yet the two propositions were true then, so the argument goes, it can be justifiably claimed that the whole utterance could still be true; "p & q" may be true, in spite of the falsity of 'q because p".

However there still seems to be a problem facing this account. In a context in which (3) is uttered as an explanation of the true proposition 'He is brave', and in which it is a well known fact, both to the utterer of (3), and to the hearer, that 'he' is an Englishman, the sole purpose of uttering (3) then is to assert a connection that holds between them; i.e. the intention of the speaker is not merely to reiterate two propositions whose truth is presumed to be well attested, and known to be so, to the hearer; but, rather, to give an account of a connection that is presumed to obtain between them. Yet, an account of such an utterance within Grice's framework is stripped of such aspects of meaning. Any intentionality on the speaker's part that constitutes the very purpose of the utterance is liable to be relegated to the feeble status of fortuitous conventional implicatures which have no real import in a semantic theory.



### 1.4.2 Inferential interpretation

As we have seen, 'p, therefore q' can express either an explanation or an argument<sup>12</sup>; (3) is meant and construed as an argument, if there is no independent evidence to the effect that he is brave, but the premises of the argument provide evidence for the truth of its conclusion. As Copi, 1968, notes, explanation and inference are closely related in so far as they are "the same process regarded from opposite points of view" (p. 376). Given the expressed premise 'He is an Englishman' and the assumed major premise 'All Englishmen are brave', the conclusion 'He is brave' can be logically inferred. This conclusion, in turn, can be regarded as adequately explained by the premises of the argument provided that they are true. However, in explanations the point of departure is a statement whose truth is established, a problematic or puzzling truth, if you will, or a given fact to be explained. This is a crucial difference. It can be justifiably claimed that this truth has been explained, if a set of premises has been found from which the true statement can be logically inferred.

In an argument, on the other hand, we assert a set of propositions to be true, and then these propositions are presented as grounds for accepting the truth of a further proposition. The truth of the premises provides the reason for believing the conclusion to be true in the sense of 'p, ∴. I infer that q'. It follows, therefore, that the proposition 'He is brave' is assertible in virtue of the truth of the propositions 'He is an Englishman' and "All Englishmen are brave'.

The proposition 'He is brave' is inferred from the other two propositions, one stated and the other assumed<sup>13</sup>.

Put rather schematically, as an argument, (3),

(3) He is an Englishman, he is therefore brave,

can be represented as 'because p, q', i.e. as (7),

(7) Because he is an Englishman, he is brave<sup>14</sup>,

as against 'q because p', i.e. (8),

(8) He is brave because he is an Englishman<sup>15</sup>,

whenever it (3) expresses an explanation.

Evidently, what we have in mind here is Halliday's, 1967, characterization of 'theme', which is that part of the clause, which has initial position (but see Firbas, 1962, 1964) and may coincide, as in (7) and (8), with the 'given'. The 'theme' is selected by the speaker as a meaningful option. Therefore, whether the speaker utters (7) or (8), is not considered to be a random event, but, rather, the result of a purposeful selection, which is in most cases conditioned by what is given in the situation (for example, his Englishness, or his bravery, in this case), and what the speaker wants to say about it ('theme').

It may be noticed that (7) sounds rather odd. This may be due to the fact that the 'because' clause in (7) states the basis for the inference, and, as Davison, 1970, noted, 'because' is distinctly odd in the premise reading, in which intention or volition is absent" (p. 108).<sup>16</sup> In contrast, the 'because' clause in (8), states the motivation for the assertion, and constitutes an explanatory account in this case. The distinction between the inferential and the explanatory reading is brought out clearly, if 'since' is substituted for 'because' in the inferential case, as in (9):

(9) Since he is an Englishman, he is brave.

To return to our argument, after this digression, the question of the truth or falsity of this proposition, 'He is therefore brave', does not arise, except as a direct consequence of the assertibility of the premises.

Therefore the assignment of the truth-value of 'p, therefore a/ by means of the logical constant '&', i.e. in the form of the conjunction, 'p & q', does not seem to be plausible in the case of arguments, since the truth-value of 'p,

therefore  $q$ ' in this case, depends not only on the truth-values of the two propositions,  $p$  and  $q$ , but also upon whether  $p$  constitutes adequate grounds for asserting  $q$ <sup>17</sup>.

Taking into account, however, that valid deductions are non-ampliative, i.e. that their conclusions are implied by their premises, and that nothing new is given in the conclusion, it could be argued in support of Grice's thesis that the fact that the conclusion is inferred from the premises is of no significance. If the conclusion follows logically from the premises used or assumed, and the premises are true, then so is the conclusion. In this case, therefore, we can see no warrant for rejecting the claim that true premises invariably provide adequate grounds for asserting the conclusion to be also true. The conclusion then is a truth validly deduced and as such it is always true given that the premises are true, i.e. it is entailed by the premises. It therefore is of no importance, in determining the truth-value of ' $p$ , therefore  $q$ ', whether  $p$  constitutes adequate grounds for  $q$  since every time  $p$  is true, in conjunction with the truth of the major premise, so is  $q$ .

### 1.5 Problems for a truth-functional account of 'therefore'

However attractive this argument may sound, it is nevertheless obvious that it is ill-founded. It is immediately recognized that (6), in spite of its form, is neither an analytic statement, nor a law. It is a general statement, but not so obviously 'factual', that its truth or falsity could be readily determined by appeal to observation or experiment.

Even so, the statement 'All Englishmen are brave', taken to refer to every single Englishman, is surely not true. Therefore, although our argument is valid, it can never be sound in this formulation (S. Haack, 1978)<sup>18</sup>. Clearly what is assumed is not the universal proposition 'All Englishmen are brave', but the generalization 'Englishmen are brave'<sup>1</sup> or 'Most Englishmen are brave'. As Gray, 1977, would put it, "a generalization can absorb exceptions; an unequivocal, all-inclusive assertion cannot" (p.136).

Dijk, 1977, noticing that general connected statements do not necessarily hold universally, introduces a new quantifier, '(Mx = for most  $x$  (- -))', or a system of relative probabilities 'Pr (p/q)', giving the probability of p, given q, in order to restrict the domain of the general statement; he writes,

We may preserve the general statements but restrict their validity to most possible worlds/situations. Thus in case two facts are causally related, the sentence (both connects) must be true in the actual world, and in 'most physically possible alternatives to  $\emptyset$ '.

(p. 49)

Moreover, Ayer, 1972, holds that most of the generalisations on which our reasoning about human conduct depends are statements of a weaker type, stating tendencies rather than universal propositions. He goes on to add:

Generalisations of this weaker type raise a special problem. If p and q are directly connected by a universal proposition r, p and r will jointly entail q. There will therefore be no question but that if we are justified in accepting p and r, we are justified in accepting q. But if r is only a statement of tendency, the entailment does not hold.

(Ch. 3, p.61)

Indeed, it is argued here, with regard to (3) uttered as an argument, that, given that we know that p, and given that q has not been observed, our ground for asserting (our belief) that q consists in the assumption of the truth of p and r. But if r is a statement of tendency or a generalisation of restricted validity, then it is quite clear that we are not in a position to claim that q is true. In any case, since q is inferred from p we do not have a p and q, whose truth values are independently known, from which we could compile the truth value of 'p & q'.

## 1.6 Conclusion

To conclude, (3) should be construed as being predictive or explanatory on the one hand and summative, on the other, by implication. The proposition

that a man is brave can be construed as an explanatory statement, i.e. as stating the cause of some action of his<sup>19</sup>; or as explaining some actions by their subsumption under a broad property of his or as manifestations of it. In this case you explain an action by appeal to a trait of character.

However 'He is brave' can be regarded as a predictive statement, in that it can be seen not as a categorical statement, but as a hypothetical one. 'Brave' is a dispositional predicate that attributes a certain tendency to its subject to act in a certain way. Indeed Ryle would characterise it as 'determinable dispositional'. To say that somebody is brave, in this case, is to make a hypothetical statement, or a prediction. Just as if you were to say that were there a call for it, or should the need arise, he would be prone to conduct himself bravely. Hartnack, 1965, reiterating Ryle's thesis<sup>20</sup>, notes that most statements describing personal traits, tendencies, dispositions, etc., are hypothetical statements.

In trying to determine the truth-value of (3) seen in this light, we shift the problem to the assumed general statement. If the assumed statement is (6), and it is true, and the first clause of (3) is as well, then so is the second clause. But (6) is not what is assumed; rather, it is the generalisation 'Englishmen tend to be brave'. Therefore, we are saddled — as we would be on either account — with the problem of specifying the truth-value of the proposition 'He is brave' independently. If there are no independent grounds, however, for determining its truth-value other than our reliance on the truth-value of the preceding propositions, expressed or assumed, and if, granted that they are true, the preceding propositions can, at best, only 'probabilify'<sup>21</sup> the truth of the further proposition 'He is brave', then we come upon a difficulty which Grice's account is not well equipped to handle.

The difficulty that an inferential use of 'p, therefore q' incurs for Grice's account, is brought out clearly in the following quotation from Brown, 1955, who argues that it is misleading to express an inference in the formulation 'p, therefore q':<sup>22</sup>

Staring at this form of words [p, therefore q] one might think it obvious that p and q stood for propositions or "statements and that 'therefore' was the mark of the transition from one proposition to another in which the inference consisted. The p and q appear to be on an equal footing, but we know that an inference cannot be either a proposition or two propositions, so there is nowhere for the inference to make its home except half-way between, as the passage from one to the other. · But the q must stand not for a proposition but for the inference that q.

(p.358)

(3) is summative by implication in as far as it hints at an inductive inference which is presumed to have been arrived at by appeal to our past experience. From one point of view, 'therefore' is employed to assert, or infer, that the proposition 'He is brave' is assertible, or inferable (cf. Ryle, 1971) by virtue of some other proposition, p, i.e. 'He is an Englishman', or a set of propositions, r, s, for instance, which constitute our evidential grounds for q. What is taken for granted on this view is that our evidential grounds are true or are believed to be true.

Indeed, it might be argued, it is more apt to claim that what is implicated here is the general statement that is left out and on the assumption of which the utterance of (3) is intelligible. The utterance of (3) forces the hearer to a backward reasoning, an "inverted deduction" process<sup>23</sup>, which will take him back to a premise that will necessarily imply the conclusion. Alternatively, it may be argued, the utterance of (3) forces the hearer to make a hypothesis which will constitute an inductive guess. It might be controversial, however, whether what is left unexpressed can be held to be implied, implicated, pre-supposed or implicitly asserted.

## 2. 'BUT' AND 'THEREFORE' CONSIDERED

### 2.1 Dissimilarities of conventional implicata

We would now like to take issue with Grice on yet another score. His two paradigm cases of conventional implicature, 'but' and 'therefore', do not receive uniform treatment, as would be required of instances of the same phenomenon. To be more specific, with regard to 'but' he says that there is a conventional implicature of a contrast between poverty and honesty, or between her poverty and her honesty; (cf. section 2.3, e.g. (27)).

First it should be noticed that if it is maintained that the contrast is made between her poverty and her honesty, (i.e. 'p but q', p contrasts with q, or, there is a contrast between p and c) then the lexical item 'but' is seen as capable of generating conventional implicatures operating within the confines of the uttered sentence, that is, what is said. If, on the other hand, it is argued that the contrast implicated is between poverty and honesty in general then the conventional implicature is generated by appeal to a general statement, and is therefore seen as operating outside the boundaries of what is actually uttered. This is a significant difference that should not go unnoticed as it does both by Grice and Harnish. Harnish, 1977, says that we have the conventional implicature of:

p but q: p contrasts with q,

but he then goes on to generalize the implicature beyond the confines of what is said:

If one says that Jackie is wealthy, but a brunet, one implies a contrast between wealth and hair color.

(p.339)

On the other hand, in his example of 'therefore', 'He is an Englishman; he is therefore brave', Grice views the conventional implicature as operating within the confines of what is said. He does not seem to give credit to the fact that to be able to intelligibly claim that there is Q conventional implicature, such that the

content of the second clause follows from the content of the first, you are implicitly relying on the felicitous invocation of a suppressed statement<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, whereas in the ‘but’ example this suppressed general statement is brought out in the shape of conventional implicatures, i.e. this general statement constitutes what is conventionally implicated, this does not seem to be the case with ‘therefore’. The conventional implicature, in this case, as explicated by Grice, does not bring out any assumed general statement. Yet it must be acknowledged that it is because of the accepted validity of this premise that the alleged conventional implicature is operative in this case. The fact remains that what are characterized as implicated meanings in each case seem to be different linguistic facts.

## 2.2 Dissimilarities: conventional implicatures and negation

Another point of divergence between the behaviour of ‘but’ and ‘therefore’ is noticed when they are within the scope of negation. It is reasonable to assume that the negative operator will not negate the conventional implicatures, but rather the semantic (truth-functional) content of the sentence that falls within its scope.

Now consider what is negated in  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$ , i.e. in (10):

(10) It is not true that she is poor but she is honest.

To be in a position to say that the non-truth-functional meaning of ‘but’ is implicated and not asserted, it must be the case that what is negated in  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$  be the conjunction ( $p$  and  $q$ ); that is, any of the two conjuncts or both. It cannot be the case that what is negated here be just the contrastive relation between the two conjuncts,  $p$  and  $q$ , if the claim is that this contrastive relation is implicated and not asserted.

Indeed this condition seems to be met in connection with ‘but’. (10) cannot be uttered with the purpose of just denying the implication. Dascal and Katriel, 1977, say that, although it is not at all clear what is denied in  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$ , the most natural interpretation in most cases of such an overall negation is that what is denied is one of the two conjuncts; that is,  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$  is treated as the negation of the



conjunction (p and q). This is brought out clearly in the following exchange:

A: She is poor but honest.

B: That's not true.

B has thereby committed himself to the falsity of 'p and q', and not to the falsity of the conventional implicature purportedly conveyed by A's utterance. B may decide to continue by uttering any of the following:

B: That's not true. She is not at all poor.

She is not honest.

She is neither poor nor honest.

However, he cannot continue as in (11):

(11) That's not true. There's no contrast between poverty and honesty,

and convey thereby that he otherwise accepts the statement. Moreover, by accepting A's utterance as true, B is not thereby committing himself to the truth or falsity of the implicature.

In our view  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$ , i.e. (10), sounds odd<sup>2</sup> just because the contrastive meaning of 'but' cannot be denied by it. It is therefore pointless to expend the extra effort required by uttering  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$ , if what you want to deny is just p or q. On the other hand, if you intend to deny both conjuncts of 'p but q', again in conformity with the principle of economy or 'least effort'<sup>3</sup> you deny them in the conjunctive form  $\neg(p \text{ and } q)$ , and not by uttering  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$ , unless such a denial is a reflex utterance given a semi-quotation interpretation: "It is not true that 'She is poor but honest.'"

This is indirect confirmation of the fact that the contrastive meaning of 'but' cannot be denied in formulations like  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$ , i.e. inexplicitly, or without being spelt out. As regards the principle of economy or 'least effort', it can be operative not only linguistically, but also conceptually, as in the case in point. That is, if the use of 'but' in a specific case does not, or cannot, result in a full utilization of all its meaning aspects — i.e. if significant meaning aspects are rendered redundant,

and only its conjunctive meaning is operative — then use another lexical item, if such an item exists, whose meaning specification is such, that it will convey just those meaning aspects, and no more than those, that the use of 'but' would convey in this case. In the case in question 'but' can only convey the conjunctive aspects of its meaning, and not its contrastive ones. Therefore it is more economical and less wasteful to use 'and', whose meaning is specified as conjunctive in, at least, the majority of the cases of its use.

However, consider a point made by Kempson, 1975, that may suggest that a non-truth-functional analysis of the-implicature generated by 'but' is problematic. The point concerns the contrast effected by 'but' between positive and negative conjuncts. Her example is the following:

(12) It's not true that John hit Bill but Bill didn't hit John — Bill did hit John.

On the grounds that the element of contrast between the two conjuncts (positive- negative) is denied, she poses the question whether, even this implicature is not after all truth-conditional, since it is included within the scope of negation. She writes:

Can we say in this case, on the ground that the element of contrast between the conjuncts (positive-negative) is denied, that the implication of contrast is included within the scope of negation? If we can, then this suggests that even this implication is after all truth-conditional. If not, then it is not.

(ibid., p.218)

However, it is arguable whether this observation holds only for cases in which the contrast is made between a positive and a negative conjunct. It may have more general validity. Indeed it seems to depend on whether the contrast is effected by reference to a general statement that is felicitously invoked to prop up the contrast made within the utterance; in this case the uttered sentence is only an instantiation of the general statement, as seems to be the case with 'She is poor

but honest'. Kempson's observation seems to hold for cases in which no such general statements are involved, but in which the contrast is made on the basis of lexical items that can be contrasted, or on 'local' inferences drawn from one of the two conjuncts and germane to the discourse in hand. Consider two examples:

(13) Bill is short but Robin is tall.

(13a) It's not true that Bill is short but Robin is tall. Robin is not taller than Bill.

(14) He went to see Aruna but her brother was there.

(14a) It's not true that he went to see Aruna but her brother was there. Her brother wasn't there. He was in London.

Notice that in both (13a) and (14a), by denying the second conjunct, you are thereby eliminating an element on which the contrast depends. This is illustrated by (15) and (16) below:

(15) ?Bill is short but Robin is short. <sup>4</sup>

(16) ?He went to see Aruna but her brother wasn't there.

Is all this then conducive to the supposition made by Kempson that the negative operator affects the contrastive meaning as well as the truth-functional meaning of 'but'? But if this is so, how can it be claimed that the contrastiveness of 'but' is not part of the truth-functional meaning of 'but'?

However, in both (13a) and (14a) the selection of a specific intonation contour seems to play a significant role. Indeed, if the elements 'Robin' in (13d) and 'brother' in (14a) are not heavily stressed it does not seem to be at all natural to deny (13) and (14) by uttering (13a) and (14a) respectively. Rather, it is more acceptable to negate them by denying the corresponding conjunction of the form 'p & q' — and this seems to follow from our discussion above — than by denying the conjunction of the form 'p but q'. If this is so, it seems that this will constitute counter-evidence to the above supposition made by Kempson.

Further, by stressing the items 'Robin' and 'brother' it is clear that you 'reiterate' a contrast that has already been made. That is, the denial of 'p but a/ in the formulation of -(p but q) has a semi-quotational reading, or is a reflex reading of the hearer's attitude (cf. Wilson, 1975, p. 119).

Whatever the case may be, it is evident that what is negated in -(p but q) is not - at least - just what Grice wants to call the conventional implicatures generated by 'but'; and this should suffice for the purposes of our argument.

Let us now consider 'therefore' when this is included in the scope of negation. Consider (17):

(17) -(p & therefore q).

(18) It is not true that he is an Englishman and therefore brave.

To be in a position to maintain that the meaning of consequentially is only implicated, and not asserted, there must be a condition that when 'therefore' lies within the negative operator this meaning be not denied. If this is so it must necessarily be the case that the negative operator negates the conjunction, i.e. at least one of the two conjuncts. It is a requirement that what is negated in - (p and therefore q) be the conjunction 'p&q'.

However, it is evident that this need not be the case. One may negate just this meaning of consequentiality that is allegedly conventionally implicated by the use of 'therefore', and nothing else. Consider (20) as a rejoinder to (19):

(19) He is an Englishman; he is therefore brave.

(20) That's not true. Why should you think that he is brave because he happens to be an Englishman? He is brave because he is a philosopher.<sup>5</sup>

What is in effect rejected in (20), by negating the relation of consequentiality between the two conjuncts, is the general statement that is appealed to, to buttress this relation of consequentially. This is done via the negation of (19). But as Harnish, 1977,<sup>6</sup> rightly says with regard to a similar example (21),

(21) He is a philosopher, he is, therefore, brave,<sup>7</sup>

...[ to ] reject the statement above as false,<sup>8</sup> it would have to be the case that what was said comprises the notion of his being a philosopher providing grounds for thinking him to be brave, because the other two clauses are true.

(ibid., p.339)

In actuality, however, when Harnish says that,

the reason we are willing to say he is brave has nothing at all to do with his being a philosopher, but rather with his work in the Resistance,

(p. 339)

he hints at the assumed general proposition that relates the state of being a philosopher with the personal trait of bravery. What is denied by calling the statement false, when we accept as true both the propositions that he is a philosopher, and that he is brave, is the relation of consequentiality that is asserted to hold between the two propositions, and hence the truth of this general proposition. What is denied by (22),

(22) It's false, he's not brave because he's English but because of his work in the Resistance,

is this relation of consequentiality, and by this means a law-like proposition of the form  $(x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)$ . In its stead it is proposed that his work in the Resistance is a sufficient evidential reason for warranting the assertion that he is brave. Instead of accepting the above general proposition, which explains a trait of character as causally sustained by another property of his, i.e. that he is brave because he is English, what is proposed is (23):

(23) He worked in the Resistance and his work there satisfies the proposition that whenever the situation calls for brave conduct he responds positively.

(23) makes a characterological attribution to an individual, which explains certain

actions. As Quine and Ullian, 1970, put it:

It 'is a sad fact about our views of others ... that we are inclined to adopt in such a case just the explanation that fits our prejudices.

(Ch. viii)

In denying that 'He is a philosopher, he is therefore brave' is true, we are actually denying — if it is well known that both clauses are true — that either his being a philosopher is a sufficient condition for his being brave, or that his being brave is a necessary condition for his being a philosopher. In asserting the proposition 'He worked in the Resistance; he is therefore brave', what we are asserting is that his being brave is a necessary condition for his work in the Resistance, or that his work in the Resistance is a sufficient reason for the ascription of the quality of bravery.

The purpose of this discussion has been to illustrate the point that it is possible to deny just the alleged conventional implicature arising from the use of 'therefore' in (18). Besides, more is involved in the use of 'therefore' than just the generation of the alleged conventional implicature that the second conjunct follows from the first. It must be noted that indeed the two utterances,

He is a philosopher, he is therefore brave,

He worked in the Resistance, he is therefore brave,

are not really mutually exclusive — identity of referents assumed — as is clear in the following exchange:

A: Why did he work in the Resistance?

B: Well, he's a philosopher, he is therefore brave.

If indeed what we understand by 'therefore' in (24), (24) He is an Englishman, he is therefore brave,

is only conventionally implicated and not part of the semantic meaning of the sentence, then it should be possible to evaluate it, i.e. for example, accept the

two propositions as true and then reject the implications in a separate evaluation. In other words, it should be possible to reply to (24) by uttering (25):

(25) That's true. But I don't agree that he is brave because he is an Englishman.

Besides, it should be possible to reply to (24) by (26):

(26) That's true,

without thereby committing yourself to accepting the conventional implicature as well. However, we have seen that the putative implicature of 'therefore' is so central to the sum total of what is conveyed by (24), that we tend to reject it as false, as Harnish rightly noticed, on the grounds that we do not happen to agree with this implicature. The upshot of all this is that a truth-value assignment to (24), irrespective of what is putatively conventionally implicated by 'therefore', does not seem plausible.

### 2.2.1 Conclusion

It has been shown, therefore, that, in negating sentences conjoined with 'but', it is the conjunction that is negated, and not the conventional implicature, i.e. the contrastive meaning of 'but'. There have been found no grounds for accepting (A) with regard to negating 'but' sentences.

- (A)(i) The 'contrastive' meaning of 'p but q' is denied; and
- (ii) neither p nor q is denied.

Moreover, in 'denying' the contrastive -meaning, a conjunct is denied, thereby undermining the basis of the contrast. By contrast, in the case of negating 'therefore' sentences, there have been found grounds for accepting (B), the equivalent of (A) in the case of 'therefore'.

- (B)(i) The 'consequential' relation of 'p, therefore q' is denied; and
- (ii) neither p nor q is denied.

In conclusion, it seems rather implausible to claim that the non-truth- functional meanings of 'but' and 'therefore', what Grice dubbed conventional implicatures, can be regarded as manifestations of the same linguistic phenomenon.

### 2.3 Cancellability, detachability and conventional implicatures

Grice employs two tests on his examples of implicatures, those of the detachability and cancellability of the implicature. With regard to his paradigm example of conventional implicature,

(27) She is poor but she is honest,

he says that whilst the implicature is detachable, "the question whether ... the implication is cancellable is slightly more complex" (1967, p.92). Yet, he argues, the resultant utterance is not unintelligible. The main thrust of his argument that what is conveyed by 'but' is implicated is, however, that it leaves the truth-value of what is said conveniently unaffected. It is reasonable to expect, however, the same results to be obtained from an application of the same criteria to all instances of the same phenomenon. With this in mind, therefore, we will apply these two tests to both examples of conventional implicatures in what follows.

#### 2.3.1 Cancellability

We will now turn to the employment of the cancellability test first, and then to that of the detachability test, in connection with Grice's example, i.e. (24), which is repeated below for convenience:

(24) He is an Englishman, he is therefore brave. Applying the cancellability test first to (24) we get (28):

(28) He is an Englishman, he is therefore brave; though, of course, I do not mean to imply that there is any causal (or other) connection between the two.

We may not wish to "go so far as to say that his utterance was unintelligible", but



nevertheless it is not far from being pointless or absurd since an essential part of the purpose of the utterance is frustrated. One is inclined to say that part of ‘what was given’, as Strawson puts it, ‘is taken back again’; indeed, it can be argued that some sort of inconsistency is involved in the utterance of (28). For is it not contradicting oneself, if one conveys in a standard<sup>9</sup> way that one proposition follows from another, and then proceeds to deny it in the same breath as it were? But if some sort of (partial) contradiction is involved here, don’t we have to say that what is contradicted, or is inconsistent, must comprise part of what is said rather than part of what is implicated?

It would seem that (28) involves a contradiction of some sort. The contradiction in (28) lies between the assertion that the speaker does not mean to imply that there is any causal connection between the propositions made, that he is an Englishman and that he is brave, and the meaning of ‘therefore’. This contradiction does not follow from our knowledge of the world or of any such pragmatical factors — in that case we would not be talking about a contradiction — but is a direct consequence of our knowledge of the meaning of the word ‘therefore’.

Evidently the issue depends on the nature of the contradiction. If the contradiction is semantic, then what is contradicted must comprise part of what is said rather than what is implicated. In other words, if  $p$  semantically entails  $q$  then  $p \text{ and } \text{not } q$  is a contradiction in the sense that there is no possible world in which it is true.

If, on the other hand, the contradiction is pragmatic then it need not be part of what is said. If  $p$  pragmatically implies  $q$ , then ‘ $p$  but not  $q$ ’ is a contradiction only in the sense that asserting ‘not  $q$ ’ conflicts with an aim or purpose the speaker is supposed to have in asserting  $p$ . But ‘ $p$  and not  $q$ ’ could be true in some possible world.

What should be examined, therefore, is the nature of the contradiction involved. Let us consider (28a), instead of (28), as the cancellation of the

implicature in (24),

(28a) He is an Englishman and, he is therefore brave, but there is no connection between the two.

(28a) seems to be close to a semantic contradiction. What then about (28)? According to Grice, 1967, the vehicle of implication with regard to the parallel case of (27),

(27) She is poor but she is honest,

can be said to be either 'the speaker', or 'the words the speaker used'. Clearly, it does not make sense to ask whether Grice would like to claim that what is implicated in (24), is,

(a) that there is a connection between being English and being brave,  
or (b) that the speaker implicates that there is such a connection,

since the expression 'implicated' cannot be reiterated as in (b). By necessity, therefore, we conclude that what is implicated in (24) is (a). If, however, this is so, what form should the cancellation of the implication in (24) take? According to the conclusion reached, this cancellation would be as in (28a). This reasoning indicates that the contradiction involved in (28a) seems to be close to a semantic contradiction. If 'There is a connection between his Englishness and his bravery' is only an implicature of (24), then (28a) seems to be the correct form of words to use to deny one's commitment to the implicature. But (28) only has a use if (28a) is not a logical contradiction. So If (28a) is a logical contradiction (28) has not a use.

In this connection Kempson, 1975, says that conventional implicatures are not contradictable:

Conventional implicatures are ... those elements of meaning which are not truth-functional but which are not contradictable.

(p.145)

However, it is not evident what she means by that, because clearly they are contradictable. Presumably she means that they are not cancellable. With regard to 'but', for instance, Grice claims that "there is a sense in which we may say that it [the conventional implicature] is non-cancellable" (1967, p.92).

It is argued here, however, that cancellability of an implicature should not result in contradiction. If it does then the implicature is spurious, if the test is to be taken seriously.

Dascal and Katriel, 1977, on the other hand, argue that "it is clear that conventional implicatures are just as cancellable as conversational implicatures" (p. 151) but this remark is not only incorrect but uncritical. They base the Obviousness of their claim on the wrong assumption that "and" generates conventional implicatures, and as those are cancellable, so are the conventional implicatures generated by 'but'. However, Grice considers 'and' to be an example of a generalized conversational implicature, and Dascal and Katriel should be referred to his Urbana lectures, IV.

Moreover (28) cannot be construed as an argument (see 1.4.2): For if you intend to assert that  $q$  follows from  $p$ , then this should be stated rather than annulled. But in the event that this connection is annulled, it is very doubtful whether it can still be argued that what is said is left unaffected, as might be the case with 'but'. The main issue is that there is a causal (or other) connection between  $p$  and  $q$  in the case of 'therefore', and it seems clear that this connection is a much stronger relation, binding up  $p$  and  $q$  together, and making the one dependent on the other, than is the contrastive relation in the case of 'but', which indeed does not seem to affect the truth-value of the whole utterance.

Neither can (28) constitute an explanatory statement, since any causal (or other) connection is first stated or implicated only to be contradicted or cancelled within the bounds of the same utterance by the same speaker.

Indeed, one is left wondering why one who wants to assert just that 'p and q', i.e. the propositions that he is an Englishman and that he is brave, should go to such lengths to say what, it is claimed, is said in (28). Further, it can be argued that granting the acceptability of (28) is not in accordance with Grice's conversational principles as it necessarily clashes with his co-operative principle. Indeed, such an utterance violates almost every single maxim, and for no good reason.

It can be argued, however, in defence of Grice's thesis, that in spite of all its flaws, (28) is a true and intelligible utterance — in a given situation — and that it is of little significance for a truth-functional semantics, as envisaged by Grice, whether (28) is pointless or unacceptable or "ill-informed" as defined by G. Lakoff, 1971a, or what have you, as long as it is true. But it can be counterargued that the cleavage between a truth-functional semantics, as envisaged by Grice, and an account of the acceptability of utterances, can be so sharp and often unbridgable that the former account seems to lose its point. Further, if an utterance like (28), which is in breach of the co-operative principle, could be included in the semantics, it would have to be conceded that such a semantics could contain sentences that are virtually 'unemployable', so to speak, as they cannot be filtered in real conversation by the co-operative principle. The worrying point is that since truth-values are assigned to utterances in Grice's system, i.e. to a full identification of what is said, it follows that truth-valuation takes place not at an abstract level, but in real conversation where the co-operative principle is — latently or actively — in operation. This fact necessarily brings into conflict utterances like (28) with the co-operative principle, since the latter cannot 'take over' from the realm of truth-functional semantics and "put right", i.e. give an interpretation to, what is presumably only seemingly wrong with such utterances. The co-operative principle will be called into action in our effort to understand what was said.<sup>10</sup> The contradiction is obvious. The point at issue is that (28) cannot be filtered by the co-operative principle, that is, is

'unusable' in any conversational situation, and this is a direct consequence of the contradiction involved.'<sup>11</sup> The speaker's act in uttering (28) is self-defeating and certainly not in accordance with any Rationality principle. For the speaker at the same time undoes, 'unstates', part of what he does, states, in his utterance (see Hungerland, 1960, pp.254-55). Yet, (28) claims a place in a truth-functional semantics.

### 2.3.2 Conclusion

We have seen that the conventional implicatures generated by 'but' and 'therefore' are not cancellable. That is, the employment of the cancellability test is not in order since it engenders some sort of contradiction and the relevant utterance has no employment. There are two routes to be taken: We can either retain a class of conventional implicatures and argue that they need not be cancellable, or concede that, since these implicatures are not cancellable, they are bogus cases of implicatures.

In the former case the onus that will fall on us will be to give strong justifications<sup>12</sup> for excluding these aspects of meaning, that have been dubbed conventional implicatures, from what is the standard meaning (semantic or logical) of the lexical items bearing the implicatures;<sup>13</sup> to say, however, that such aspects of meaning constitute a stumbling block in a truth-functional account, within the framework of a traditional logical system, is evidently not a plausible reason for jettisoning them from a semantics proper.

### 2.3.3 Detachability and reported conventional implicate

Let us now apply the detachability test to 'therefore'. If the implicature in the case of 'therefore' is detachable then it should be possible to restate (24) as (29):

(29) He is an Englishman and he is brave,

and, further, (24) would invariably have the same truth-value as (29.). But is this

so? If 'He is brave' in (24) were to be inferred from 'He is an Englishman', rather than be asserted on independent grounds, we would be inclined to say that what is asserted in (24) cannot be assigned the same truth-value as (29). This must be clear by now.

Furthermore, we could consider what results (29) would yield, were it to be reported. Consider (30):

(30) She said that he was an Englishman and that he was brave.

Would one who had uttered (24) intending it as an argument consent to this form of report on his utterance? Indeed, were it to be proved that the referent of "he" was not an Englishman, wouldn't one be prone to retract his utterance on the grounds that if the first conjunct was false so was the second? This utterance, then, would resemble the conditional rather than have the form of a conjunction. In any case, (30) does not seem to report the utterance of (24) truly, though it does that of (29). But isn't arguing so tantamount to saying that part of what was said in (24) was not reported in (30)? For if what was not reported was only what had been conventionally implicated in (24), one would neither balk at (30), nor rule it out as a false report.

It must be made clear, however, that we are here concerned with the report of (24), when this is meant as an argument. It may be recalled that a true or satisfactory report need not report all the assertions made in a speech. However, it should report those parts of the speech that are crucial for conveying any further assertions in the spirit in which they were made. Moreover, as argued by Zwicky, 1971,

a satisfactory report conveys the meanings<sup>14</sup> of a speech and not its presuppositions or its possible messages or possible inferences from it. This is a property of the verb 'say' ...

(pp. 74-75)

If conventional implicatures do not constitute part of what is said, then we are entitled to conclude that they have no place in a report of a speech with 'say' as the reporting verb. If however Zwicky's condition is deemed to be too strong then, relaxing it, it can be expected that the inclusion or not of a conventional implicature should not affect the meaning and the truth-value of what is reported. Yet, we have seen that it does. Moreover, the inclusion of the alleged conventional implicature renders the report more satisfactory and complete in any case. This fact yields additional evidence against the construction of an account of those aspects of meanings in terms of conventional implicatures.

If (24), on the other hand, was meant as an explanation then, though (30) might not be looked on as false, it would nevertheless frustrate the very purpose of the utterance. Note that in this case (31),

(31) She said that he was brave because he was an Englishman, is a more satisfactory report of (24) than (30) is.

To see the whole issue from the other side of the coin, (32),

(32) She said that he was an Englishman and that he was therefore brave,

should constitute a true report of (29) if (24) is equivalent to (29). Yet, it is doubtful whether one who had uttered (29) would, quite happily, consent to (32) as a true report of what he had said, especially if (29) was intended as the assertion of two independent propositions, unconnected, apart from the obvious connection that they were both predicated of the same individual. Wouldn't we be inclined to say that the report (32) was false on the grounds that part of what was reported as having been asserted, i.e. that he was brave, was reported as if it followed from the other part, i.e. that he was an Englishman? Yet, the inclusion in the report of a conventional implicature should not be capable of falsifying it; but this seems to be the case with (32).

One is inclined to conclude that indeed what is conveyed by 'therefore' cannot be conventionally implicated, since a prerequisite for the assignment of the status of implicatures to any aspects of what is conveyed in an utterance is that they do not affect the truth-values of the utterances which include them.

On the other hand, 'but' does not seem to behave in quite the same way. Consider (33),

(33) He said that she was poor and (she was), honest which can be the report of (27):

(27) She is poor but she is honest.

Indeed, (33) is not only a true and satisfactory report of (27), but it also seems to share the same truth-value with (34):

(34) He said that she was poor but (she was) honest.

Moreover, in (34) the source of what is conveyed by 'but' need not be the speaker of the 'Oratio recta'. This source can be sought either in the original speaker, or in the reporter, or indeed in someone else connected with the discussion; "but" can be understood either as having been uttered by the original speaker of the utterance, or as having been added by the reporter. Understood in a loose sense it can function transparently. To clarify this point consider (34a):

(34a) He said that she was poor but he ( also ) said that she was honest (too),

In which the elements 'he (also) said' reinforce the status of the second clause, which is that of a report. 'but' falls outside the scope of the reporting verb, which is repeated, and serves to conjoin the two clauses as two separate reports.

In contrast, 'therefore' can function only opaquely, so to speak; that is, it can be understood only as within the scope of the reporting verb:

(35) She said that he was an Englishman and (she said) (that) (he was) therefore brave.<sup>15</sup>



'Therefore' cannot be added by the reporter as 'but' can be.

In this connection it can be noted that the reported clause in (36),

(36) He said that she was poor but (that she was) honest, though I  
wouldn't agree there was a contrast between the two,

must be recognised as the quotational form of someone else's words if we are to understand the reference of the second clause; i.e. (36) must be understood as (37):

(37) He said (that) 'she was poor but she was honest'.

But even if (36) is given a (semi-)quotation reading it is not obvious that what is conveyed in it is absolutely clear. Indeed, if the utterer of (36) wishes to express his difference of opinion on the matter, he had better be explicit, as in (38) or (39):

(38) He said that she was poor but that she was honest, though I  
do not see why she should have to be dishonest just  
because she was poor,

or (39) He said: 'She is poor but she is honest', but ... (as in (38)).

(40), on the other hand, does not pose such problems:

(40) She said that he was an Englishman and (that) (he was)  
therefore brave, but/though I can't see the connection.

These facts are brought out clearly in the following examples:

(41) He said that she was poor but (that she was) honest though  
he (himself) didn't imply a contrast between the two.

(42) She said that he was an Englishman and that he was  
therefore brave though she (herself) didn't imply (a  
connection between the two. (that the one followed from the  
other.

In (41) the pending attribution of the implicature generated by 'but' to the original speaker of 'Oratio recta' is averted. But this does not hold for (42). (42) involves a contradiction.

The diverse linguistic behaviours of 'but' and 'therefore' in Oratio obliqua seem to be determined by the fact that they each have a distinct structural status. According to Fries, 1967, "but", but not 'therefore', belongs to a group in which all words are "signals of 'levelling', of connecting two units with the 'same' structural function", as "all the words of this group stand only between words of the same part-of-speech class or subgroup" (p. 95). 'But', therefore, is capable of bringing the reported clause 'that she is honest' down to the same structural level as, either that of the clause 'that she is poor', or that of 'he said that she is poor'.<sup>16</sup>

In other words, this versatility is due to the fact that 'but' like 'and', 'or', 'not', and 'rather than' (Fries, op.cit.) can stand, on the one hand, either only between words of the same part-of-speech class, as in 'she is poor but honest', or, on the other, before single free utterance units. Therefore, in our example of Oratio obliqua, 'but' can be interpreted as standing either before '(that she was) honest', in which case it will have to be understood as the 'but' connecting words of the same part-of-speech class - i.e. in the case in hand as connecting '(that she was) honest' with 'that she was poor'; or it can be interpreted as standing before, what can be characterized as, a single free utterance unit, namely, 'he said that she was honest', connecting it with the preceding part of our example, i.e. 'He said that she was poor'.<sup>17</sup> The ambiguity is resolved in (34a), in which the structure of the second clause becomes explicit. The tree-diagrams on pp.51 and 51a represent the distinct structures in each case.

On the other hand the structural description of 'therefore' specifies that it belongs to those words that can all stand before groups of words "having the characteristic arrangements of parts of speech that occur in single free utterance units" (Fries).

Figure 7

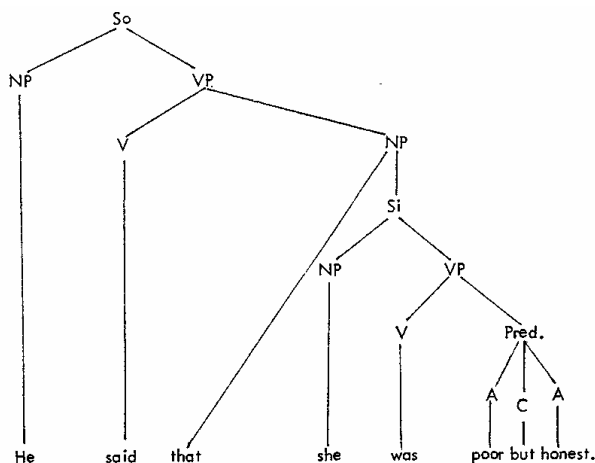
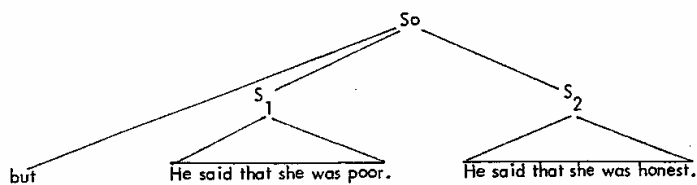


Figure 7a



Performative Analysis

Figure 8

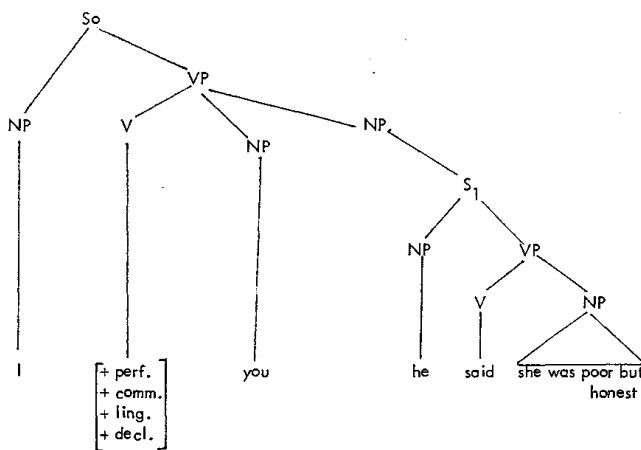
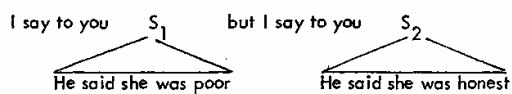


Figure 8a



It follows, therefore, that 'but' can operate to invoke a general proposition or belief in this case which can be imputed either to the original speaker, or to the reporter, or to a related person in the same discourse. By contrast, 'therefore' invokes the assumption of a general belief which can be imputed only to the utterer of the sentence and not to the reporter. This is indicative of the presence of closer ties between p and q in 'p therefore q' than there are in 'p but q'. It also seems possible to claim that the general statement assumed in 'p, therefore q' is invoked via the stated connection between its two propositions so that what is said, including those aspects of meaning that have been claimed to be conventional implicatures by Grice, can be confined within the bounds of what is actually uttered. In this respect, too, 'but' and 'therefore' seem to be distinct as regards their conventional implicata.

Furthermore, it is reasonable to report (24) as in (43):

- (43) She said that he was an Englishman and that he was brave and that he  
was brave because
- he was an Englishman,
  - or the one followed from the other,
  - or there was a causal connection between the two,

or as in (44) She said that he was brave because he was an Englishman. (Katz, 1972, p.446)

On the other hand, if we apply the same methods to 'but', we end up with odd reports of what was initially said.

We believe we have shown that 'but' and 'therefore', both claimed to be paradigm cases of the same linguistic phenomenon in Grice's theory, do not behave uniformly as should have been expected. Moreover, not only does 'therefore' seem to be more easily amenable to a semantic treatment but it also poses, as we have seen, greater problems for an account of its meaning in terms of conventional implicatures as these have been explicated by Grice.

## 2.4 Summary

Grice offers as paradigm cases of conventional implicatures the implicatures generated by the lexical items 'but' and 'therefore'. Conventional implicature in both cases are characterized as the non-truth-functional aspects of their meanings. That is, in the case of 'but', the truth-functional meaning is its conjunctive meaning, while the contrast that is conveyed by 'but' is claimed to be conventionally implicated. Therefore "but" can be accounted for in terms of the truth-functional conjunctive 'and'.

As far as 'therefore' is concerned, however, Grice is not explicit as to how it should be represented in a formal system, but it has been assumed in this study that this, too, will be treated in terms of the truth-functional conjunction. This assumption is based on the existence of sentences like: 'He is an Englishman and he is therefore brave' and also on the necessity of the presence of the conjunctive 'and' in negation: 'It is not the case that he is an Englishman and that he is therefore brave'. Grice has claimed that the meaning of consequentially conveyed by 'therefore' is not truth-functional, but is conventionally implicated and, therefore, truth-valuation of what is said can take place irrespective of any such aspects of its meaning.

However, it has been shown in this study that this is not always the case. There are cases of the use of 'therefore' in which such a claim is groundless because the truth or falsity of the second sentence depends on the truth-value of the first by way of this relation of consequentially conveyed by 'therefore'. No such inter- relation has been found in cases of use of 'but'. Moreover, it has been pointed out that in the case of 'but' Grice is not consistent in his claim concerning what constitutes the conventional implicature, while in the case of 'therefore' the conventional implicature, as explicated by Grice, does not extend beyond the limits of the uttered sentence.

Employing the negation test, it has been found that in  $\neg(p \text{ but } q)$  the

conjunction is negated while in cases of  $\neg(p \text{ and therefore } q)$  it is possible to negate just this relation of consequentiality between  $p$  and  $q$  conveyed by 'therefore' and characterized by Grice as the conventional implicature generated by 'therefore'. This latter result, however, is not consistent with the assumption that what is negated is conventionally implicated, and not asserted.

Applying the two tests proposed by Grice to conventional implicatures, it has been shown that both the implicatures of 'but' and 'therefore' are not cancellable. Grice never suggested that cancellability is a sufficient or necessary condition for the presence of conventional implicatures. However, under the assumption that aspects of what is conveyed in an utterance that do not form part of its truth-functional meaning should be cancellable, without engendering contradiction, the cancellability test is of some utility: the expectation being that cancellation of conventional implicatures should not occasion contradiction. Yet, we have shown that it does. If  $q$  is merely an implicature of  $p$ , then it should be possible to cancel the implicature. Hence, ' $p$  but I don't mean to imply that  $q$ ' should have a use, and ' $p$  but not  $\neg q$ ' should not be self-contradictory. In our discussion we have focused our attention on 'therefore', and not on 'but', as the cancellability of the latter is discussed in Grice, 1967a. Therefore, our conclusions concern mainly 'therefore'.

It is argued that the postulation of a separate class of conventional implicatures needs strong justification based on independent criteria that will differentiate them from meaning proper (see Wilson, 1975, p. 120). This strong justification is lacking at the moment, and the postulation of a class of conventional implicatures is therefore based on flimsy grounds, the sole motivation being that such aspects of meaning would constitute a stumbling block to a truth-functional account of meaning.

Further, the test of detachability (see 2.3.3) revealed that indeed the implicature of 'therefore' is detachable as claimed by Grice. However, the

question that is raised is whether In all such cases, in which 'therefore' is detached, it can be justifiably claimed that the truth-functional meaning of the utterance remains the same as in cases of its use. This takes us back to problems posed by the inferential use of 'therefore' discussed in section 1.4.2.

On the other hand, the conventional implicature generated by 'but' is not only detachable, without thereby affecting the truth-value of what is said, but it has also been shown that in indirect speech the conventional implicatures of 'but' play no role in the truth-valuation of the utterance. Besides they can be attributed either to the speaker of the 'oratio recta', or to the reporter, or to someone connected with the conversation, without affecting truth-values. This constitutes additional evidence of the absence of any truth-functional interrelation between the two conjuncts in cases of 'but'.

'Therefore', however, creates a lot of problems for an account of non-truth-functional conventional implicatures. To be sure, reported conventional implicate of 'therefore' cannot 'move across' from the speaker of 'oratio recta' to the reporter. They behave opaquely, so to speak, confirming an inextricable connection between the two propositions it conjoins. Besides, conventional implicate of 'therefore' are not cancellable in reported utterances, in spite of the fact that such implicate need not be conveyed in reported forms of the utterances containing them in the first place. This yields additional evidence that the meaning of consequentially conveyed by 'therefore' is asserted and not implicated.

## 2.5 Conclusion

We believe that the following points have been convincingly argued in this chapter:

- (1) Conventional implicate of 'therefore' are operative within the limits of what is actually uttered. This has not been shown to be the case with respect to 'but'.

- (2) Conventional implicatures of 'therefore' can be negated. This has not been shown to hold for conventional implicatures generated by 'but'.
- (3) Conventional implicatures, in general, are not cancellable. In particular, with regard to 'therefore', it has been shown that cancellation of the implicature results in contradiction, a feature characteristic of truth-functional aspects of meaning.
- (4) Conventional implicature of 'but' are detachable without any consequences for the truth-value of the conjunction. This is not true of the conventional implicature of 'therefore'. Conventional implicature of 'but' in reported utterances can be 'lost' or cancelled in a sense. Conventional implicature of 'therefore' remain attached to the conjuncts it conjoins. They cannot be cancelled or 'transferred'.

On the assumption that these points are correct, it is evident that "but" and 'therefore' differ on more than one count as regards their conventional implicatures. In view of this fact they cannot be characterized as instances of the same linguistic phenomenon. Besides, while it is clear that part of the meaning of 'but' is conjunctive - and therefore 'but' has this aspect of its meaning in common with 'and' - this is not true of 'therefore'.<sup>18</sup> Therefore the question that one may posit is what the justification is for accounting for 'therefore' in terms of the truth-functional conjunction.

Moreover, it has been argued that the conventional implicatures of 'therefore' cannot be justifiably excluded from its truth-functional meaning, as it has been shown that they affect the truth-valuation of what is said.

In view of these facts it is claimed in this study that what is allegedly conventionally implicated in the case of 'therefore' is part of its semantic meaning, and it is, therefore, suggested that it be accounted for within the framework of



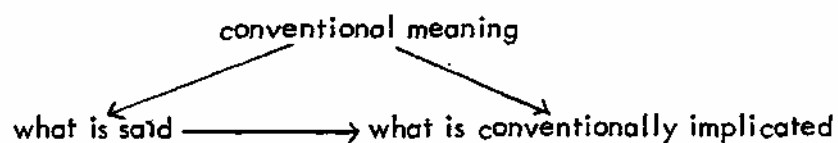
semantics proper. This will not pose as many problems as a semantic account of 'but' would probably do, since the alleged conventional implicatures of 'therefore' are constant and operative within the bounds of the utterance. This has not been proved to be the case with regard to 'but'.

In the next chapter therefore we will concern ourselves with the intricate linguistic behaviour of 'but', and examine the nature of the implicatures it generates as we have not found any grounds, as yet - as in the case of 'therefore' - for assuming that these aspects of meaning can be justifiably claimed to be part of its meaning proper.

### 3. CONVENTIONAL IMPLICATURES: VARIABLE OR INVARIABLE

Grice says that in some cases the conventional meaning of the words used determine "what is implicated, besides helping to determine what is said" (1975, p.44). These implicatures were dubbed conventional. Clearly conventional implicatures, as described by Grice, are not connected with general features of discourse since they do not seem to be affected by the maxims of conversation or by violations of them. On the other hand, they do not constitute part of what is said since they are not amenable to a truth-functional treatment. Yet they are characterized as being determined by the conventional meaning of the words that generate them. Grice does not argue for the presence of any other factors that might determine them. One is therefore led to conclude that part of the conventional meaning of some words is not explicable within a truth-functional framework.

Besides, according to Grice, what is said does not in any way determine, or help to determine, what is implicated; that is, an interrelation between what is said and what is implicated, as seen in the following diagram, is not in Grice's spirit:



On the contrary, what is said does not seem to affect what is implicated; rather, it is the conventional meaning that does. One of course may identify the conventional meaning with a partial specification of what is said; but we are here concerned with the full specification of what is said, which is truth-functional.<sup>1</sup> This leads us to the assumption that conventional implicatures, unconnected as they are with features of discourse, and unaffected by the full specification of what is said, must be invariable; But are they?

Regarding 'therefore', as we have seen, we can confidently say that it invariably conveys a relation of consequentiality between the two propositions that it connects. This enabled us to argue that this aspect of meaning should not be regarded as conventionally implicated, but as part of what is said.<sup>2</sup> As far as 'but' is concerned, however, it is difficult to see how this could be the case in view of the versatility of its linguistic behaviour. In what follows, therefore, we will consider more closely the behaviour of this conjunction; but first we will try to establish, what has already been claimed, that the conventional implicatures generated by 'but' are not invariable.

### 3.1 On the implicatum of 'but'

Grice claims that the speaker's word, i.e. 'but' in the case at issue, implies a contrast between the two parts that it conjoins. But even in this respect there is an inconsistency in his claim because he explicates the contrastive meaning of 'but' as operating either between the two conjuncts that are actually uttered, or as invoking a general statement, of which the uttered sentence is only an instantiation, i.e. a statement of the form  $(x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)$ .

However, if the non-truth-functional meaning of 'but' is invariable, it must be the case that its contrastive meaning is always operative in a standard way. One must always be in a position to delineate the function of 'but' - apart from its truth-functional conjunctive meaning - by saying for example that, besides conjoining two sentences, 'but' serves to contrast them.

However it is clear that this is not so. This is amply illustrated by such examples as (45):

(45) I went to see him but he wasn't there.

Clearly there is nothing that 'but' contrasts in (45), at least at first sight. 'I went to see him' and 'he wasn't there' cannot be contrasted in any meaningful way. But granted that there must be some contrast, it is not at all evident what this contrast

is or what it holds between.<sup>3</sup>

T. van Dijk, 1977, argues that similar sentences are equivalent to the schema 'p but q' because r1 which will make (45) equivalent to (46):

(46) I went to see him but I didn't see him because he wasn't there.

The example he gives is the following:

(47) I called him but he was drunk and didn't hear me. He maintains that (47) is equivalent to (48):

(48) I called him, but he didn't hear me because he was drunk. He goes on to say:

From a sentence 'a calls b' we may infer in most contexts

'b hears a' (otherwise a's calling would be pointless, i.e.

it is a necessary condition of any speech act that the speaker

believes that the hearer can hear and will listen to him).

In the example this is not the case. Hence the contrastive

'but' in (48).

(p.58)

In a similar fashion it could be argued that when we say 'a went to see b' what we infer, unless otherwise stated, is that 'a saw b'; hence (46) (cf. Bendix, 1966, 1971).

However, it must be noted that if there is a contrast here, this contrast must be seen as operating, not within the bounds of what is uttered in (45), but rather, between part of what is uttered and inferences drawn from it. Seen in this light it is a cooperative act, in Grice's sense, to proceed to annul these inferences that are legitimately drawn and yet are false.

In his explication Dijk sees the contrast as operating between what is said preceding 'but' and the inferences that are expected to be drawn from it, rather than

between the two conjunct\*. In his example however these inferences are stated, or rather denied, in an immediately following clause introduced by "and", thus providing the grounds on which the contrast operates. He maintains:

The rule is, thus, that directly after 'but' we may have sentences describing the situation in which facts may occur which are in contrast with the set of sentences preceding 'but'.

(Dijk, 1977, p.58)

He argues that (47) is equivalent with the schema 'p, but q, because r'; but this argument does not hold for (45) as the inferences drawn from the sentence preceding 'but' are not stated — or denied — in any explicit formulation.

### 3.1.1 On Dijk's definition of contrastives

Dijk's definition of contrastives, (49),

(49)  $\text{CONTR}(A,B)=\text{def } (A \rightarrow B). (A,-B),$

(ibid., p.51)

does not seem to be capable of analysing cases like (47) or (45). In any case (49) seems to be inadequate to represent examples of 'but' in which the use of the conjunction is determined, not by any expectations, but by semantic (lexical) dissimilarity,<sup>4</sup> as in (50):

(50) John is a bachelor but David is married.

There is no reason to assume that if John is a bachelor David must be a bachelor, etc. Therefore Dijk's condition  $(A \rightarrow B)$  of (49) is not satisfied in (50), and there are many similar cases of 'but'.

However it may be hoped that (49) is a plausible definition of the use of 'but' in cases in which expectations or presuppositions are involved. Dijk does not talk in terms of expectations with regard to 'but', but in terms of general statements

with varying 'strength' that are involved in conjunctions. He holds that:

The definition of contrastives must thus incorporate a negation, because the negated postcedents yield regular implications. The intuitive idea is thus that a regular implication  $p \rightarrow q$  is presupposed but that  $p \wedge \sim q$  is actually true.

(Dijk, p. 51)

Arguably, (49) can embrace most cases of the use of 'but' in which a general statement is involved on the assumption, however, that in most cases  $(A \wedge B)$  of (49) is not a representation of this general statement, but of an instantiation of it. This leaves us with a deficient definition since this presupposition on the basis of which the conjunction is used is not captured in it. For example (51),

(51) John is a Republican, but he is honest,<sup>5</sup>

will be represented by (49) as in (52):

(52) If John is a Republican then he is dishonest and John is a Republican and he is not dishonest,

where  $A =$  John is a Republican  $B =$  He is dishonest.

(52) leaves out the general statement, which Dijk presumably wants to include in his definition, namely, In the case in question, that Republicans are not generally highly esteemed.

Moreover there are cases of the use of 'but' in which a general presupposition is involved which has little lexicogrammatical affinity with the second conjunct,  $B^A$ , and therefore in these cases Dijk's condition,  $(A \wedge B)$ , is rendered vacuous. Consider an example from R. Lakoff, 1971;

(53) John hates ice cream, but so do I,

in which the general presupposition is that ice cream is generally liked.<sup>6</sup> By

contrast, what (49) can yield by substitution is (54):

(54) If John hates ice cream then I like it and John hates ice cream and I hate it too.

It is not clear though how the hypothetical in (54) can be justified in the event that the general presupposition involved in this use of "but" is either that people generally like ice cream, or that I am expected to like ice cream. In addition the hypothetical here imparts something that (53) does not necessarily convey.<sup>7</sup>

Further (49) is incapable of capturing the function of 'but' when this operates across the discourse, i.e. when its point of reference lies not within the conjunct preceding it, but reaches out into the preceding utterance made by another speaker; that is, when its point of reference lies in the preceding turn<sup>8</sup> and not in the one in which it occurs; this is a very general use of 'but' even if it does not occur initially.<sup>9</sup>

However (49) seems to be satisfactory for those cases of "but" which contain a direct contrast, i.e. a contrast operating within the bounds of the conjunction and which is understood without any reliance on the invocation of any general proposition; (55) is an example:

(55) It's January but it's not cold.

Admittedly it is not clear whether what is involved in (55) is some sort of contrast or presuppositions and therefore expectations. In any case (55) seems to be satisfactorily explicated by (49).<sup>10</sup>

### 3.1.2 G. Lakoff's deductive system and 'but'

In this connection G. Lakoff's, 1971b, work seems to be relevant. He characterizes cases of 'but' which involve statements of greater generality as more complex and as being instantiations deduced from a general presupposition; in other words he argues, like Dijk, that a general implication  $p \rightarrow q$  presupposed, but he also maintains that there is a series of deductions involved via which we get to

the uttered structure. For example, he says that (56),

(56) John is a Republican, but he is honest (too),

is grammatical only relative to the general presupposition that one would expect Republicans not to be honest. He therefore argues for the following form for it:

(56i) Assertion:  $f(a)$  and  $g(a)$

Presupposition:  $(x)\text{Exp}(f(x) \supset \sim g(x))$

where:  $f$  = is a Republican

$g$  = is honest

$a$  = John

$f(a) = S_1$

$g(a) = S_2$

By means of a deductive process<sup>11</sup> we get to (56ii):

(56ii) a.  $(x)\text{Exp}(f(x) \supset \sim g(x))$  (presupposition of (56))

b.  $\text{Exp}(f(a) \supset \sim (a))$  (instantiation)

Since  $f(a) = S_1$  and  $g(a) = S_2$  we arrive at the form  $\text{Exp}(S_1 \supset \sim S_2)$ .

Lakoff, therefore offers a more complex general implication that claims to represent more accurately the thought processes that seem to be involved in some cases of 'but'. But even this complex system of deductions is not capable of accounting for the difficulties that confront us in types of sentences conjoined by 'but' in which the contrast - if indeed it is a contrast - is made between the conclusion of inferences that are not stated and part of what is said in an utterance. And this despite the fact that Lakoff brings contextual features into his analysis. In such intractable cases the second conjunct must be replaced by the conclusion of inferences drawn from the first.<sup>12</sup> But what are the criteria that can be independently<sup>13</sup> employed to differentiate between these cases?

Notice that if I say 'M went to see him' you invariably infer, in the absence of any further remark, that I saw him. But if I say 'She is poor' or 'She is a woman'



you do not infer that she is dishonest or, in the latter case — hopefully — that she is unintelligent. Hence in utterances like (27) and (57),

(27) She is poor but she is honest,

(57) She is a woman but she is intelligent, more can be conveyed by the use of "but" than can in (45).<sup>14</sup>

Besides, in (45) 'but' does not conjoin the sentence 'I went to see him' and the negation of the conclusion of the inferences that are legitimately drawn from it in the absence of a further utterance denying them, 'I didn't see him'; that is (45) is preferred to (58) by speakers,

(58) I went to see him but 'I didn't see him,

because it is more economical and informative since the inferences drawn are automatically, though inexplicitly, annulled by giving the explanation superceding the explicit cancellation: 'He wasn't there'.

### 3.2 Conclusion

To conclude, it is clear that there is not a constant standardized conventional implicature of a contrastive relation between the two parts conjoined by 'but' as argued by Grice. In Wilson's, 1975, words:

There are, unfortunately, myriad other interpretations, and not all of them involve either an objective contrast between the facts described in the two conjuncts, or a contrast of any sort in the speaker's attitude to them.

(p. 118)

indeed, Woods's, 1967, remark on 'and' could be aptly extended to 'but', as well:

By contrast with 'implies' there just is no common non-truth- functional relational ingredient associated with the various non-truth-functional uses of "and" ...

(p.363)

Moreover, if the implicature generated by 'but' is conventional but not truth-functional, and hence not dependent on features of conversation or on what is said, but only on the conventional meaning of 'but, it follows that the meanings of the two conjuncts must not be involved in the determination of the non-truth-functional meaning of 'but'. However, we have seen that there is no independent procedure available that will help us determine what the non-truth-functional meaning of "but' is., without recourse to the meanings of the conjuncts it connects. Besides, we cannot say that 'but' invariably implicates a contrast between its conjuncts. It must be noted that there are more difficulties involved in determining the meaning or implicatures of 'but' than just having to take into consideration the meanings of two conjuncts.<sup>15</sup> 'But' can function across the discourse at hand, and in that case it is meaningless to talk of any contrast implicated or not, between the two conjuncts. In any case, we cannot appeal to any general principles that will provide the guidelines in the determination of the nature of the conventional implicature independently of the meanings of the conjuncts, or in some cases, of longer stretches of discourse.

Kempson, 1975, says that conventional implicatures are counterexamples, not only to a truth-functional semantics, but also to a Gricean Pragmatics, as they are not explicable by reference to discourse features, and concludes that "the evidence in these cases is far from unambiguous — either in favour of a truth-conditional analysis or against it" (p.218). Analysts of language generally tend to disregard conventional implicatures either because they are left unexplicated, and therefore are not well-understood, or because it is not clear in precisely what way they differ from the meaning of the words that generate them.<sup>16</sup> For example, Katz, 1972, says:

I shall ignore the former sub category [what is conventionally implicated] because I am unable to see why the kinds of cases that are included in it are really anything more than part of the meaning of the sentence type in question.

(p.445)

The attractiveness of Grice's thesis from some points of view, however, is obvious. But if we opt for his position then our choice would be dictated by a desire to retain, on the one hand, a truth-functional semantics at all costs and, on the other hand, to dismiss significant aspects of meaning with the claim that they are adequately explicated in terms of conventional implicatures of a contrastive relation between two conjuncts. However, even on the assumption that these aspects of meaning are conventionally implicated, we have seen that it cannot be justifiably claimed that conventional implicatures arise invariably from relations between two conjuncts. This evidently poses the question of what conventional implicatures are.

The facts discussed here seem to militate against a truth-conditional approach to 'but' that would not exclude the  $\eta$  on-conjunctive aspects of its meaning. However, assuming that what has been called the non-truth-functional meaning of 'but' is invariant, the question that arises is whether these aspects of meaning can be justifiably accounted for non-semantically. Wiggins, 1971, for example, in considering the difficulties posed by 'and' and 'but', in relation to the lexicon entries, writes:

Consider 'and' and 'but', ... If we try to account for the differences in each pair by making different 'analyses' or 'citations'<sup>17</sup> do the explanatory work, then we reach some absurd positions. But and and differ in meaning. Suppose we account for this by a difference in citation. Then the sentence 'His speech was long but impressive' will account as false even if the speech was both long and impressive if there exists no such contrast as the one which the different citations for and and but require. Finding this absurd, we may feel obliged to accept one and the same simple truth-functional citation for both words. And we may wrongly reject the idea that but and and have any difference at all in strict meaning. Note, however, that we shall be doing this purely and simply because their lexical citations are identical. Frege boldly took this course but it is equally counterintuitive ... The generalization of the distinction between a directive<sup>18</sup> and a citation makes it possible for us to see how and and but have

different lexicon entries and differ in meaning without differing in citation. The standard ... difference between them comes in their respective directives. But this leaves the difference within the realm of semantics ...

(P-27)

It is not inconceivable that a comprehensive account of the meaning of 'but' - both truth-functional and non-truth-functional - can be given. What is objected to in this study is an unprincipled exclusion of these non-conjunctive aspects of meaning from semantics, which is motivated solely by the fact that they constitute a hurdle to a truth-functional account.

### 3.3 Robin Lakoff: two types of 'but'

In the previous section we established that the non-truth-functional meaning of "but", namely, what Grice calls the conventional implicature occasioned by 'but', is not invariant. Grice argues that 'but' generates a conventional implicature of some sort of contrast between the two conjuncts. However as we have seen, not only is his notion of contrast vague and unexplicated, but it is not always made between the two parts of conjunction. Besides it is disputable whether indeed what is involved in all uses of 'but' is some sort of contrast as Grice argues. We will therefore turn to a widely accepted account of conjunction in the hope that it will throw some light on the behaviour of 'but'.

In her insightful analysis of conjunction, R. Lakoff, 1971, differentiates between two uses of 'but': the 'semantic opposition but' and the "denial of expectation but". It is not clear whether she wants to attribute two distinct senses to 'but', or whether she is only interested in the various uses of 'but' and in giving an analysis of the various factors that determine them.<sup>19</sup> However she formulates some rules which in her view seem to condition the use of either of the two types of 'but'.

#### 3.3.1 'Semantic opposition but' and 'denial of expectation but'

In conjunctions in which the 'semantic opposition but' is used, she says, there

is no relationship between the two conjunct\* except that their subjects are directly opposed with respect to a specific property. She goes on to say:

There is no reason to assume that, since the first part of the sentence is true, the second should be false; no conclusion about the second member of the conjunct is derivable from the first, insofar as we know from the sentence itself.

(R. Lakoff, 1971, p. 133)

Therefore the use of 'but' in (59) and (60) is that of the 'semantic opposition but' since the contrast is made between lexical items contained in the two conjuncts which form pairs of antonyms:<sup>20</sup>

(59) John is tall but Bill is short,

(60) John hates ice cream but i like it.

On the other hand the denial of expectation use of "but", it is argued, is conditioned by the speaker's presuppositions and knowledge of the world which give rise to general tendencies or expectations.<sup>21</sup> In a sentence like (61),

(61) John is tall but he's no good at basketball,

the presupposition involved is that if someone is tall he is then expected to be good at basketball. These presuppositions are not claimed to be germane to the speaker alone. They are held either by the speaker, or the world in general.

In what follows we will endeavour to show that her distinction between the two types of 'but' is not justifiable; though it might look so at first sight. In addition, it will be argued that most cases of the denial of expectation use of 'but', given the appropriate context, can be seen as uses of the 'semantic opposition but' or rather - since a distinction between the two types of 'but' is considered unfounded in this study - as a use of 'but' that does not involve the assumption of any general presuppositions regarding the speaker's or hearer's general knowledge and hence expectations.

### 3.3.2 On Lakoff's conception of antonymy

First it will be argued that her notion of antonymy is not only confusing but confused. Yet this notion should be defined in clearcut terms as her thesis is based on it. The 'semantic opposition but', Lakoff holds, is determined not by presuppositions "residing in the speaker's knowledge of the world, and therefore his expectations" (R. Lakoff, 1971, p. 1 34) but by 'presuppositions of antonymy'; that is, the presupposition involved in the case of the semantic opposition use of 'but' is a part of the lexical item that is contrasted. The reference to pre- suppositions with regard to lexical meanings is rather uncomfortable, but it need not concern us here as our argument does not hinge on this point.<sup>22</sup>

However, clearly, Lakoff wants to draw a distinction between the meanings of lexical items in abstraction from the speaker's presuppositions regarding his knowledge of the world, on the one hand, and these presuppositions and hence the speaker's attitude and expectations on the other. That she refers to features of the meanings of particular words in her definition of antonymy is beyond doubt as she talks of their representations in the lexicon. For example, she says, that 'hot' and 'cold' will differ in their representations in the lexicon in that the former will be assigned a feature /+ temperature/7 or some such notion and the latter ^temperature/7. Therefore the contrast between the words 'hot' and 'cold' provides the ground for the use of the semantic opposition 'but'. If I say 'My drink is hot' there is no expectation derivable therefrom of a second member of a conjunction, for instance, "My drink-is hot but yours is cold.'

However, as is acknowledged, her distinction between the two types of 'but' is hardly tenable if her notion of antonymy is not considerably extended. A use of 'but' like that in (62),

(62) John is rich but dumb, she claims, can be either that of the 'semantic opposition but' or that of the 'denial

of expectation but'. Evidently, (62) must find o place in the 'semantic opposition but' cases as the first conjunct does not give rise to any assumptions as to the truth or falsity of the second conjunct or, as Lakoff puts it, "no conclusion about the second member of the conjunct is derivable from the first, in so far as we know from the sentence itself" (p. 133).

In order to account for the semantic opposition use of 'but' in (62) along the lines of the notion of antonymy, she concludes that "the only reason that 'but' may be used in the sentence is the fact that rich and dumb share one semantic characteristic, and share it in that one is '+' for it, the other '-' (p. 135). She goes on to say, firstly, that richness and dumbness are contrasted in that they can be the objects of approbation or disapproval, and secondly, that they differ with respect to one feature, i.e. one is [+good thing], the other [-good thing]. But one should note how the relation between 'good' and 'approve" is summed up in Ziff, 1960, pp.223-27:

The relation between 'good' and 'approve' appears to be as follows: if someone says that something is good in a situation having a relatively formal character owing to the fact that it has something to do with putting that which is in question to a test, and of that which is in question is envisaged as subject to alteration, and if there are no indications to the contrary, the person who utters the utterance can be taken to approve of whatever is in question.

(emphasis added, p.227)

He goes on to add:

But how one could seriously maintain that to say 'This is good' is to say, and means the same as saying, 'I approve of this', I find difficult to understand.

incidentally, only a cursory look, not into the endless philosophical disputes over -the meaning of 'good', but into the last chapter of Ziff, 1960, will dissuade any linguist from using the term 'good' as a semantic feature.

However, whilst rich and poor contrast semantically<sup>23</sup>, there is no warrant for holding that this is the case with respect to rich and dumb. The pre- suppositions involved here, [+good thing] and [-good thing], as Lakoff sees them, are features of a pragmatic appraisal of certain qualities rather than "part of the lexical items" rich and dumb. Such features are outside the realm of semantics. Indeed the respective ascription of these features to the lexical items in hand is conditioned by our cultural beliefs. Even within our society not all people will agree that richness must be assigned the feature [+good thing], whilst we will all be scalded if hot water were to be spilt on us. It is remarkable, though, that although Lakoff bends the notion of 'semantic features' to make the concept of antonymy suit her analysis, she still claims to explicate 'antonymy' in semantic terms.

It follows therefore that according to Lakoff our lexicon will be fraught with our value-judgments and, evidently, if value-judgments start finding their way in- to the lexicon, it will not be a lexicon any more; it will be a thesaurus of our cultural beliefs. It can be argued, however, that 'evaluative features'<sup>24</sup> can have a place in the lexicon. Fillmore, 1971a, for example, considers both cases in which evaluative adjectives like 'good' can have a fixed meaning derivable from the semantic definition of the words they qualify, and cases in which evaluative adjectives characterize words, not in terms of their semantic definition, but in terms of features that have to be stated independently of the definition of the word (cf. also Wiggins, 1971, p. 29). He concludes,

The question a lexicographer must face is whether these matters have to do with what one knows, as a speaker of a language, about the words in that language, or what one knows, as a member of a culture, about the objects, beliefs and practices of that culture.

(p.383)



However, assuming that "evaluation features" can have a linguistic validity that would reflect an aspect of linguistics competence, (cf. pillmore, op. cit.), the lexical items 'dumb' and "rich" are not related, in any systematic way, in terms of any evaluative semantic markers. Besides, in the same paragraph

Lakoff seems to obliterate her distinction between lexical meanings and the speaker's knowledge of the world, and hence his attitudes and expectations. Indeed what else are our judgments of approbation or disapproval than our expression of our attitudes towards the existing state of affairs? And what determines our attitudes other than our knowledge of the world and our beliefs and expectations thereof?

Furthermore, by the same token, the use of 'but' in (61) could be claimed to be the semantic opposition one as both the expressions tall and no good at basketball can be said to "share one semantic characteristic and share it in that one is '+' for it, the other '-' " (R. Lakoff, 1971, p. 135). That is, tallness and being no good at basketball are alike in that one is [+good thing], and the other is [-good thing]. Indeed Lakoff's notion of antonymy is so blurred and infiltrated with pragmatical notions that one is tempted to think that the reason she does not claim that 'but' in (61) is a 'semantic opposition but' is the fact that the two predicates that are somehow contrasted in (61) are of a completely different composition.

We believe that we have shown that Lakoff's definition of antonymy is circular since it involves the speaker's beliefs. In any case, it is so broadly defined that it has been made almost contentless. By necessity, therefore, her argument for a distinction between some broad, but yet semantically defined, conception of antonymy and the speaker's knowledge of the world, i.e. a pragmatical feature, is vitiated by her own definition of this extended notion of antonymy, and hence untenable.<sup>25</sup> If such a distinction, however, is a condition for her distinction between the two types of 'but', as is the case, then her thesis is invalidated. But let us for the moment accept her distinctions and see whether her thesis can be formulated in more rigorous terms.

### 3.3.3 An attempt to reformulate Lakoff's analysis: some criteria proposed

There appear to be two factors that seem to condition the use of 'but', in Lakoff's view, although they remain unacknowledged and presumably unidentified. Firstly, it is noticed that the subjects in conjunctions with the 'semantic opposition but' are not identical in most cases. This is only implicitly acknowledged by Lakoff in the following quotation:

There is no relationship, implicit or otherwise, between the two parts of the sentences except that the subjects of the two sentences are directly opposed to each other in a particular property.

(emphasis added, R. Lakoff, 1971, p. 133)

Secondly, in the cases of the 'semantics opposition but' there must be lexical items that are antonyms or near-antonyms. It must be also noted that expressions that are contrasted usually belong to the same lexical class.<sup>26</sup>

On the other hand in cases in which the contrasted expressions are either of a different structural composition, as in (61), or cannot be claimed in any reasonable sense to be antonyms, as in (63),

(63) John hates ice cream, but so do I,

then the type of 'but' used is argued to be the denial of expectation one. However, it is not an accident that in the cases of the 'denial of expectation but' the subjects of the two sentences of the conjunction usually have the same referent. This seems to be a direct consequence of the concept of antonymy involved in the semantic opposition use of 'but'. Indeed antonymy can only be present in an attenuated form if the subjects of the two conjuncts are identical. As Lakoff notices in cases of true antonymy the subjects of the two conjuncts cannot refer to the same individual. For example, (64),

(64) John is rich but poor,

is contradictory.<sup>27</sup>

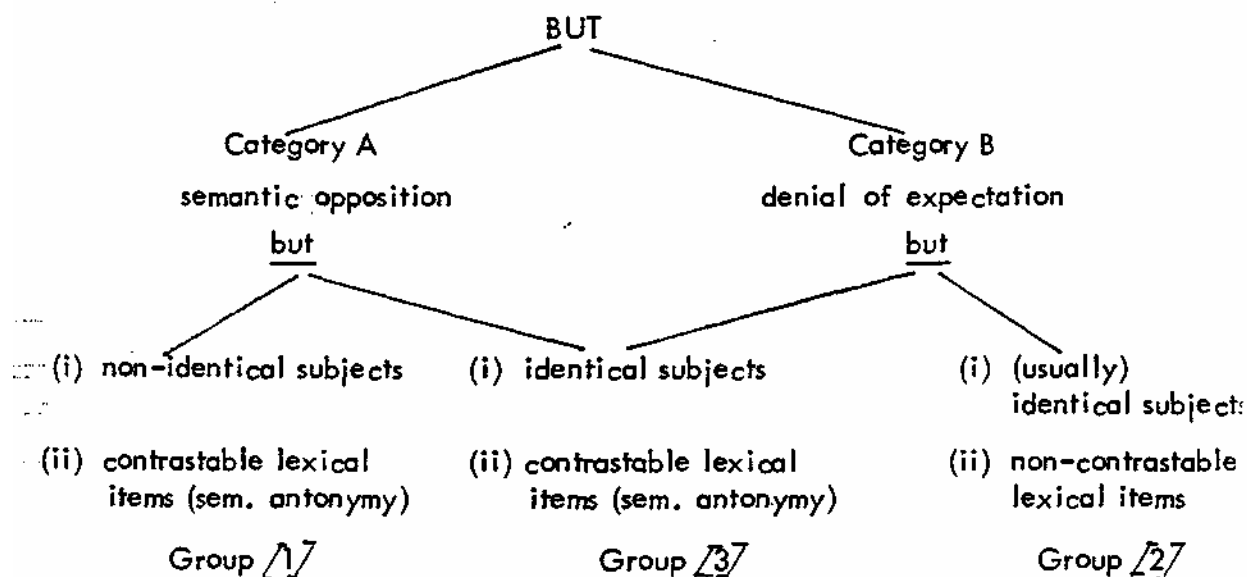
In cases of the denial of expectation use of 'but', therefore, the tendency is to have identical subjects in both conjuncts and items that are not antonyms or near-antonyms. Additional evidence for this supposition is provided by examples which have identical subjects, on the one hand, like (62),

(62) John is rich but dumb,

but which, in Lakoff's view, contain near-antonyms that belong to the same class, on the other. Lakoff claims that (62) has two readings depending on the circumstances in which it is uttered. It must be noticed that in (62) the subjects are identical, hence the structural ellipsis of the noun phrase. However, since near-antonyms, at least in Lakoff's view, are also present in (62), it can be grouped together with cases of the semantic opposition type of "but". But nevertheless it has also the reading of the denial of expectation 'but', just because — it is argued here — the subjects of the two sentences in the conjunction refer to the same individual.

A graphic representation of what the case seems to be in Lakoff's account is given in figure 9 below:

Figure 9



However even if we put aside our objections to Lakoff's definition of antonym/which, as has been claimed, invalidates her distinction between the two types of the conjunction at issue, there is such a plethora of uses of 'but' which like (62) can be identified, depending on the circumstances, with either the 'semantic opposition but' cases or the denial of expectation ones that a distinction between these two uses of 'but' is rendered vacuous, especially as no formal procedure is provided that will distinguish between them. For instance, the 'but' in our familiar example,

(27) She is poor but she is honest,

which belongs to group [3], in figure 9, can be identified as either the 'semantic opposition but' or as the 'denial of expectation but'; poor and honest are in Lakoff's view (near-)antonyms in that they both share the same semantic characteristic; i.e. poor differs from honest in that the former is assigned the feature [-good thing] while the latter [+ good thing]. Therefore, according to Lakoff's account, (27)

must be assigned the interpretation determined by the semantic opposition use of 'but' "depending on circumstances".<sup>28</sup> On the other hand (27) must have a place in the category of the denial of expectation use of 'but', and this claim is based, as has been argued here, on the fact that the two sentences conjoined in (27) have identical subjects. To clarify this point consider (65),

(65) John is poor but Bill is honest,

where John and Bill are unrelated. 'but' in (65) can be only that of the semantic- opposition 'but'.

As the reader can provide as many examples of cases like (27) which will belong to group [3] in figure 9, as he wishes, we consider it unnecessary to pursue this point any further in order to prove that group [3] can have as many potential members as any of the other two groups. Having established however that group [3] cases are numerous, and bearing in mind that they can belong to any of the other two groups,

it becomes obvious that any distinction between a 'semantic opposition but' and a 'denial of expectation but' becomes void.

Further, the criteria that were provided here, as shown in figure 9, do not seem to be either necessary or sufficient for the determination of the type of 'but'. To illustrate this point consider (66),

(66) She is poor but her parents were rich.

Clearly poor and rich are trueantonyms and not just near-antonyms. Besides, the subjects of the two conjuncts are not identical. Therefore both conditions for group [1] cases are fulfilled and yet the type of 'but' used seems to be that of the denial of expectation. It can be rephrased with although, a feature claimed to be characteristic of the denial of expectation use of 'but', as shown in (67)<sup>29</sup> (R. Lakoff, op.cit., p. 141 );

(67) Although her parents were rich she is poor. On the other hand, as shown in (68),

(68) Her parents were rich but she is poor,

(66) is symmetric, i.e. reversible, a feature, claimed by Lakoff to be, characteristic of the semantic opposition use of 'but' (ibid. , pp. 135-36). An allegedly para- digmatic example of semantic opposition would be (69),

(69) John is poor but Bill is rich (ibid., p. 141)

since it contains paradigmatic antonyms and non-identical subjects. Lakoff claims that "semantic opposition but's tend to be a little strange with 'although' ", and, as an example, she gives (70), which she asterisks as unacceptable:

(70)\* Although John is rich, Bill is poor. (ibid., p. 141)

However, you only have to consider the case in which John and Bill are brothers, and (70) becomes a perfectly appropriate and acceptable utterance. But, in this

case, according to Lakoff, despite the paradigmatic antonyms, (69) would have to be a case of the ‘denial of expectation but’, the expectation being that Bill is not expected to be poor since he is John’s brother.

In support of Lakoff’s thesis it can be proposed that (i) in [1], in figure 9 be further constrained by the addition of the condition that the subjects should not only be non-identical, but also unrelated. However such a proposal is untenable for two reasons: firstly, we have to provide a definition of the concept of relation, and the difficulties facing us here are notorious; moreover, the notion of relation is a two place predicate and points of reference are not readily available or fixed. Secondly, any such constraint on (i) would of necessity run counter to the condition specified in Lakoff’s account that the two conjuncts be related in that they share a common topic:

... ‘but’ requires a common topic — The two members of the conjunct joined by ‘but’ must be related to one another, in some way. Again, the relationship is based on semantic rather than purely lexical similarity.

(*ibid.*, p. 131)

It could be counter-argued, however, in defence of Lakoff’s thesis, that the constraint applies only to (i) in group [1] and not to (ii), which (ii) will provide the ground for the common topic. The invalidity of this claim, however, is illustrated in (71):

(71) John is a bachelor but the President of the United States is married.

As Dascal and Katriel, 1977, note in this respect:

Just as it is not the conjuncts themselves that determine the nature of the contrast between them, so their contents do not necessarily determine the common topic.

(p.147)

The upshot is that, even ignoring the circularity involved in Lakoff’s definition of antonymy, her account of conjunction cannot be formulated in any clear-cut terms.

Besides, the postulation of any formal criteria that might be regarded as sufficient or necessary conditions of the presence of either type of 'but' is proved to be unfounded. Lakoff's thesis fails on more than one score.

#### 3.3.4 Antonymy and the speaker's presuppositions: a conflation

Lakoff fails to differentiate between the speaker's knowledge and presuppositions and those of the hearer. How can we define what constitutes expectations, and hence denial of expectations? Is an example like (57),

(57) She is a woman but she is intelligent,

considered to be a case of the semantic opposition use of "but' or of the denial of expectation one? Are the lexical items woman and intelligent contrasted in any semantical way? If Lakoff feels free to extend the notion of antonymy to make out a case for a contrast between dumb and rich, by parity of reason and method, we can make out a case of antonymy for the pair woman and intelligent. That is, woman: [-good thing], intelligent: [+good thing].

However if this claim is unendorsable on the grounds that such beliefs are not generally held and hence Lakoff's notion of antonymy is not present in (57), then one is left wondering on what grounds one can meaningfully claim that (57) can be a case of the denial of expectation use of 'but'. Is there any reason "to assume that, since the first part of the sentence is true, the second should be false"? (R. Lakoff, 1971, p. 133). Is the conclusion that she is dull derivable from the first conjunct? These are, however, preconditions for the denial of expectation use of 'but' in Lakoff's analysis; that is the presence of the expectations derivable from p are a prerequisite if these expectations are to be denied in q. If Lakoff wants to persist in her claim that this is a denial of expectation use of 'but', then, it seems obvious that she has to differentiate between the speaker's and the hearer's presuppositions and beliefs (in the obvious case that at least half of the population

on our globe would not hold such a belief).

However, if expectations do not have a general character but are narrowed down to individual beliefs, there is no sound basis for a distinction between a semantic opposition type of 'but' and a denial of expectation type of 'but', as her notion of antonymy and her concept of the speaker's expectations seem to merge. It is a matter of individual belief whether 'dumbness' or 'richness' or 'womanness' or 'intelligence', or what have you, are to be assigned features like [+good thing] or [-good thing]. Besides, another point that escapes Lakoff's notice is that the attribution of such features is only relative to points of reference and dependent on the circumstances. In one situation 'intelligence' may be assigned the characteristic [+good thing] - for example if my son is concerned - and in another [-good thing], for example if my business rival or my prospective wife is concerned - in accordance with my belief that less intelligent women make better wives; (cf. 'She is beautiful but she is intelligent').<sup>30</sup>

It all boils down to the same conclusion: [+good thing] and [-good thing] are not inherent properties or intrinsic qualities of things. They are realizations of our evaluations or expressions of our judgments.

### 3.3.5 Conclusion

It has been shown that R. Lakoff's distinction between the two types of 'but' is unprincipled and circular because it is based on a conception of antonymy, on the one hand - a purportedly semantic notion but nevertheless pervaded with pragmatic features like speaker's value-judgments in her analysis - and on a characterisation of speaker's general knowledge and expectations, on the other. Besides, the presuppositions of knowledge and expectations need not be universal: "others are confined to a subclass, or are idiosyncratic with the speaker" (R. Lakoff, op.cit., p. 148). The circularity of her distinction between the two types of 'but' resides in the fact that the two notions of antonymy, a semantic notion, and of speaker's general knowledge, beliefs and expectations are conflated in her account.



The over-all conclusion that emerges is that from whichever angle Lakoff's thesis is examined, it is indefensible and therefore untenable.

### 3.4 On the vacuity of Lakoff's distinction between the two types of 'but'

We will now endeavour to show, as was argued in section 3.3.1 above, that many, if not all of R. Lakoff's examples of the 'denial of expectation but', do not involve any general presuppositions, or expectations, as claimed by Lakoff, and that, moreover, these presuppositions are invoked by the hearer, or, rather, the linguist in the case in point, in order to impose an acceptable interpretation on what he hears, or reads in limbo. This method of analysis, therefore, comes very close to being an 'overhearer's' method of understanding what is said, with all attendant consequences, the most significant of which being, that, whatever the results of the analysis are, they cannot tell "the whole story".

Although this remark is not meant to denigrate the method of analysis of language that concentrates primarily on sentences in isolation, the point that should be emphasized is that we cannot follow this traditional line of research, and, at the same time, claim that such an analysis can embrace all pragmatosemantic aspects of the use of linguistic items, as the Lakoffs seem to do. For example, it seems paradoxical that, while they focus on sentences (sentence types, and not sentence tokens), yet, they bring pragmatic presuppositions to bear on them. Such presuppositions are not germane to sentence types, but, rather, to utterances of sentences, since they pertain to speaker-hearer specific relations.

Moreover, the presuppositions that are brought to bear on the appropriate use of 'but' are neither predictable nor regular in Fillmore's, 1971a,b, fashion, as they extend to the conjuncts; for example, Fillmore's felicity conditions, or happiness conditions, are addressed to the question: "What do I need to know in order to use this form appropriately, and to understand other people when they use it?" (1971b, p.274). Neither can they (the presuppositions) always be translated

into 'appropriacy conditions' (Kempson, 1977), or 'felicity conditions', that would constitute the grounds on which a comprehensive characterization of meaning could be based.<sup>31</sup> If we are to utilise such a pragmatic apparatus, we should do so in the context of utterances, and, as is well known, "an utterance will occur some place sequentially" (Schegloff, 1976).

Although R. Lakoff is talking about the 'acceptability' of sentences, she, nevertheless, examines them as if they were to be uttered in limbo, abstracted from any situational or linguistic context. But this method had better be our last resort in trying to understand what can be conveyed by the utterance of a sentence, whether it is "acceptable', or 'unacceptable' and so on. Utterances are not made out of the blue, in isolation from a complete co-text or a situational context (cf. Longuet-Higgins, 1972, "human utterances are not produced in vacuo"). As Schegloff, 1976, put it,

The use of the sheer occurrence of the lexical items without regard to the placement of the utterance in which they occur in the sequential organization of conversation, can be badly misleading, though not implausible.

Let us, therefore, try and see some of Lakoff's examples in some sort of context, before we pass judgment as to which 'but' is involved in each case. Consider therefore (63):

(63) John hates ice cream, but so do I.

(R. Lakoff's 'denial of expectation but', p. 133)

(63) can be uttered as a reply to Uncle Tom's offer:

(72) I'll buy you ice cream, kids. (72) could also be replied to by (73):

(73) John hates ice cream but I like it.

Now in both (63) and (73) it is not at all clear that 'but' operates within the

conjunction, i.e. that it contrasts in some way the two conjuncts, or that it denies expectations aroused by the first conjunct as Lakoff would claim the case to be for (73) and (63) respectively. Indeed, it is arbitrary and unreasonable to assume that by uttering (63) the child is denying the expectation that "one would expect (for whatever reason) that anything John hates, I would like" (R. Lakoff, 1971, p. 133). It has been claimed in section 3.1.1 that if this utterance is abstracted from any context, the most generally acceptable interpretation that will be given to it is via the invocation of the assumption that people are expected to like ice cream and that, therefore, the referent of T is expected to do so also. This is a general assumption that springs to mind while the one Lakoff appeals to must be invoked via the knowledge of particular circumstances obtaining in the specific case in point.

And in any case — it can be argued in the same vein — what prevents us from assuming that the expectation is that (for some reason, having been brought up together and having developed the same likes and dislikes) I hate whatever John hates and vice versa? In this case (73) is a "denial of expectation but", despite the fact that it contains paradigmatic antonyms. Neither can we see how using 'and' in (63) "would produce a greater change in the meaning of the conjoined sentence as a whole than that change of conjunction would produce" in (73) (ibid., p. 133). On the contrary, (63a):

(63a) John hates ice cream and so do I,

would produce the same perlocutionary effect in Uncle Tom (he would not proceed with his plans to buy them ice cream). Nor would he understand anything less by it. Whereas (73a),

(73a) John hates ice cream and I like it,

would produce a greater change in the meaning(?) or appropriateness of the conjunction. (73a) is just not as appropriate in the circumstances as (73) is.<sup>32</sup>

These are linguistic facts that are ignored by Lakoff. In her view 'but' is always operative within the conjunction. In the context constructed above, in our view, the 'but' 'reaches out', across sentence boundaries, into Uncle Tom's utterance. This becomes clear if the offer in (72) is responded to as in (74):

(74) Thanks, but we don't like ice cream, or just as in (74a):

(74a) But we don't like it.

Kempson, 1975, p.57, who argues against the claim that the use of 'but' involves presuppositions of expectations, maintains that a 'parallel' example to (63),

(63) John wants ice cream, but so do I,

uttered in a situation where there is not enough money to buy us both ice creams, so that neither of us can have one, need not involve any presuppositions of expectations. Here, it must be noticed, firstly that Kempson 'contextualizes' the utterance to 'rid it' from any presuppositions of expectations, as described by Lakoff, and, secondly, that, as we have seen, we need not draw on 'parallel' examples. (63) is a perfect case in point, as has been shown.

With regard to (63) Lakoff says that the "denial of expectation is the only possibility" (p. 133). She defines the expectation, as we have seen, that one would expect that I would like anything that John hates. This clearly can be wrong. But the question that remains is whether there is still involved some sort of expectation that is denied, not necessarily between the two conjuncts but between the sentence following 'but' and some point of reference in a previous utterance that prompted the use of 'but', for example, in our case Uncle Tom's utterance. We will deal with this point later in our discussion.

Let us now consider some more examples to establish the point made in the above discussion. Consider (27):

(27) She is poor but she is honest. (27) can be responded to as in (75):

(75) She is poor but she is not honest. (Anyway I can't see the connexion.)

In the absence of any context it may be claimed that (27) is either a 'semantic opposition but' or a 'denial of expectation but'. But what is the case with the 'but' in (75)? Clearly, it does not contrast 'poor' and 'honest' or 'not honest'. It is evident that the 'but' in (75) has as a frame of reference some- thing in (27).

Imagine a situation in which a group of gangsters are trying to recruit members for carrying out their illegal operations. Prospective members of their group would have to be

poverty-stricken people with no high moral standards. A woman is proposed for consideration to which one of the gangsters responds with (27). Now would we be justified in saying that the 'but' here contrasts the two conjuncts? That is, that we have any notions of antonymy regarding the two adjectives in question that are realised in (27)? Or is it a 'denial of expectation but' denying any expectations (that she is dishonest?) aroused by the first conjunct? Notice that the conjuncts could be reversed (also reversed in terms of polarity) were the requirements specified by a different situation (cf. (75)).

In our view the use of 'but' is motivated by the requirements specified by the context, i.e. our search in this case for somebody who is both hard-up and of dubious morality. That is, by contextual features germane to the specific situation. The criteriality of these features is therefore the determining factor of the appropriate or inappropriate use of 'but' in the case in point.

It may be that there can be made out a case for a 'semantic opposition but' or for a "denial of expectation but'. But which of the two? Indeed, there

are no independent criteria. We cannot argue that because she is poor she is expected to be dishonest, even in this specific situation. Remember that the conjuncts could be reversed ('She is honest but she is poor', 'She is poor but she is dishonest', 'She is not poor but she is dishonest', etc.). As for the 'semantic opposition but', the same argument goes. What would the criteria be for contrasting (opposing) 'poor' and 'honest' as antonyms? [+good thing] for 'honest' and [-good thing] for 'poor' clearly will not do in this case. Incidentally, this adduces more evidence for our argument in section 3.3.4 that such criteria cannot serve in determining antonymic pairs, and hence trigger the use of the 'semantic opposition but' since they are not only subjective but also situation-specific. It follows therefore that any criteria for contrasting the lexical items 'poor' and 'honest' are fluid — situation-specific — and reversible.

However, it can still be claimed that 'poor' and 'honest' are contrasted in (27) uttered in the specific situation, but that this contrast is brought about, not by independent conditions — like antonymy between lexical items or general presuppositions and expectations — but by means of the particular requirements specified by the context in hand. To pass verdicts as to which 'but' is involved in each case — granting the distinction between the two types of 'but' — irrespective of the type of situation in which the utterance containing them occurs, is, as we have seen, justifiable.

It is easy to construct another context in which her poverty would be considered a disadvantage while her honesty an advantage. It could, therefore, be claimed that there is a contrast — but surely, not a semantic one — made between her poverty and her honesty relative to the requirements specified by the context. But certainly it cannot be claimed that there is a contrast made in general between poverty and honesty (cf. Grice). Neither can it be maintained — given the specific situation — that this contrast is operative by appeal to a

general proposition of the form  $(x)(Fx \rightarrow Gx)$ .

Consider the above described context (group of gangsters, etc.) and one of the gangsters uttering (76):

(76) Do you think that Joan would like to cooperate?

to which one could answer by (27). In this particular context it is clear that there is no specific expectation being denied. 'She is poor' (so she would welcome a good share of money), 'but — on the other hand — she is honest' (so she would be reluctant to get involved in an enterprise of a dubious nature).

Mutatis mutandis the above criticism of R. Lakoff's thesis, and, more specifically, of her definition of the 'denial of expectation but', goes for G. Lakoff's analysis of deductive procedures allegedly involved in understanding conjunctions containing this type of 'but' (1971 b). Consider (56),

(56) John is a Republican, but he is honest (too).

which, he says, is grammatical relative to the general presupposition that one would expect Republicans not to be honest. These presuppositions and the deductions involved in the derivation of the expectations in question were given in 3.1.2.

However, imagine a situation in which some unscrupulous Republicans are planning to break into the offices of their rival party and they are, therefore, looking for volunteers who would, naturally, come from the class of Republican devotees. To a proposal that John might qualify for rendering his services one can respond by (56). Would then (56) be grammatical only relative to the presupposition that  $(x) (\text{Exp } (f(x) \supset \neg g(x)))$  where  $f =$  is a Republican, and  $g =$  is honest? Hardly so. Yet G. Lakoff claims that,

Certain sentences will be grammatical only relative to certain presuppositions and deductions, that is, to certain thoughts and thought processes and the situations to which they correspond. This seems to me wholly natural.

(1971b, p. 69)

It hardly does to us, however, it must be admitted. Besides, as is well known, these deductions and presuppositions should be represented in syntactic derivations, on Lakoff's view. It must be made clear that what is criticized here is not the proposal made by Lakoff regarding the deductive processes involved in cases of 'but', but rather his claim that these sentences, like (56), are "grammatical only relative to certain presuppositions and deductions" (emphasis added), that is, that such conditions are essential or, indeed, necessary.

It is evident that 'but' in (56), uttered in the above-described situation, does not have its anaphoric point within the bounds of the conjunction. (Clearly, it is not a 'semantic opposition but', in any sense.)<sup>33</sup>

Neither does it invoke any line of deductions deriving from any presuppositions whatever. And yet it is a grammatical and appropriate utterance in the specific situation.

This criticism carries over to Harder and Kock, 1976, whose account of 'but' draws heavily on Ducrot, 1973. They maintain that,

... by prefixing 'but' to the second conjunct, the speaker 'situates' it in a context where it contradicts a continuation to be expected in the light of the first conjunct. The provocative effect of examples like "Harry is a Republican, but honest", is due to the fact that one is expected to interpolate a conclusion from Harry's Republicanism which contrasts with his honesty.

(p.23)

It is perhaps worth noting Isard's difficulty in finding an interpretation for utterances like (i),

(i) John called Harry a model theorist and then HE insulted HIM.

(an example discussed in detail in G. Lakoff, 1971a) when they are abstracted from their contexts; he notes:

Given the minimal context of (i) the only candidate for this contrasting setting is calling Harry a model theorist, so HIM



must contrast with Harry. HE must then contrast with John, of whom the contrasting setting has been predicated. If we had a richer context, it would be perfectly possible to understand the pronouns as people other than Harry and John altogether, but if we are restricted to choosing from Harry and John, HE can only be Harry, and HIM John (emphasis added),

and he concludes:

... but I also find it impossible to understand HE as Harry.

(1978)

This quotation is indicative of the limitations imposed on the understanding of utterances — one should be talking of sentences here — when these are considered in isolation from their contexts.

However, to close the parenthesis, it is true that, in the absence of any particular context, on hearing (56), or examples that have been identified as cases of the denial of expectation use of 'but', we are inclined to appeal, roughly, to such general presuppositions, expectations and deductions in order to 'understand' these utterances. This points to the fact that humans do not reject utterances (Wilks, 1975) without first utilizing all resources available to them in order to understand them. On hearing an utterance abstracted from its context — or reading it as an example in a linguistics analysis — we have recourse first to our knowledge of the world in order to find an interpretation for it. We try to construct a 'general'<sup>34</sup> framework that will fit what we hear in the same sense that upon hearing our interlocutor suddenly shout 'He's mad; he's going to jump into the river' — when his utterance is not connected to the on-going conversation — we will automatically look around in search of the intended referent of 'he'; if we can't see anybody around fitting the referring expression of the utterance then — and only then — we are likely to think that our interlocutor must be imputed the attribute that he ascribed to his imaginary referent of 'he'.

Now why does the framework assumed have to be general? It doesn't.



For example; when presented with (I),

(i) The notes were sour because the seam was split,

subjects could not comprehend it, but as soon as a cue was given (e.g. 'bagpipes'), (i) was comprehensible (Bransford and Johnson, 1973).

It is therefore evident why reading or hearing sentences in limbo we will try to understand them. It is also clear why in trying to understand them we will first appeal to our general knowledge of the world rather than resort to the construction of contrived situation-specific contexts. We do not expend this effort unnecessarily. Human nature abhors waste: a straight route is always preferred to a zigzag if they both lead to the treasure. However in the absence of an available general frame that will fit what we hear, we do not reject the utterance, but resort to contriving a possible context in which it will 'acquire' meaning, i.e. will be appropriate.

Bransford and Johnson, 1973, report with respect to example (i),

(i) Bill is able to come to the party tonight because his car broke down,

that people indicate that they understand it by way of fabricating an elaborate situation; they note that most people will give an account of what they understand similar to ('I $\alpha$ ) below:

(ia) Bill was originally going to leave town, but now he could not leave because his car broke down. Since he could not leave he could come to the party since the party was in town.

(p.391)

As Bransford and Johnson point out, "a listener is confronted with a problem-solving task of creating some situation in which the because structure makes sense". What seems clear, though, is that (i) is not uttered in a situation where antecedent

circumstances of (ia) were not already known (given) or presumed to be known, to the hearer, so that he would not have to concoct them in order to make sense of (i). Part of the circumstances (or more aptly, the antecedent circumstances) in (ia) are part, or, rather, must be part, of the participants' CMCA's (see section 7.1) pertaining to the speech-act in (i). As Bransford and Johnson, 1973, note,

... results support the notion that semantic anomaly is largely a function of the degree to which one can relate a sentence to some relevant aspect of his knowledge of the world.

(p.405)

Let us now consider R. Lakoff's example (1971, p. 136),

(77) Bill murdered Alice, but he was caught,

which, she claims, must be a case of denial of expectation. But then, she says, this supposition makes it clash with (78),

(78) Bill murdered Alice, but he got away,

which is, naturally, claimed to be a case of denial of expectation. Lakoff fails to appeal to 'local' expectations in trying to 'understand' (77). (77) is appropriately uttered by a friend of Bill's to an audience to which it was well known that Bill had been planning over a period of time how to murder Alice and how to get away with it (thus giving rise to his friends' expectations that he might not get caught). It must be noted, though, that Lakoff does invoke 'local' expectations in trying to explicate the use of the denial of expectation 'but' in (63), as we have seen.

What is argued here, therefore, is that it is totally unjustified to judge the grammaticality or otherwise of sentences according to whether they can be understood by appeal to general presuppositions and expectations and legislate that these presuppositions, expectations and deductions be necessary conditions for their

grammatically and be represented in their syntactic/semantic derivations. We have seen that this need not be the case and that, moreover, these conditions are appealed to only in our effort to 'understand' utterances in the absence of any co-text and other specific contextual features that take priority over our general knowledge in aiding us with giving an interpretation to what we hear. If such a context exists, it often renders our invocation of any general presuppositions, as the Lakoffs would have it, redundant. Whatever the case may be, the co-text and context take precedence over other general 'extra-textual' (extraneous to discourse at issue) presuppositions (knowledge) in the understanding of what we hear. An analysis of linguistic phenomena that disregards such facts is bound to be defective.

### 3.5 Conclusion

This lengthy discussion of "but" must have convinced the reader of the multi-faceted linguistic character of this item and of the intractable problems that it would pose for a truth-functional account of its meaning that would aspire to embrace all aspects of its linguistic behaviour. Whether one would opt to include all these aspects within a semantic framework, if indeed this could be accomplished (cf. Parret, 1977, Karttunen and Peters, 1975, 1979), or would like to account for only the conjunctive meaning of "but" within semantics and let a theory of Conversation account for the non-truth-functional aspects of its meaning in the guise of conventional implications, is very much a moot point. The latter approach clearly envisages a dichotomy between semantics and, what has been called, 'pragmatics', with all its emergent problems and inadequacies — rather than a unitary theory of Language and Conversation — an approach not to be countenanced in this study. In any case, it should be borne in mind that those linguistic phenomena that Grice dismissed as conventional implications of certain linguistic items are not invariable and predictable aspects of meaning.

In the next section we will tentatively sketch out the function of 'but' within a framework that would view conversation as an integral part of interaction.

#### 4. 'BUT': THE PROBLEM REMAINS

##### 4.1 A tentative proposal

It seems that not only the configuration of the clauses within the utterance, but also the configuration of the utterances within a piece of discourse, are determined by the purpose of the utterance in relation to the goals of the conversation. Our roles as participants in the conversation also seem to be of some significance (cf. Halliday and Hasan, 1976). The configuration of our clauses and utterances will then reflect the significance we assign to our moves represented in these clauses or utterances.

Gray, 1977, notes that "the great bulk of unmarked inter-assertional relationships are continuing" (Ch. 6). While both 'and' and 'but' effect 'descriptive inter-assertional' relationships, "and' is a continuing conjunction, and 'but' is a contrasting one. Gray does not explain what he means by 'continuing' conjunction, but we think that "and' can be said to be a "continuing' conjunction in the sense that the clauses or sentences joined by it, represent positive moves leading to a goal either in the context of the conversation or in that of the utterance. In other words, 'and' connects clauses representing mainly positive moves forwarding the point of the conversation. 'But', on the other hand, is characterized by Gray as a 'contrasting' conjunction, but this term seems inadequate and misleading in a large measure, because 'but' need not contrast anything. Neither need it 'react' or 'cancel' (as Dascal and Katriel, 1977, would have it) some part of the meaning of a previously made utterance, or replace some part of the first conjunct. 'But' can signal a negatively<sup>1</sup> assessed move relative to the goal set in the conversation or utterance which, however, is assessed as carrying at least equal, if not more, weight than other positively assessed moves. Davey and Longuet-Higgins, 1976, note that connecting major clauses by conjunctions is indicative of the fact that "the moves are of comparable interest".

However, 'but' need not introduce a negatively assessed move; depending on the character of the antecedent relations in the discourse it can introduce a positively assessed argument or move in relation to the directionality of the utterance or conversation. If the determination of directionality and antecedent relations is not possible for want of context, for example, then we try and construct such relations within the bounds of the given utterance in order to facilitate our understanding of it. Such interpretation will be acceptable provided that it does not come into conflict with our SBKBs (see section 7.2) (cf. the Lakoffs).

But it seems that a great majority of cases of the use of 'but', reveal this phenomenon of 'stepping back' from the 'same-directed' on-goingness of the moves in an utterance. This 'directedness'<sup>2</sup> is set by other moves prior to the 'but'-introduced move. Consider:

Well I want to wear it this weekend to Vegas but my Mom's buttonholer is broken.<sup>3</sup>

Positive move; I want to wear it,

Negative move: I can't wear it though because ...

It is noticeable that 'but', following a positive move, can signal that there is something untoward in what is coming next, thereby preparing the hearer's framing of the speaker's ensuing utterance: "What follows is to be taken as non-contributory towards the over-all point of my utterance. See it as a negative move (argument)." This seems to be the reason that enables the speaker to follow 'but' with a clause that Overrides' in a way the negatively assessed move; this 'superceding' clause relies for its understanding, within the context, on the assumption of the negative move that is not explicitly stated. In such cases it is common for what follows 'but' to be the explanation of an argument or move that is negatively assessed by the speaker. In the above example, clause (i), 'my Mom's buttonholder is broken", is understood as cohering with the clause preceding 'but', because it explains something that is assumed by the utterance of (i). In

this case what is thus assumed is something of the order of 'I can't wear it though.' The explanation of this assumption is the function of 'but' in conjunction with the clause following it.

'But' is, in a way, a kind of orientating signal. It can characterize the nature of the next move in the light of what has preceded. If what has preceded is a negatively assessed move or argument then 'but' will probably signal a move that positively contributes towards the point of the utterance or the conversation. The characterization of the contribution of the whole utterance as a positive move, or as 'stepping back' from the on-going point of the conversation, will depend greatly on whether the 'but' clause introduces a negatively or positively assessed argument.

Consider the following fragment in which 'but' introduces a clause representing a positive move towards the on-going direction of the conversation:

Fragment (1):

Bess: ... the Black Muslims are certainly more provocative than the Black Muslims ever were.

Jean: The Black Panthers.

Bess: The Black Panthers. What'd I,

Jean: You said the Black Muslims twice.

Bess: Did I really?

Jean: Yes you did, but that's alright I forgive you.

(drawn from data from G. Jefferson's lecture, University of Warwick, 19 February 1979)

'But' here introduces a clause signifying a move resolving a minor problem which, nevertheless, for a moment hampered the felicitous flow of the conversation. Note the interplay of 'but' introduced clauses representing positive and negative moves in the following fragment:



Fragment- (2):

- 1 Caller : They're not —  
 1 B.C. : In hand work, let's face it. Let's face It, you're uh only gonna be  
           able tuh turn out a cert'n amounta work,  
 2 Caller : It's rough buh — We'll al::ways make a living,  
 2 B.C. : Right,  
 3 Caller : Buh we'll never be really rich.  
 3 B.C. : Right. But on the other hand ...

(ibid.)

Notice how C2, having made a negative move — 'It's rough' — goes on to contribute positively towards the desired direction of the conversation by introducing a clause by 'but' thus signalling a positive move: 'It isn't all that bad; we'll always make a living.' In his next turn C3 'steps back' just a little bit from his positive contribution to make a negative point: 'But we'll never be really rich.' BC3 accepts C3's negative point ('Right') and carries on, presumably, to make a positive move. Although the 'but' clause at BC3 is not completed, it is presumed to have been a positive contribution. This is predicted by the nature of his previous move, or rather his acceptance of a negative move ('Right'), in conjunction with the following 'but' signalling his next move.

Of course, notions such as the 'directionality' or point of the utterance, or goal of the conversation (cf. Grice's notion of "the accepted purpose or direction of the talk-exchange", 1975, p.45) are admittedly very vague concepts and require researching. But this should not bar us from looking at clauses in the context of utterances and at utterances in the context of broader pieces of discourse. Analogously we should view the directionality of clauses in terms of the directionality of whole utterances containing them, and this, in turn, should be viewed as determined by the overall directionality, or goal, of the conversation.

Moreover, the notion of move, as used here, in relation to the goal of a conversation, is rather vague and undefined, as this goal is a vague and undefined notion. However, the concept of conversational move has been employed lately in the analysis of conversation (Grice, 1975, p.45, Goffman, 1976, Weiner and Goodenough, 1977, Owen, 1978). Weiner and Goodenough define a conversational move on the production side, as "an action taken by a speaker to accomplish something with words". Seen in this light, then, speech acts (Austin, 1962, Searle, 1969) constitute conversational moves. Despite the obscurity of the concept of conversational move, it can be argued that its use as a unit of analysis "shows promise of dealing with a variety of relevant variables at different conversational levels within an integrated theoretical framework", as Weiner and Goodenough, 1977, p.224, conclude. However, it must be noted that the term 'move', as has been used in recent literature, carries a "static' implication which is not countenanced in this study and is, certainly, not a desired interpretation of the term as employed here. Davey and Longuet- Higgins', 1976, and Levinson's, 1978a, b, employment of this term is not subject to such an interpretation but is used rather 'dynamically'.

My hypothesis is that 'but', being in a sense a metalinguistic device in that it partly functions to characterize inter-clausal relations and thereby label the moves signified by them, is acquired at a later stage in child language acquisition, as is indicated in the following conversation between a father and his four-year-old son:

Father : Let's have some coffee.  
Child : We always have tea.  
Father : Yes, but now we'll have coffee.

Notice that the child's utterance has the illocutionary force of a question, or, in any case, of a response-begging assertion, as becomes clear in Father's second utterance. This is connected with the assumption of an implicit 'but' prefacing

the child's utterance as indeed is understood to be the case by his father.

The distinction made by Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.53, between two types of conjunction seems to be of some relevance here. (Also, see Halliday, 1977, p. 190) Their characterization of the internal type of conjunction which is effected at the inter-personal level may be seen as a metalinguistic contribution towards the flow of the conversation, whilst external conjunction is characterized as a relation within the thesis (see below) at the level of the ideational components of meaning and, therefore, can be seen as a linguistic contribution. Halliday, 1977, characterizes these two types of conjunction as follows:

Each one of the types of conjunctive relation has in principle two interpretations, according to the functional-semantic component from which it is derived. Either the conjunctive meaning resides in the ideational component, as a relation within the thesis, or it resides in the interpersonal component, as a relation within the speech process. These have been referred to respectively as 'external' and 'internal' taking the communication process as the point of departure; a relation between things — between phenomena that constitutes the ideational content of the discourse — is one that is external to the communication process ...

(p. 190)

However theoretically attractive and intuitively plausible this distinction may seem to be, it becomes clear that it is not equally viable when we try to apply it to conversational data.

It should be noted that accounting for the use of 'but' in terms of positively or negatively assessed moves in relation to the directionality of the utterance or conversation will enable us to tackle in the same framework both cases of what have been called 'semantic opposition but' and 'denial -of expectation but', as these have been described by R. Lakoff, 1971. Moreover, a unified analysis is called for, since, as has been shown, such a distinction cannot be justified in

the terms in which it has been made.

It has been argued here that a sentence like (51),

(51) John is a Republican, but he is honest,

can have several interpretations — contra G. Lakoff, 1971b — depending on the context in which it is uttered:

(a) Suppose (51) is uttered in  $\sigma$  context in which a group of unscrupulous Republicans are trying to recruit some Republican devotees, but of rather low moral standards, with a view to raiding the offices of a rival party: in this situation (51) is understood as follows:

- (i) John is a Republican: positive move,
- (ii) But he is honest: negative move of equal or more weight.

The negative move follows the positive one and this is deemed to be decisive for the whole outcome at that stage of the conversation: i.e. the contribution of the utterance is negatively assessed in relation to the set goal of the conversation — the question of John's candidacy. If the speaker had instead uttered: 'John is honest but he is a Republican' then the whole utterance would have been regarded as positively assessed in relation to the set directionality of the conversation. This is so because the 'but' introduced clause is always central to the characterization of the whole utterance as regards its directionality as has already been argued. It carries as much weight as, if not more than, the p conjunct of the 'p but q' utterance. In other words both p and q conjuncts can be 'new' information, but whilst the p conjunct can sometimes be 'given' information, as in the following example,

Fragment (3):

Jean: I still say that the sewing machine's quicker,

Harmon: Oh it c'n be quicker but it doesn't do the job,

(Jefferson, op.cit.)

this cannot be the case with the q conjunct. The 'but' introduced clause has always to be 'new' information as we shall see below.<sup>4</sup>

(b) Now consider a context in which a firm is looking for a candidate for a job for which the quality of being honest is considered an asset whilst Republicanism a disadvantage. In this situation then (51) would be understood as positively contributing towards the overall directionality of the conversation, as against its utterance in context (a) above. Conjunct q, carrying more weight than p, and being assessed as a positive move, determines the overall point of the utterance.

(c) Two friends at a cocktail party, where gossip, as usual, thrives, are exchanging their views about John's virtues and vices. One of them utters (51) in the course of their conversation. As there have been no antecedent relations in this case in connexion with John's Republicanism and honesty, as in the other two contexts (that is, no relevant CMCA's, see 7.1) the listener of (51) will try and construct such relations within the bounds of the utterance. In this case, therefore, understanding (51) requires the listener's appeal to Standing, Background Knowledge and Beliefs (SBKBs, see 7.2) which can be connected only with the speaker of (51), and not necessarily shared by the listener. However, if such a relation is constructive then (51) is "understood", i.e. is felicitous. In this case, therefore, a direct antecedent for 'but' is not to be located within the province of Current, Mutual, Contextual Assumptions (CMCA's), and the listener resorts to the invocation of possible SBKBs that would supply such an antecedent. Here again the moves can be regarded as positively or negatively assessed in relation to antecedents provided, not by the relevant CMCA's, but by the SBKBs. As we have seen, G. Lakoff maintains that (51) is grammatical only as interpreted in context (c); but, as has been amply illustrated, his claim is unfounded.

'Semantic opposition but', a la Lakoff, can also be accounted for in this framework. A sentence like "John is tall but Bill is short" can be uttered in a

context in which there are antecedent relations (CMCAs) for the use of ‘but’, introducing negative or positive moves relative to such relations — looking for young tall people for our football team, for instance; or it may be uttered in a situation in which such relations are non-existent. In the latter case such relations are constructive by appeal to SBKBs (in this case: ‘tall’, positive, ‘short’, negative). It is widely held in the literature that one polar extreme is considered positive. We don’t say: ‘How small is the house?’ but ‘How big is the house?’ even if it is known that it is small.

#### 4.2 Dascal and Katriel’s thesis reviewed

We now turn to the consideration of the most comprehensive and most recent account of ‘but’, that given by Dascal and Katriel, 1977. They are mainly concerned with the linguistic behaviour of the two Hebrew equivalents of ‘but’, ‘aval’ and ‘ela’ in ‘pAq’ and ‘pEq’ sentences.

The framework proposed requires a broad notion of meaning which consists of several layers and sub-layers, "ranging from the more to the less explicit, from an inner ‘core’ of content to contextually conveyed implicatures via layers and sub- layers such as presuppositions, modality, illocutionary force, and felicity conditions" (p. 153). ‘Aval’ and ‘ela’ (‘but’) are used to mark explicitly some separation between a pair of layers or sub-layers of meaning, or a contrast within a specific layer. In (79)B, therefore, B acknowledges A’s question as valid, but questions A’s commitment to it — so that ‘but’ is interposed between the ‘layer’ of phrastic and neustic (cf. Hare, 1970):

- (79)     A: Why did he react that way?  
           B: It would be interesting to find out, but why should you wrack your brain?

‘But’ can operate on the layer of meaning referred to as ‘felicity conditions’, as in (80)B:

(80) A: Give me this book as a present.

B: But you don't need it,

in which B, they say, cancels out the felicity condition of A's request. Incidentally, it can be noticed that the notion of felicity conditions needs to be stretched if it is to embrace such features as these noted here by Dascal and Katriel (cf. Heringer, 1976, Searle etc.).

It can also be noticed that in many 'aval' utterances in which the  $\&$  conjunct is omitted, q actually overrides an implicit reaction by B to A's utterance (or to part of it); q is no more than the explanatory part accounting for B's reaction or negative move. Therefore in (80)B, B questions (makes a negative move in relation to the point of A's utterance, as we would put it) the overall warrantability of A's speech-act. What is understood, though not uttered, is something of the order:

B(i) Why should you be asking for it, since you don't need it?

It, therefore, seems to be arguable whether B accepts any layers of A's utterance, as Dascal and Katriel claim, while rejecting an outer layer of meaning.

Further Dascal and Katriel claim that 'pAq' sentences can reject presuppositional aspects of a previously made statement, as in (81) below:

(81) A: Dan stopped beating his wife a long time ago.

B: But he has never beaten her.

Dascal and Katriel write:

By rejecting one of the presuppositions of A's utterance, B accepts part of its meaning, the proposition that Dan does not beat his wife, but rejects the suggestion that he once did beat her, thus invalidating A's utterance as a felicitous assertion.

(emphasis added, p. 155)

It is not surprising that Pascal and Katriel prefer the term suggestion to the term presupposition in their attempt to present the '(p)Aq' utterance as accepting one part of A's utterance meaning while rejecting another. It should be reminded that it is widely held in the literature that if the presupposition of a sentence fails, the question of whether the sentence is true or not (and hence accepted or rejected) does not arise. Besides, we are here faced with the most well-known example of 'classic' (semantic) presupposition, and the bulk of the literature on the subject would militate against Dascal and Katriel's claim that, while rejecting the presupposition in the case at hand, you can nevertheless claim that you accept the propositional meaning. As Dascal and Katriel themselves note, the failure of the presupposition "invalidate/s/A's utterance as a felicitous assertion". Their two claims are clearly in conflict.

By the same token it can be argued in connexion with (80)B, with regard to which Dascal and Katriel claim that,

B acknowledges A's utterance as a command, pointing out that one of its felicity conditions does not hold.

(p. 165)

that the satisfaction of the felicity conditions is a prerequisite of the felicitous coming off of the speech-act in question. It follows therefore that if a felicity condition is questioned as invalid, a fortiori the speech-act dependent on the satisfaction of such felicity conditions cannot be regarded as 'happy' or felicitous.

Dascal and Katriel regard the function — as they define it — of 'pAq' sentences in examples like (81)B and (80)B as evidence for the postulation of the following principle;

When a 'pAq' sentence is uttered as a reaction to an utterance U, the meaning layer of U rejected by the utterance of the 'pAq' sentence is either more 'external' than or as 'external' as the meaning layer accepted by it.

(p. 165)



However, as their claims regarding their examples (81)B and (80)B are shaky, so are their grounds for the postulation of the above principle.

Indeed it seems that Dascal and Katriel would be prepared to claim that B in (82)B below accepts part of the meaning of A's utterance that Robin danced with Aruna, while rejecting another part of it, that he went to the party:

(82) A: Rpbm danced with Aruna at the party last night. B: But he didn't go to the party.

They do not seem to think that by rejecting the one part, a fortiori B rejects all that is left inexplicitly negated in his utterance. However, such a view would take little notice of how language functions.

Moreover, Dascal and Katriel purport to have constructed a framework that will afford a "unified description of the linguistic behaviour of 'aval', 'ela' and, ..., of many other related linguistic facts" (p. 153). It is clear, therefore, that their aspirations regarding the explanatory power of their framework extend well beyond its being adequate for accounting only for a limited range of 'but' sentences. As is noted, however,

'pAq' and 'pEq' utterances share a common characteristic with respect to the positions they can occupy in discourse. In Schegloff and Sack's, 1973, terminology, to say that 'aval' and 'ela' utterances typically function as reactions in discourse, and cannot serve to initiate a conversation, is to say that 'pEq' and 'pAq' utterances can function only as second pair parts in adjacency pairs. The pair type utterances they are associated with are Offer/acceptance, refusal', 'argument / agreement, disagreement', etc.

(p. 164)

Indeed all their examples of 'p but q' sentences fall within the category of utterances that can be characterized as second pair parts in adjacency pairs. But, although many 'p but q' sentences can be second pair parts of adjacency pairs, it would be far from true to claim, as Dascal and Katriel in fact do, that they cannot occupy

other positions in discourse, as a quick look into real conversational data will readily show". Indeed, the bulk of 'p but q' sentences cannot be accounted for within Dascal and Katriel's framework. But it seems that this is the fate of most analyses of linguistic phenomena that are not based on real conversational data but rather on constructed artificial-looking examples that always fit the theses. (cf. 'You seem to imply that I should open the window, but you can't really mean it' (p. 166), 'You don't really mean that I should throw it out but just say so' (p. 156)). Moreover, as will be evident in many fragments below, many 'but' sentences are 'split' between two utterances — allocated in distinct 'turns' (Sacks *et al.*, 1974) — but made nevertheless by the same speaker (cf. Fragment (6) C<sub>3</sub> below). This fact does not accord with Dascal and Katriel's neat allocation of 'p but q' sentences to second pair parts.

In what follows we will test Dascal and Katriel's thesis on data in which 'p but q' sentences do not occur as predicted in their account. They write:

The point of using an 'aval' or 'ela' utterance is to mark explicitly some particular separation between a pair of layers (or sublayers), or a contrast within a given layer.

(p. 153)

However attractive this argument may seem to be, it cannot purport to embrace 1+ie majority of cases of 'but' despite the generality assumed in the notion of meaning. The clause introduced by 'but' may often have no such bearing on what preceded it. A *fortiori* it cannot be claimed in such cases that 'but' marks "a contrast within a given layer" of meaning. To take only one example, consider the following fragment drawn from Heritage, 1978:

Fragment (4):

- L: Okay maybe we can go when Dave 'n Steve go to school on Monday.  
 R: ya sure. Oh by the way ((sniff)) I have a big favor to ask ya.  
 L: Sure, go 'head.

- R : 'Member the blouse you mode a couple weeks ago?  
 L : Ya.  
 (i) R : Well I want to wear it this weekend to Vegas but my Mom's  
 buttonholer is broken.  
 L : Rob I told ya when I made the blouse I'd do the buttonholes.

Clearly 'but' does not operate across the 'p but q' utterance boundaries as all 'pAq' utterances in fact do in Dascal and Katriel's study. Neither is (4i) a 'pEq' utterance as p is not negated here as is required for the use of 'ela'. We are, therefore, constrained to consider the function of 'but' as operative within the utterance boundaries.

What is the relation between the two sentences conjoined by "but' in (4i) then? Can it be justifiably claimed that 'but' "marks explicitly some particular separation between a pair of layers (or sublayers) or a contrast within a given layer"? Surely the clause 'my Mom's buttonholder is broken' does not cancel any felicity conditions of the assertability of the clause 'I want to wear it this weekend to Vegas', or any part thereof. Moreover, as has been noted, (4i) would definitely be a 'pAq' utterance since 'pEq' utterances are corrective and must have their p conjunct negated. But as noted by Dascal and Katriel,

The job performed by 'aval' and, to some extent, by 'ela' is to indicate a differential attitude of the speaker towards different layers of meaning. Therefore ... each 'aval' example falls under two layer-labels, one referring to the layer accepted by the speaker and the other to the layer rejected by him.

(p. 154)

That is, 'but' utterances have 'cancellatory' or 'corrective' functions:

'aval' and 'ela' perform similar cancellation jobs whether they cancel out implicatures derived from factual or contextual knowledge or features of meaning proper derived from dictionary entries.

(p. 169)

However, although this seems to hold for a number of uses of 'but', it is by no means true of all occurrences of "but'. For example, it is not at all clear what can be said to be 'cancelled' in (4i) above. Moreover, as regards this example, it cannot be claimed that one layer of the meaning of a previously made utterance is accepted in its p-conjunct while another is rejected in its q-conjunct, or vice versa, by the speaker. This would entail that the use of 'but' is motivated by a preceding utterance made by another speaker which can hardly be the case in this example. It is worthy of note that this claim is applicable to cases of 'but'-utterances which have a 'reactive' character; that is, when they are second pair parts in adjacency pairs, as has already been noted. In such cases then it makes sense to talk of accepting one layer of meaning while rejecting another; but then we are referring to the layers of the overall meaning of another speaker's utterance, preceding the 'p but q' utterance, in which these layers of meaning are separated.

However, straining Dascal and Kernel's thesis, in an attempt to make it work within the bounds of the 'p but q' utterance, we can see that problems still -persist: If any part of the meaning — in its broadest sense — of the p-conjunct in 'p but q' is cancelled out in q, then it must be understood that this cancellation is not only not straightforward but also inexplicit. What is cancelled out is understood as assumed to be so cancelled on the strength of the q-conjunct, which can be seen as an explanation. Further, one's looking on q as an explanation in the context at hand, is motivated by this very assumption of an inexplicit cancellation. Put differently, the assumption of the inexplicit cancellation of inferences(?) drawn from the assertion of the p-conjunct is necessitated by the clause introduced by 'but'. This clause can be seen as relevant to what has preceded it, on the condition that it be looked upon as explaining and, therefore, necessitating a certain cancellation of inferences.

Cases like this, however, cannot be captured in Dascal and Katriel's thesis. However, if we allow for 'but' to signal positive and negative moves, as has been

explained, then in the light of what precedes it, it is clear what significance the next move is assigned in relation to the overall point of the utterance.

Admittedly, Dascal and Katriel's framework for accounting for 'but' sentences is very attractive indeed. But in order to encompass such cases of 'but' as the above, and many more, as will be shown below, it needs to be so broadened that the thesis will be rendered contentless, as there can be envisaged no such stretching of the notion of meaning that will enable us to account for cases like (4i) and others, more intractable, in terms of it.

#### 4.2.1 An illustrative example of types of moves signalled by conjunction

Dascal and Katriel hope furthermore that their framework might be "fruit- fully applied to the study of other linguistic phenomena as well" (p. 170). One such phenomenon they go on to consider, is the case of 'although'. They note that a constraint, not shared by 'but'-sentences, is in evidence in 'although'- sentences; that is, the clause introduced by 'although' must be in the indicative mood as shown in (83)B:

- (83) A : Shut the window.  
 B : I'll shut it, although I don't want you to give me orders.  
 : \*I'll shut it, although don't give me orders.

They do not offer any explication of this linguistic fact; however, an account is readily available if conjunctions (conjunctive relations, elements) are seen as introducing clauses representing move's in relation to the overall direction of the conversation or to the local aim of the utterance.

As has been noted 'but' introduces clauses signifying moves that play a central role in relation to the point of the conversation (cf. Davey and Longuet- Higgins, 1976). This is not the case with 'although'-clauses. As Davey and Longuet-Higgins would put it, 'although' introduces moves that are not "tactically important":

When  $\alpha$  move is futile or vacuous, its description may be relegated to subordinate clause.

If this argument is accepted it is clear why 'although'-clauses do not admit of the imperative mood. The issuing of orders or requests represented in the imperative mood (direct speech acts) is always 'tactically important'; that is, cannot be seen as a futile or vacuous move since it purports to change the world in some sense or other (Searle, 1976). It is of significance to the overall on-goingness of the utterance or conversation. It follows therefore that such a central move cannot be relegated to the less significant status of those signified by 'although'- clauses. On the other hand, if the q-conjunct is in the indicative, as in (83)B, it can be taken as not signifying a 'tactically important' move. The speaker of (83)B does not "put his case' strongly. He only mentions that he does not want the speaker of (83)A to give him orders, but he certainly does not make an issue of it. A will probably think twice before he gives an order again to the speaker of (84):

(84) I'll shut it, but don't give me orders.

Not so with the speaker of (83)B. As Searle, 1976, would have it, (83)B and (84) differ with regard to their direction of fit between words and the world. Whilst the direction of fit in (84) is clearly a 'world-to-word' one (hence the listener's second thoughts about issuing orders to him in the future), in (83) B the direction of fit is ambiguous. It can be either a 'world-to-word' one if the content of the 'although'- clause is meant as an attenuated form of an indirect speech act, or it can be a 'word-to- world' one if it is taken as a description of a particular state of affairs/( although I don't want you — and you know it — to give me orders). Clearly, if the 'although'- clause is taken as a request, it cannot have the same illocutionary force or, rather, strength, as the 'but'-clause in (84), even if they have the same illocutionary point (Searle, 1976).

The notion of the distinction between 'given' and 'new' in an utterance is of relevance here. What is conveyed in q of a 'p but q' utterance must necessarily be

new. That is what must be understood by 'tactically important'. It has a high degree of dynamism in relation to the determination of the purpose of the utterance or, generally, the directionality of the conversation. Not so with 'although'-clauses. What is conveyed in the 'although'-clause is given, or regarded as given, by the speaker. This explains its lack of significance in the context of the overall utterance and conversation. In (83)B, therefore, the 'although'-clause, 'although I don't want you to give me orders', conveys either something that is known to the hearer, or something that is looked on as given by the speaker and, therefore, is not attributed any current significance in the context of his overall utterance. Moreover, in 'although'-clauses following the main clause, 'although' is "normally unaccented", as noted by Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.252. This is conducive to the intended understanding of the 'although'-clause as given material.<sup>5</sup>

As has been noted, the clause introduced by 'but' signifies the latest move that is to be taken as decisive for the determination of the overall direction of the utterance or conversation at that stage. For instance, consider (84)B and (84)C as regards the overall direction of the utterance:

- (84) A Shut the window.  
 B Don't give me orders, but I'll shut it.  
 C I'll shut it, but don't give me orders.

It is clear that the q-conjunct in both (84)B and (84)C is of a greater centrality to the direction of the utterance. In both cases what is impressed on the hearer is not so much the p-, but the q-conjunct. Indeed, in (84)B the p-conjunct is heard as having the illocutionary force of a request rather than that of an order (or at least it is an order of a lesser illocutionary strength than that in C), in view of its positioning and of what follows it. This is not the case with (84)C.

It is clear, therefore, that the 'but' - introduced clause carries more weight than the preceding clause in relation to the point of the utterance, and seems to

have a decisive role in determining the goal of the conversation. To illustrate the overriding significance of the second conjunct introduced by 'but', consider what effect the TV advertisement of fresh cream cakes would have, if, instead of being,

Naughty, but nice,

it were,

Nice, but naughty.

The latter would be more likely to feature in Health or Slimming magazines, but not in advertisements promoting the sale of fresh cream cakes.

Moreover, 'but' can follow a p-conjunct that has served to 'set the stage', so to speak, for the q-conjunct which is introduced by 'but' and carries all the information that the utterance purports to convey. In this case, p will usually refer to 'given' information that is considered to be part of the hearer's knowledge of the world. Consider the following example,

I don't know whether you guys know about quizzes but this one is really fantastic,

in which the speaker presumes that his audience do know about quizzes, but his p-conjunct, nevertheless, serves to forestall possible unwanted reactions (protestations, etc.); q, prefaced by 'but' signals that here something different, new, is to follow. 'But' serves to "hammer in" the point made in the q-conjunct. This construction is very common in repeating questions, or a point made earlier in a different formulation. Also, consider the following example, from a radio interview on ambassadors:

Obviously, the man's policy is the important factor, but the desirability of the wife is of some importance, too.

'Obviously' is indicative of the fact that the p-conjunct is considered by the speaker as 'given' information; p, in a way, is complimentary, a courtesy



move, towards the listener, before he 'presses on' with the new information contained in the q-conjunct.

#### 4.3 Conclusion

We have made the point that Dascal and Katriel's analysis holds for cases of \*£ but q' conjunctions which are 'responses' to a previous utterance made by another speaker and in which a separation of different layers of meaning can be effected. However, if their thesis is not applicable to cases of 'JD but a/' sentences which are not seen as responses to a previous utterance made by another speaker, the scope of the explanatory power of their analysis is significantly diminished. Consider, for instance, their claim that 'but' can serve to cancel out presuppositional aspects of an utterance (p.155). In a sentence like (85),

(85) \*John knows his wife has left, but he's wrong,

'but' cannot be claimed to felicitously cancel in its q-conjunct the presuppositions of its p-conjunct. Mutatis mutandis this goes for all other layers of meaning with the possible exception of the most outer ones. It follows, therefore, that their analysis holds only for 'but' sentences which form second pair parts in adjacency pairs, and in which 'but' is seen as cancelling or correcting something uttered by another speaker in a previous utterance.

But this is not all: in many cases, in which 'but' occurs in second pair parts of adjacency pairs, it is evident that its relation to the preceding utterances is not so clear-cut as to enable us to put our finger on what exactly it is that 'but' cancels out, corrects, or, generally, responds to. That is, it is not at all clear, not only what separation of layers of the meaning of the preceding utterance can be effected, but also how, and in relation to which utterance, this overall meaning is to be located. The example of fragment (1) (p. 96 ) is illustrative of the problems mentioned here.

Furthermore, the use of ‘but’ need not be motivated by something in the preceding utterance — i.e. in its first pair part. In real conversation the factors motivating the use of ‘but’ can stretch across several turns. In such cases it is rather implausible to claim that ‘but’ neatly and squarely cancels or corrects one specific layer or sub-layer of the meaning of a previous utterance and not a sum total ‘meaning’ gleaned from more than one utterance previously made. This problem is illustrated in fragment (5) below:

Fragment (5):

- Janet :           Guess why I’m calling.  
 Larry :           I know cuz I didn’ do my math,  
 Janet :           Well-u-how w’d I know. I wasn’ et th’ school today.  
 Larry :           Oh:  
 Janet :           Right?  
 Larry :           Right.  
 (i) Janet :       hhh But I am calling about math.  
 Larry :           I knew it!

(from Jefferson, lecture at Warwick University)

Notice that the use of ‘but’ here is motivated not by one or two preceding utterances, but by the sum total of the preceding utterances, which set the stage for the felicitous introduction of J (i)’s utterance by ‘but’.

Moreover, even in connection with adjacency pairs, it is not at all evident that Dascal and Katriel’s analysis is always applicable. Consider fragment (3) (p. 100), for example, in which, clearly, ‘but’ does not have a cancellatory or corrective function; that is, it does not accept one layer or sub-layer of the meaning of the preceding utterance. Instead, in the p-conjunct of his \*£ but a/ utterance, Harmon accepts Jean’s utterance in its totality (all layers of its meaning), and in the q-conjunct he goes on to add a negative argument, which, constituting the q-conjunct, signals a negatively assessed move towards the point of the utterance.

Besides 'but' can introduce utterances that 'complement', in a way, an utterance made by the same speaker, perhaps in a previous turn, as in C3, fragment (6) below.

There follow a number of cases of 'but' from real conversational data which cannot be accounted for within Dascal and Katriel's framework. These, however, can be satisfactorily handled in terms of a framework, as adumbrated here, in which 'but' is seen as signalling positively or negatively assessed moves:

Fragment (6): (Telephone conversation)

(C = caller, R = recipient)

C<sub>1</sub>: So er anyway Christina the next time I shall be able to have a go at Julia  
is next Thursday

R<sub>1</sub> : yes

and I'll certainly do that but you know she feels that you sh I think she's  
not quite clear what the fuss is about

R<sub>2</sub>: yes

C<sub>2</sub>: as far as she's concerned I'm telling you it's alright

R<sub>3</sub>: yes

C<sub>3</sub>: but you know as far as I'm concerned that's not really legal and it's very  
much better to have a letter

R<sub>4</sub> : yeah

C<sub>4</sub>: and I really will do what I can about it as

R<sub>5</sub> : yes

soon as I can.

(from M. Owen (forthcoming) 'Units  
of Natural Conversation')

## Fragment (7):

Bob: Don't they have those new snaggies or, *you* know non-snaggies?  
Sue: Mesh?  
Kit: I'm gonna get me ( )  
Sue: If you, uh, if you, uh put them, they run up, they don't run down.  
Bob: Oh boy'.  
Sue: But if you, you know, rip here it runs up — and then it doesn't run down.

## Fragment (8): (Telephone conversation)

R: 6912264  
C: 's that Michael  
R: yeah  
C: it's Jane  
R: hello Jane  
C: hello I've got a lot of mail down here of yours  
R: have you  
C: yes but I've got my big conflict tonight and I just can't bring it up hhhh  
so if one of you wants to pop down and get it I hate to be mean but I  
(daren't) I can't

(M. Owen, op.cit.)

**PART II**

**CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES**

## CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES

In this part our main preoccupation will be with the class of conversational implicatures. We therefore propose to examine in detail some of Grice's examples of conversational implicature, while some other cases will be dealt with more cursorily. The motivation is to see whether these examples can be claimed as genuinely belonging to the class of conversational implicatures. To be members of a homogeneous class they must all instantiate the same linguistic phenomenon, and hence be amenable to a definition by a homogeneous class of criteria, rather than exhibit distinct, idiosyncratic features. The findings will support the view that a wide range of phenomena have been explained in terms of conversational implicature. It will, therefore, be contended that the term "conversational implicature" has been used as a blanket term to accommodate linguistic phenomena of a multifaceted character, and hence has been abused. The concept of conversational implicature will be redefined in more stringent terms.

Some cases of alleged conversational implicature can be explained in terms of shared background knowledge and assumptions. Due to their important role in language use, bodies of background knowledge will be examined, and their significance for language use will be illustrated. A typical case of "indirection" will be considered as the background of such bodies of knowledge. Finally, a class of generalized conversational implicatures will be looked at closely, and shown to be misbegotten in so far as it fails to adequately explain intriguing issues of language use.

## 5. GRICE'S PARTICULARIZED CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES

In this chapter we will look closely at some of Grice's examples of particularized conversational implicatures. However, before examining each case in depth, it may prove profitable to consider Grice's early account of implication in general and, in particular, his account of the vehicles of implication, to which we may now turn.

### 5.1 The vehicles of implicature

In this section we would like to examine some examples which Grice presents as cases of implication, that is cases in which particular locutions are used in such a way as to generate certain implications in virtue of general features or principles governing the use of language, rather than in virtue of the meaning of such locutions.

What gave rise to his account of implications was his dissatisfaction with the state of affairs regarding the Theory of Perception and, more specifically, the stalemate in which it was, because of the alleged unsuitability of such locutions as 'it looks red to me' for describing sense-data:

The primary difficulty facing the contention that perceiving involves having or sensing a sense-datum is that of giving a satisfactory explanation of the meaning of the technical term 'sense-datum'.

(Grice, 1967a, p.87)

One kind of objection to a Causal Theory of Perception (hereafter CTP) consisted in the contention that one cannot use such locutions as 'looks to me' to describe sense-data in cases where there is no implication of denial or doubt; that is, in cases where there is no fulfilment of the implication, accompanying the utterance of such locutions, that there might be doubt about the state of affairs thus described, or in cases where we know that denials have been expressed, or

might be expressed. This implication, Grice calls, the 'D-or-D' condition ('doubt-or-denial' condition) and describes it as follows:

When someone makes such a remark as 'It looks red to me' a certain implication is carried, an implication which is disjunctive in form. It is implied either that the object referred to is known or believed by the speaker not to be red, or that it has been denied by someone else to be red, or that the speaker is doubtful whether it is red, or that someone else has expressed doubt whether it is red, or that the situation is such that though no doubt has actually been expressed and no denial has actually been made, some person or other might feel inclined towards denial or doubt if he were to address himself to the question whether the object is actually red.

(*ibid.*, pp. 87-88)

Grice goes on to say that this implication is not attached to such locutions as a feature of their meaning, but as a feature of the use of language. It follows, then, that the implication of the fulfilment of the 'D-or-D' condition is not logical in character, and therefore not a precondition of the truth or falsity of the locution in question. The upshot of this claim is that the sense- datum theorist can use such locutions to describe sense-data. In order to come to this conclusion Grice considers four examples, the utterance of which, he thinks generates similar implications as locutions of the form 'it looks to me'.

As we are here concerned with his account of implication, and not with his account of a CTP, we will concentrate on the examples of implication considered there, which are the following:

- (1) 'Smith has left off beating his wife'; the implication is that Smith has been beating his wife.
- (2) 'She was poor but she was honest'; what is implied is roughly that there is some contrast between (her) poverty and (her) honesty.
- (3) A teacher reporting on a pupil at Collections says 'Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical'; the implication is that Jones is no good at Philosophy.



- (4) 'My wife is either in the kitchen or in the bedroom'; what is normally implied here is that the speaker does not know in which of the two rooms his wife is.

In all cases, except in the first, Grice says that the truth or falsity of the implication is irrelevant to the original statement's truth conditions. As regards the first example, which he says is "a stock case of what is sometimes called 'presupposition'" (*ibid.* , p.90), he admits, not without reservation, that the truth or falsity of the original statement is dependent on the truth of what is implied.

Grice considers what the vehicle of the implication is in each case and offers four candidates:

- (a) what the speaker said (or asserted).
- (b) the speaker ('did he imply that ...').
- (c) the words the speaker used.
- (d) his saying that (or again his saying that in that way).

As regards the first candidate, (a), Grice says that while in the first case, (1), it holds, i.e. one could say that what the speaker said implied that Smith had been beating his wife, in the second case, (2), one could not say that what the speaker said implied that there was a contrast between for example, honesty and poverty. The test he offers is that whereas it is true to say that 'If Smith left off beating his wife, then he has been beating her', one cannot accept the hypothetical 'If she was poor but honest, then there is some contrast between poverty and honesty, or between her poverty and her honesty'. As has been seen, Grice, in his later article 'Logic and conversation', adopts the view that the implicatures generated by 'but' are conventional in character. He thus modifies his view that such cases should be classed on a par with cases of type (1). In the light of this modification we will not consider several points he makes in connection with these two examples. As far as the second vehicle of implication is concerned, Grice claims with regard to both (1) and (2) that "the speaker could be said to have

implied whatever it is that is implied" (*ibid.* , p.91).

Let us now examine candidate (c) in relation to example (1), and see whether it carries over the implication:

(c) 'the words the speaker used implied ... '

Grice is sceptical about whether this candidate would hold in this case. One tends to say that it does not: candidate (c) refers not to the utterance as a whole, as candidate (a) does, but to the specific words the speaker used and, as seems to be clear, the presupposition of (1) is not the work of any specific word or words as is the case with the implication of example (2).

There remains to be examined the fourth candidate of the vehicle of implication, (d), with regard to the first two examples:

(d) 'his saying that (or again his saying that in that way)'.

In relation to this candidate Grice says that "in neither case would it be evidently appropriate to speak of his saying that, or of his saying that in that way, as implying what is implied" (*ibid.* , p.91). Evidently, Grice is right in excluding (d) as a vehicle of the implication in both cases, with one restriction though, which Grice seems to assume by the addition of the qualification: '(or again his saying that in that way)'. The expression "his saying that" may refer either to the utterance as an act of issuing a statement (act-sense), or to the utterance as what has been stated (object-sense). It is clear, however, from the qualification added that Grice intends to refer to the act-sense of the expression 'his saying that', because it is only in this sense that the phrase is subject to qualifications with regard to the manner in which the statement was made.

With regard to the third example, Grice says that, uttered in this context, its implication is in no truth-conditional relation with the statement made; and in this respect, he says, (3) is much closer to (2) than (1).

As for the candidates for the vehicle of the implication, he argues that the speaker could be said to have implied that Jones is hopeless, and he apparently feels it imperative to add the qualification "(provided that this is what [the speaker] intended to get across)" (*ibid.*, p. 93). What Grice here seems to have in mind is that, when we say that the speaker implied that S, we are referring, not only to his utterance and its implications, but also to the implications he wanted it (his utterance) to impart. In other words we recognize the speaker's specific intentions in uttering the statement. However, he does not seem to have the same view when he examines the same candidate in relation to case (1), either because he thinks that the verb 'imply' is ambiguous between these two uses (the intentional and the unintentional one), but sees no reason to distinguish between them, or, because he confuses the two possible uses an utterance of (1) can be put into.

We must distinguish between at least two cases of the use of (1): one is the presuppositional one for which no 'setting of the scene' (linguistic or situational) is required; the other use is the one whereby the speaker avails himself of these presuppositional aspects of the sentence which he deliberately puts to work in order to convey implicitly (imply) what conventionally should be treated as an established fact. Is there any gain in drawing the line between presuppositional and 'implicational' uses of the same sentence? It might be useful to distinguish between what is treated as presuppositional stock (known and believed by all participants in a talk exchange to be so), and what is intentionally drawn out of this presuppositional 'pool' and so manipulated that it impart information beyond the conventional meaning of the utterance in whose guise it functions. If we view the two utterance-tokens of the sentence from the point of view of their information increment, and therefore their functional nature in conversation, we see that they carry out distinct tasks in furthering our conversational purposes. The imparting of the information in the guise of a presupposition may either be drawn out of the common presuppositional pool, as noted above, and in this case

the additional information will not be the presuppositional stock per se, but possibly the information, for instance, that the speaker is aware of the state of affairs being such; or it may be treated by the speaker intentionally as if it belonged to the shared presuppositional pool with a view to conveying his message indirectly. Thus it seems as if the notion of intention is a distinguishing factor for cases generating implication.

As regards the fourth candidate, (d), 'his saying that', or 'his saying just that and no more', Grice thinks that it carries the implication in (3) that Jones is hopeless. Although we feel inclined to agree with Grice in this respect, we should not fail to notice that he alters the wording of this candidate, probably unintentionally, from 'his saying that (or again his saying that in that way)' to 'his saying that (at any rate [his] saying just that and no more)'.

We would like to examine the two different phraseologies of the same candidate more closely and see what, if anything, is the difference between them. As has already been argued, the former formulation refers, in all likelihood, to the statement in its act-sense, i.e. to the speaker's making a statement in a particular manner; besides, it should be remembered, it was in this sense that this candidate was excluded as carrying the implications in the first two examples, obviously, because such a formulation attaches significance to intentional aspects on the part of the speaker, with regard to his statement's implications.

On the other hand, however, it is not clear whether the latter formulation refers to the statement in its act-sense or its object-sense. Let us see what we understand by the expression 'his saying that' in the former formulation first and then in the latter: The former formulation evidently refers to features like tempo, intonation, tone of voice, as well as to paralinguistic features like gestures, movements, posture, proximity (proxemics), or, generally, to the manner in which the statement is made; it therefore refers to the act of making an assertion.

On the other hand the latter formulation, ('his saying just that and no more'), seems to refer to the statement in its object-sense rather than in its act-sense. However, it is not evident what should be understood by the phrase 'his saying just that and no more' if we are not aware of the specific context in which the statement was issued. What, therefore, the added qualification does in this case is to pin the utterance against the background of the situation at issue, and therefore against our conventional expectations. The utterance then in this formulation is not considered in abstraction from, but within, its linguistic or situational context; it thus invokes set conventions, and consequently set expectations, shared by all the participants involved in the linguistic event. However, the statement fails to meet our expectations, hence the wording: 'his saying just that' and the generated implications.

In order that the implications of the latter formulation of the fourth candidate, (d), be better understood, we could try to apply it, thus formulated, to utterances of the first two examples:

His saying that (at any rate his saying just that and no more) Smith has left off beating his wife implied that Smith had been beating his wife,

and,

His saying that (at any rate his saying just that and no more) she was poor but she was honest implied that there is some contrast between poverty and honesty (or between her poverty and her honesty).

The incompatibility of these embeddings becomes even more evident if the examples are phrased as follows:

His saying just that Smith has left off beating his wife and no more implied that...

In our view this incompatibility is due to the fact that, if there are any implications in the first two examples, they do not emanate from the function of the linguistic or

situative context in conjunction with the utterance. The implications in the first two cases are neither the function of the speaker's intentions nor the function of the context.

As far as the other two candidates are concerned, 'the words the speaker used' and 'what the speaker said', Grice thinks, quite rightly, that in relation to the third example they do not hold as carriers of the implication.

We would now like to apply the hypothetical test to examples (3) and (4) with a view to determining whether the implication is carried by (a), i.e. 'what the speaker said'. With regard to (3) the hypothetical sentence would run as follows:

If Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical then Jones is no good at Philosophy.

Obviously this will not do. However, we might try and contextualise the utterance by adding some features of the fourth candidate of implication and see whether it works:

If Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical and nothing else is said about Jones (or, and this is just what is said about Jones) then Jones is no good at Philosophy.

Whichever way we formulate the hypothetical it does not seem to work. The reason for the inapplicability of the hypothetical here seems to be the abstraction of the utterance from the speaker; this is effected by treating his utterance as a fact of the world and not as something the speaker uttered. Compare with the following formulation:

If he said just that Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical and no more, then Jones is no good at Philosophy.

This again will not do because, although the utterance is not treated as a fact of the world but as a statement made by the speaker, the implication is; and this

obviously will not do. However, taking care of this point, the hypothetical can be formulated as follows:

If he said just that Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is good and no more, then he implied that Jones is no good at Philosophy.

This formulation will do, with the proviso though, that we have knowledge of the context at issue. The qualifications required here are not interpretable, unless they serve to invoke the situation at issue. Therefore 'what the speaker said', abstracted from pragmatic factors, like the context of the utterance and the speaker's intentions, will not carry any implications in (3). It should be remembered here that this was not the case with (1).

Let us now consider the same test with regard to the fourth example, and try to answer the question whether (a), i.e. 'what the speaker said' carries any implication; Grice does not consider (a) in this respect. The hypothetical would run as follows:

If my wife is either in the kitchen or in the bedroom then I do not know in which of the two rooms she is.

This formulation will not do; it is also reminiscent of the results obtained from the application of the hypothetical test in the second case. Candidate (a), therefore, does not hold in this respect.

However, if the utterance and the implication are not abstracted from the speaker, then the hypothetical is not out:

If I say that my wife is either in the kitchen or in the bedroom then I imply that I do not know in which of the two rooms she is.

Thus formulated the hypothetical test would also hold in the case of (2) because in this formulation both the utterance and the implication are given as attaching to the speaker. Therefore in this respect both (2) and (4) seem to behave uniformly.

We should not fail to note, however, that although in all three cases, (2), (3) and (4), the hypothetical test holds with the proviso that the utterance and the implication are not divorced from the speaker, in the case of (3), there is one more proviso that makes this example stand out: Not only should the hypothetical formulation make reference to the speaker in (3), but it should also make reference to the context of the utterance by way of various qualifications, as has been seen. This is vital for the generation of the implication in this case.

As regards the second vehicle of the Implication in connection with the fourth example, Grice says that we could say that the speaker had implied that he did not know, and in this respect too it is very much like (2); Grice also maintains that in relation to the third example "(the speaker) could certainly be said to have implied that Jones is hopeless (provided that this is what [he] intended to get across)" (1967a, p.93).

Grice seems to put all four cases on the same footing. With regard to (1), it can be argued that if we say that the speaker implied that S, then we are faced with a different case of implication than the one in the cases in which the 'implication' is carried just by the words the speaker used; therefore, we would like to put this case aside. As far as the remaining three examples are concerned, we would like to differentiate between (2) and (4), on the one hand, and (3), on the other.

In all three cases we could say that the speaker implied that S; however we must not fail to notice that in the cases of (2) and (4), in which we have an utterance abstracted from any context, either linguistic or situational, this vehicle of implication holds, without any qualifications. This is not the case with (3); in an utterance of "Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical", considered outside its context, we cannot say that the speaker implied that S. It should also be noted that Grice adds a proviso: "(provided that this is what I



intended to get across)", to buttress up his argument that the speaker implied that S. However, how do we, as hearers, get to the recognition of the speaker's intentions with regard to his implications? Even if the speaker's intentions play a significant role in all three cases — (2), (3) and (4) — regarding the generation of the implication, we must recognize that two different notions of intentions, or, rather, two different facets of the same notion, are involved in cases (2) and (4), on the one hand, and (3), on the other. In (2) and (4) the speaker's intention to imply that S does not rely on factors other than his choice of the specific word or words in order to get across his message (implication). In (3), however, this intention is not realized in the speaker's choice of the vocabulary; rather, it is a function of the specific context on his choice of the words or phrases, or on his utterance. His implication and, therefore, his intention to imply that S, is not realized, or understood, if the context of the utterance is not considered. The hearer relies on the context in question to recognize the speaker's intention and thereby deduce the intended implication; it is with a view to stressing the significance of this intended recognition of the speaker's intention that Grice adds the qualification "(provided that this is what I intended to get across)".

The upshot is that although in all three cases the speaker could be said to have implied that S, the recognition of the speaker's intention by the hearer, is grasped via different routes: in (2) and (4) by the use of specific word(s), whereas in (3) via the function of the context on the utterance. In (2) and (4) there is an immediate perception of the generated implications, whereas in (3) the recognition of the implication is achieved only via the hearer's reasoning. This should suffice to differentiate the implication generated by (3) from the ones generated by (2) and (4).

In connection with the fourth candidate of the vehicle of implication ('his saying that') with regard to (4), Grice says that "his saying that (or his saying that

rather than something else, *viz.* in which room she was) implied that he did not know" (*ibid.* p.94). It is immediately noticed that Grice again alters the phraseology of this candidate by appending yet another qualification to it. We have already seen that this candidate, modified by the other two qualifications — see tables **following** (di) 'his saying that in that way' and (dii) 'his saying just that and no more' — does not carry any implications in the cases of (1) and (2), whereas (dii) seems to hold in the case of (3). Therefore, we concluded, the inapplicability of (dii) in the first two cases and its applicability in the third example yield evidence that points to the significance of the function of context in the generation of the implication in (3). Although the significance of the context in this connection is noted in Grice's account, in his view, it does not seem to play any differentiating role in characterizing the generation of implications.

However, thus altered candidate (d) — (diii) — seems to carry the implications, not only in the fourth example, but also in (1) and (2), in which the context does not have any functional role to play:

His saying that she is poor but she is honest,  
 (rather than that she is poor and she is honest),  
 implied that { {

 in his view  
 he believed that?  
 etc.
 
}
 there is some  
 contrast between poverty and honesty.

Clearly, we cannot put all three formulations of candidate (d) on the same footing: (di) makes reference to paralinguistic features of the utterance; (dii) makes sense against the background of the hearer's knowledge of the context of the situation; as regards (diii), however, it is not clear what purpose the qualification serves.

As far as the third candidate is concerned — 'the words the speaker used' or 'the speaker's words' — Grice does not say whether it is a carrier of the implication in (4); we think, however, that it would not be strained

to say in this connection that the speaker's words implied that he did not know. If this candidate carries the implication in this case, as it does in the case of (2), then in both these two utterances the implication will be carried by the same vehicles.

Below (p. 132) there are two tables; in table 1 are shown the vehicles of implication in each case as described in Grice's account; in table 2 they are shown as revised in our account. What we see in our revised table is that both (2) and (4) behave uniformly with regard to the carriers of their implications. As regards the remaining two examples, they seem to behave idiosyncratically with regard to the vehicle of their implications. We must note, however, that only in the third case is the implication generated in a way which takes into consideration the context of the utterance (if we put aside a possible interpretation of the utterance of (1) in which the context seems to play a significant role).

Therefore if the experiment, offered by Grice, concerning the vehicle of implication and the results from its application on the four examples is anything to go by, we should be inclined not to lump all four cases of implication under the general heading of 'implication' as if they were all instances of the same linguistic phenomenon.

We would now like to turn to the question of another test Grice offers, that of the detachability and cancellability of the implication. With regard to the first example, Grice says, the implication is not detachable from what is asserted. Moreover, the implication cannot be annulled without annulling the assertion itself, whichever form of words is used to state or assert just what the first sentence might be used to assert. Therefore, the implication is not cancellable in so far as you cannot intelligibly add a further clause ('but I do not mean to imply that S') denying just the implication.

Table 1

Vehicles of implication		Examples			
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(a) wha+ +he speaker said		+	X	X	?
(b) +he speaker		+	+	+	+
(c) +he words +he speaker used (+he speaker's words)		X	+	X	?
(e) his saying +ha+	(di) (his saying +ha+ in +ha+ way)	X			
	(dii) (his saying jus+ +ha+ and no more)			+	
	(diii) (his saying +ha+ ra+her +han some+hing else)				+

+able 2

Vehicles of implica+ion		Examples			
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(a) wha+ +he speaker said		+	X	X	X
(b) +he speaker		+	+	+*	+
(c) +he words +he speaker used (+he speaker's words)		X	+	X	+
(d) his saying +ha+	(di) (his saying +ha+ in +ha+ way)	X	X		X
	(dii) (his saying jus+ +ha+ and no more)	X	X	+*	X
	(diii) (his saying +ha+ ra+her +han some+hing else)	+	+	X	+

+\* = context-dependent implication

### Examples

- (1) Smith has left off beating his wife.
- (2) She was poor but she was honest.
- (3) Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical.
- (4) My wife is either in the kitchen or in the bedroom.

If we apply the same test to the remaining examples, we see that it is only in (1) that the implication is inextricably tied up with one's utterance. In the second case the implication is both detachable: "She is poor and she is honest", and cancellable: "She is poor but she is honest, though I do not mean to imply that S".

As regards the third example, Grice argues that the implication is cancellable but not detachable:

The implication is not ... detachable; any other way of making, in the same context of utterance, just the assertion I have made would involve the same implication.

(ibid., p.93)

This quotation makes it fairly clear that, if the implication is not detachable, this is not a feature of the semantical aspects of the utterance itself, as might be the case with (1); rather, it is a feature pertaining to the functional nature of the context with regard to the utterance at issue. In this respect then, the non-detachability of (3) cannot be viewed on a par with that of (1).

In the fourth example, Grice says,

The implication is in a sense non-detachable, in that if in a given context the utterance of the disjunctive sentence would involve the implication that the speaker did not know in which room his wife was, this implication would also be involved in the utterance of any other form of words which would make the same assertion. ... In another possible sense, however, the implication could perhaps be said to be detachable; for there will be some contexts of utterance in which the normal implication will not hold.

(ibid., p.94)

Here, again, context plays a significant role in determining whether the implication is detachable or not. The conclusion to be drawn from the above

is that the implication is truly non-detachable and non-cancellable only in the first example; it seems to be part of the semantic aspects of the sentence.

Another test Grice offers with regard to the four examples is to ask whether the implication is generated by the meaning of some particular word or phrase occurring in the sentences. In the second and fourth examples he views the presence of the implication as being a matter of the meaning of the words 'but' and 'or' respectively. On the other hand, the presence of the implication of the utterance of (3) does not pertain to the meaning of any lexical item, or of the whole utterance; as regards (1), he writes that "we should be in some difficulty when it came to specifying precisely which this word is, or words are" (*ibid.*, p.92) the meaning of which generates the implication. Regarding this question, therefore, we can conclude that here again examples (2) and (4) behave uniformly.

## 5.2 On implicatures generated by stress

Before examining in detail some cases of particularized conversational implicature, as described by Grice, we thought it was rather constructive to review his account concerning the vehicles of implication. We reached the conclusion that amongst all the examples considered there by Grice, only the ones containing the conjunct 'but' and the disjunct 'or' seemed to display an identical linguistic behaviour in respect of the vehicles of their implications.

However, it should be borne in mind that Grice maintains that whereas 'but' is a paradigm case of conventional implicature, the implicatures generated by 'or' are 'conversational' in character, but 'generalized', nevertheless, in contrast to particularized conversational implicatures (cf. example (3) of previous section). It has been shown here that at least in respect of the vehicles of their implications both 'but' and 'or' behave uniformly.

In this section we would like to examine in some depth a case of purported conversational implicature in which the vehicle of implication seems to be (d),

as this was formulated in (di) 'his saying that in that way'. More specifically, (di) in this case refers to the prosodic structure of the utterance.

(cf. Uldall, 1972, p.250: "It wasn't what she said, it was the way she said it!")

In dealing with prosodic features in relation to implicatures Grice is concerned with stress, and, in particular, with cases in which words are being stressed variably, namely with cases in which stress plays a significant role as far as the conveyance of meaning is concerned.<sup>1</sup> Although he says that stress often makes a difference to the "speaker's meaning", and on many occasions it helps to generate implicatures, he is reluctant to attribute any conventional meaning to it. He therefore extends the jurisdiction of the maxim of relevance, not only over what is said, but also over the means used for saying what is said:

This extension will perhaps entitle us to expect that an aspect of an utterance which it is within the power of the speaker to eliminate or vary, even if it is introduced unreflectively, will have a purpose connected with what is currently being communicated.

(Grice, 1978, p. 122)

He distinguishes between at least three types of context — and, I take it that, he is thereby referring to linguistic context — in which "stress occurs, /and/ which seem to invite ordering" (*ibid.*, p. 122). However he does not seem to provide any ordering whatsoever, neither do these three types of context — if indeed they deserve to be so called — exhaust the variety of linguistic contexts in which stress occurs.

One basic distinction that has been made is between utterances with marked intonation contours and those with unmarked intonation contours, though such a distinction has been objected to (Schmerling, 1971). This distinction is linked with the question of what is asserted in an utterance and

what is presupposed, what is focused upon and what is assumed or uttered as 'given' (cf. Halliday, 1967). There are various problems in such distinctions we do not want to go into; however, it should be added that Grice's examples of stress generating implicatures are clearly examples of utterances with marked intonation patterns.

One of the types of context in which stress occurs, Grices says, includes utterances which constitute replies to 'wh-' questions:

A: 'Who paid the bill?'

B: 'Jones did.'

A: 'What did Jones do to the cat?'

B: 'He kicked it.'

He adds that in such examples stress is automatic and nothing is meant or implicated. However in the second example the word 'Jones' may have markedly higher pitch than

the other elements in the utterance, and, therefore, it might convey the speaker's concern, or even anxiety, about what 'Jones' (and not the others) did to the cat. He is not concerned about what other people did, or perhaps he already knows. Accordingly, the reply 'He kicked it' may receive different intonation patterns. The heavy stress may lie on the element 'He', especially if the context is such that it is known that the poor cat has been kicked by others already. However a reply with the stress on the verb is in order if the information that the cat has been kicked is not recoverable from the context; in the former case, by stressing the element 'He', the speaker is focusing on the same element in the utterance as is his addressee.

This first type of context, Grice seems to suggest, would include utterances which are made in reply to 'wh-' questions, and therefore these utterances will share a certain stock of presuppositions (common knowledge) with their questions. However it must be noted that these presuppositions (tentatively so called) are not definable merely in terms of the signification of the words of which the question consists. Another decisive factor should be taken into account, and this is specific intonation contours which such 'wh-' questions may take: for



example, the question

2

1

'Which books has John read?'

with this particular intonation pattern will imply that John has read some books but only skimmed others, or at least the speaker's belief that this is so (Bresnan, 1971). So 'wh-' questions have by no means a uniform intonation contour, nor can one always predict what intonation contours their replies will have.

Therefore the assignment of specific intonation contours is by no means so readily amenable to systematic rules as Grice seems to suggest; for example one cannot always predict that questions asking about the actor (agent etc.) of an action (process etc.) will give rise to replies with the heavy stress on the same element, or that questions inquiring after the action will demand replies with the heaviest stress on the verb and so on. Such treatment would ignore the unpredictability of stress placement and would do scant justice to its power.

Furthermore, linguistic context is not adequate to account for specific intonation patterns in all cases. For example, suppose that I hear my son crying in the garden and I go out to see what the matter is with him; finding out that his brand new toy is badly smashed, I ask him what happened. The boy, who is aware that I have already seen the smashed toy, replies as follows:

John smashed my new toy with his bike.

The question 'What happened?', abstracted from any situational context calls for a reply with 'normal' stress, i.e. with unmarked intonation pattern, since there are no presuppositions attached to it — other than the one that something happened. The unmarked intonation contour will be expected to highlight the action, though without reducing the stress of the accented syllables. However, in the above situation my son's reply highlights the elements referring to the agent of the action, 'John', and to the instrument, "with his bike", with which John smashed the toy and the utterance is 'felicitous'.

An argument, therefore, that assumes that stress in replies to wh-questions is dependent upon the questions themselves is debatable, to say the least. As has been seen, shared presuppositions as well as the knowledge of the participants of a specific talk-exchange that they share the same stock of presuppositions may contribute to the selection of a particular intonation contour. Moreover, these presuppositions need not be of a semantic nature; they may be pre-suppositions pertaining to actual situational contexts (cf. Schmerling, 1971).

Another type of context in which stress occurs, according to Grice, is in exchanges of such forms as:

(i) A: Jones paid the bill. (ii) B: Jones didn't pay the bill; Smith paid it.

In such cases stress, Grice maintains, "is automatic or a matter of habit" (Grice, 1978, p. 122), but we will come to that later.

However, this description is rather crude and unsystematic. It may be argued that such an intonation contour, as described by Grice, whereby the heavy stress lies on the word 'Jones', is rather "unnatural", and therefore not "automatic or a matter of habit", and this is at odds with Grice's claim that nothing "is meant or implicated" (*ibid.*, p. 122), i.e. that the assignment of this particular intonation pattern is of no special significance. Anyway, Grice will have to explain what he means by the word "automatic"/ but I take it to mean that nothing more is conveyed over and above what is conveyed by the meanings of the words in the sentence. He says "we are not inclined to say that anything is meant or implicated" (*ibid.*, p. 122). (What he means by "meant" here is rather vague.) He falls into the pitfall of ignoring the variety of intonation contours such an utterance might take, and he therefore leaves out of account various attitudes and feelings of the participants which such an utterance might convey.

As has already been suggested, this intonation contour is by no means automatic. ' Reading out (ii), for example, one would be inclined to lay as heavy a stress on 'didn't' as on 'Jones'. This can be explained in terms of the thematic structure of the talk-ex change: 'Jones may be characterized as the topic of the talk-exchange and 'didn't pay the bill' would then be the comment (cf.Schenkein, 1972, Sgall, 1972, Hajicova, 1972, 1973). Following Halliday's terminology the utterance 'Jones didn't pay the bill' could be assigned either marked or unmarked information structure. In the latter case the utterance 'Jones didn't pay the bill' would be assigned the status of one information unit: //Jones didn't pay the bill// 'Jones' would be the theme and 'didn't pay the bill' would be the rheme. In this case the focus of the information will fall on the rheme and the main emphasis will be on the negation, this being the focus of the message,

that which is represented by the speaker as being new,  
textually (and situationally) non-derivable information  
...      ...      But the non-predictability of the new  
does not necessarily imply factually new information;  
the newness may lie in the speech function, or it may  
be a matter of contrast with what has been said before  
or what might be expected.

(Halliday, 1967, pp.205-6)

This utterance would then receive tone 5, which is a rounded rising- falling tone with the main force on the rise and in the case in point on the negating element. This intonation contour is speaker oriented in the sense that there is a finality in the assertiveness of this utterance, the speaker is quite sure of what he has said and his utterance is not intended to prompt any objection or confirmation from his addressee.

The claim that it is common for utterances with unmarked intonation contours fulfilling a negative speech function to have the heaviest stress on the negating elements (since this is what is usually focused upon by the speaker)

is corroborated by the fact that the speaker has an alternative option in hand, if he wants to lay the main emphasis on 'Jones'. However, again in this case, the negating element will be attached to the most heavily pitched element, and in the case in point, to the word "Jones". Thus the whole structure of the utterance — and consequently its thematic structure — will change, and, therefore, the utterance will carry different presuppositions:

'It wasn't Jones who paid the bill' (or 'The one who paid the bill was not-Jones')

It should be noted that the intonation pattern of the preceding utterance, i.e. (i) 'Jones paid the bill', is relevant to what intonation contour will be selected for the following utterance, i.e. (ii); for instance this talk-exchange

— (i)A and (ii)B — may be viewed as part of an argument as to whether Jones paid the bill or not. Speaker A may place special emphasis on the word 'Jones'

— which, again, will be accountable for in terms of previous linguistic context, or situational context, or a combination of both. (In situational context we include sets of beliefs and knowledge shared by the participants of the talk-exchange.) In this case then, if speaker B stresses the element 'Jones' in

his utterance, more heavily than any other element, his utterance will have a content equivalent to "It wasn't Jones who paid the bill", though it is not obvious how this utterance would felicitously go through, and, if it would, how it would differ from the same sentence uttered as in (in).

However, if the heavy (main) stress lies on the element 'Jones', then one is led to think of this utterance as consisting of two information units though it is not clear how this would tally with the argument that such an intonation contour "is automatic or a matter of habit [that is] difficult to avoid" and that nothing is "meant or implicated" (Grice, 1978, p. 122).

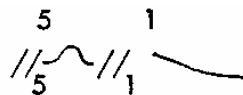
In this case then the utterance 'Jones didn't pay the bill' does not have "the regular distribution of new information" (Chafe, 1970, p.230) according to

Grice. It might be claimed to have marked information structure consisting of two information units:

(iii) //Jones// didn't pay the bill//

The first information unit has focus on 'Jones' and the second on the negating element. The assignment of two information units — and therefore of two focuses — to the utterance reflects the speaker's decision to highlight two elements in his utterance. 'Jones' is focal, and therefore it should be new (what is focal is "new" information). However what is new, here, is not the element 'Jones' but the speaker's attitude towards the statement that Jones paid the bill, which is revealed by selecting a specific intonation contour, and therefore a particular information structure for his whole utterance. This utterance would be assigned two intonation contours and therefore it would have two tone-groups:

(iii) //Jones// didn't pay the bill



(Halliday, 1967)

Tone 5 would express assertiveness as above — when the whole utterance would receive tone 5 — but it could also convey surprise or some sort of personal reaction through its assertiveness (*ibid.*) The falling contour of tone 1 would just express certainty.

Grice claims that this sentence, uttered with the heavy stress on the word 'Jones', and without a preceding statement to the effect that Jones paid the bill, will generate the conversational implicature that someone might think that Jones did pay the bill; however this alleged implicature is nothing more than what is conveyed via the selection of particular intonation contours for our utterances. As has already been mentioned, tone 5 on the word 'Jones', in the utterance in

point, could be interpreted as conveying surprise or some sort of reaction; in this case the reaction is directed towards the assumption by the speaker, or his addressee, or by both, that Jones was expected to pay the bill, this being the topic of previous conversation. But even previous mention need not be a condition for this interpretation of the selected intonation contour. Consider a point made by Schegloff and Sacks, 1974, in relation to contrastively accented utterances which is of relevance to the point under consideration here:

An accent on the second part of a contrast pair whose first part is not explicit can none the less serve to display the relevance of the first part. Thus, to cite another example, a particularly clear display of what is "going through someone's mind" though: it is not spoken or gesturally, etc., conveyed, is provided by a person waiting to take an elevator down, who is told upon its arrival that the elevator is going up, pauses a moment, and then says, 'I guess, I will wait.' The contrast accent displays his prior, now abandoned, decision to 'go along for a ride'.

(p. 260)

Would Grice persist with his claim that this utterance, 'I guess, I will wait', (or its speaker) unprecedented, as it is, by any other utterance that would serve to account for its intonation contour, would implicate that someone might think that S (i.e. that he/she wouldn't wait? Therefore, accounting for these instances in terms of pragmatic inferences, implicatures, is not only gratuitous but can also be incorrect as shown by Schegloff and Sacks.




Grice's further claim that the same utterance (iii) might generate the implicature that someone (other than Jones) paid the bill (Grice, 1978, p. 123) can be connected with the phenomenon of presupposition, the presupposition in question being that someone paid the bill or at least there was a bill to be paid. For all the speaker/hearer knows this may be someone other than Jones, indeed, given Jones' habits the reasonable presumption may be that it is someone other than him.

An Intensification of the speaker's feelings and attitudes revealed, or conveyed, by the intonation pattern of the utterance as analysed above, would be better instantiated in a similar utterance with the same intonation contours but with a slightly different structure:

'Jones! he didn't pay the bill'

'Jones' is singled out because it has been assigned a separate intonation contour, and in so uttering 'Jones' the speaker expresses his feelings (or opinion) towards the immediately preceding utterance, which may range from embarrassment or disagreement to sarcasm. It may be noted that a falling intonation contour is not hearer oriented in the sense that it is not question- begging.

Note how many different functions a sentence may perform, if uttered with different intonation contours:

- (1) Speaker A: Tone 4 : Jones! // 
- (2) Speaker B: Tone 5 : Jones // 
- (3) Speaker A: Tone 5 : Jones // 

(1) expresses reservation, difficulty to believe and it is hearer-oriented,

(2) expresses assertion and reassurance, "there may seem to be strange  
but it is so",

(3) expresses surprise "that's what you say, but are you sure?" (Halliday, 196?

Alternatively, the utterance 'Jones didn't pay the bill' might receive an entirely different intonation pattern:

(iv) Speaker A: Jones paid the bill

(v) Speaker B: Jones didn't pay the bill

Perhaps this is what Grice had in mind when he claimed that the heaviest stress would lie on "Jones". However it should be noticed that 'Jones', though an

accented word, is uttered with a low pitch though one higher than the other elements in the utterance and especially 'didn't' which is a highly accented word.

This fact, however, is not consonant with Grice's suggestion that stress is automatic, and nothing is meant or implicated; the selection of this particular intonation contour should not be attributed to mere chance, or to automatic behavioural patterns; its significance should not be underestimated, neither should its potentialities to convey the speaker's feelings or attitudes on the matter. In the case in point the speaker may want to express his mild objection to A's utterance without offending or aggravating his interlocutor, (cf. Bolinger, 1972, p.152 "... low-pitched accented [syllables] blunt the impact of whatever facts are reported ... and the rising terminals remove any impression of assertiveness. ") The selection of such a contour for the utterance is a motivated choice and reveals "control" on the speaker's part over the situation.

If we try to analyse this intonation contour in terms of Halliday's account, we would see that Grice's example uttered as in (v) would receive tone 4 which is a rounded falling-rising tone:

// 

Halliday's description of tone 4 agrees with Bolinger's account, that such an intonation pattern blunts the impact of what is asserted, and is used for mild objections:

Tone 4 falls and then rises, meaning something like 'it may seem as though all is clear, but in fact there is more involved; characteristically it is used to make statements carrying some reservation, implying a "but" and also ... a tentative opinion.

(Halliday, 1967)



However, the point, which is the objection to the previous utterance, is made, though mildly, through the fulfilment of the negative speech function in this case; the argument goes through by the fact that the maximum force and intensity which comes on the fall is borne out by the negating element; this is connected with what has been argued above with regard to the negating elements in the utterance. The overall rise manifests a 'hearer orientation' in the utterance, in the sense that things are not settled and some sort of reaction to what has been uttered from the addressee is in order and actually expected by the speaker.

This stretch of conversation,

A: Jones paid the bill.

B: Jones didn't pay the bill; Smith did.

might be assigned an altogether different thematic structure: if speaker B selects the unmarked intonation pattern for his utterance 'Jones didn't pay the bill' as described above but goes on to add 'Smith did', stressing the elements 'did' and 'Smith', then perhaps the participants are not really interested in whether the bill has been settled; their main concern may lie with the generosity, or other virtues, of the members of a club, for instance. This is an additional indication pointing to the power of intonation patterns with regard to the construction of the thematic structure of utterances.

We would now like to come to Grice's claim that stress is automatic or a matter of habit in exchanges of such forms as,

A: Jones paid the bill.

/ /  
B: Jones didn't pay the bill; Smith did,

or in such cases as incomplete versions of this conversational schema, i.e. without a preceding statement to the effect that Jones paid the bill. It will be argued that his claim is rather tenuous and in any case at variance with his argument

concerning stress. He acknowledges the significance of stress, but in order to avoid attributing to it conventional meaning, he extends the maxim of relevance to make it encompass, not only what is said, but also features of the means used for saying what is said.

However the maxim of relevance falls under the Cooperative Principle, which participants in a talk-exchange will be expected to observe and consciously abide by. Observance of the Cooperative Principle and its maxims is rational and intentional, and is based on the awareness on the part of the participants that it pays to conform to the maxims. "The participants have some common immediate aim", says Grice, 1975, p.48, and therefore to ignore the significance of intentionality with regard to the conformity to the Cooperative Principle is to take the substance out of the claim. It should be noted that the notion of intentionality is central not only to fulfilling a maxim but also to violating it.

If therefore stress is made to enter the province of the maxim of Relevance, it should not be claimed to be introduced automatically, and yet generate implicatures. Stress, here, is a function of the speaker's intention in the specific linguistic context and situation. The speaker will decide what the distribution of "communicative dynamism" (cf. Firbas, 1964) to his utterance will be. We can talk of 'automatic' stress only with reference to sentences, in abstraction from their linguistic and situational context. Automatic stress then is what we might understand by the terms 'colourless' or "normal' intonation pattern, as opposed to 'intentional' stress, which is a function of the speaker's intentions to highlight a specific item (or more) in his utterance. Stockwell, 1960, defines a 'normal' intonation pattern as:

that pattern which emerges from the application of constituent structure rules and those optional transformations which do not operate specifically to shift the position of the intonation pattern in the string. 'Normal' intonation is ... the consequence of failing

to elect an optional transformation of shift. We think of it as the 'normal' pattern because it is the obligatory pattern equivalent to zero, in the sense that it occurs automatically if the Intonation Pattern rules are, so to speak, left alone.

(p.362)

Halliday (1967) makes the same point:

The significance of the 'neutral' tone is that it is the one that always can be used in the given speech function. It implies no previous context and can always be selected therefore, if there is doubt about the appropriateness of the other tones.

If therefore automatic stress is identified with the failure to select an optional intonation-shifting transformation, then it is obvious that there is no connection between automatic intonation and utterer's intentions.

On the other hand, in a specific linguistic context like the one discussed here, by highlighting the element 'Jones' in his utterance, the speaker expresses his intention to argue against the content of the previous utterance that it was Jones who paid the bill. However, were B's objections of another nature, he could opt for a different intonation pattern shifting the prominence to another element in his utterance; for instance:

/

B: Jones didn't pay the bill; he only passed it to Smith.

Grice goes on to claim that in an utterance such as (ii), which however is not prompted by a preceding remark to the effect that Jones paid the bill, the stress may be automatic again. He then adds that here we have an instance of implicature, the implicature being that someone thinks or might think that Jones did pay the bill. Grice says:

The maxim of relation requires that B's remark should be relevant to something or other, and B, by speaking as he would speak in reply to a statement that Jones paid the bill, shows that he has such a statement in mind.

(Grice, 1978, p. 122)



However, if in order to effect" such an implicature a major role should be attributed to intentionality on the utterer's part then Grice is inconsistent here, because on the one hand he says that stress may be automatic and on the other that the speaker is implicating something or other. (If by "automatic" he means that it is introduced unreflectively — which I do not believe to be the case — then he fails to distinguish between cases of stress in which the speaker is shown to have control over the situation and cases in which he does not.)

We hope to have shown that Grice's claim concerning cases of conversation- al implicatures generated by stress is eliminable. On Grice's view, implicatures are pragmatic inferences which do not appear to be amenable to any formal treatment. However with regard to his examples of implicatures generated by stress we have argued that the alleged implicature of (ii) is not a genuine case of implicature. His account in terms of implicatures is gratuitous, since these aspects of meaning can be systematically accounted for in terms of intonation patterns and their interpretation.

The advantages accrued from an account of these aspects of meaning in terms of intonation patterns, rather than in terms of inferences are obvious. Although Grice's account of implicatures is able to handle 'pragmatic' meanings conveyed over and above lexical meanings in individual cases — though not in a uniform way — his programme affords no actual gain to a general systematized theory of language, or of language use. However, if we have a systematic description of speaker's attitudes and feelings, and therefore of attitudinal meanings (intonational meanings), over and above lexical meanings, conferred on utterances, accountable along these lines (systematic description and there- fore interpretation of intonation contours) then such an account would contribute more significantly to a more valid and general theory able to handle these aspects of meaning. An extra bonus would then be that the specification of intonation- contours of utterances would help determine those contexts in which they could

Occur. As Lyons, 1977, 2:611, noted, "to know the meaning of an utterance, a word, an intonation-pattern, etc., is to know the contexts in which it can Occur". However the problem remains in what terms these aspects of meaning, conveyed by the intonation contours of connected speech, are to be described.

### 5.3 Group A: cooperative principle observed

In his paper *Logic and Conversation II*, 1975, Grice offers a number of cases of conversational implicatures which he divides into various groups. One such group is formed by those cases of conversational implicature in which no maxim is violated. As my thesis will eventually be that a necessary condition for the generation of a conversational implicature is the violation (apparent) of at least one of the conversational maxims, I propose to examine closely these cases of purported conversational implicature, offered by Grice, in which the Cooperative Principle is observed. Interestingly enough, Grice himself says that a conversational implicature is not generated on the trivial assumption that someone is cooperating:

When I speak of the assumptions required in order to maintain the supposition that the cooperative principle and maxims are being observed on a given occasion, I am thinking of assumptions that are non-trivially required; I do not intend to include, for example, an assumption to the effect that some particular maxim is being observed, or is thought of by the speaker as being observed.

(1978, p. 114) 5.3.1

#### 5.3.1 Mutual, factual knowledge: implicated?

One of the examples falling in the group of cases in which none of the maxims is violated is the following:

GROUP A: Examples in which no maxim is violated, or at least in which it is not clear that any maxim is violated:

A is standing by an obviously immobilized car and is approached by B; the following exchange takes place:

(86) (i) A: I am out of petrol.

(ii) B: There is a garage round the corner.

(Gloss: B would be infringing the maxim 'Be relevant' unless he thinks, or thinks it possible, that the garage is open, and has petrol to sell; so he implicates that the garage is, or at least may be, open etc.)

(Grice, 1975, p.51)

Firstly, we would like to rule out any supposition that the purported conversational implicature might be a regular feature of the uttered sentence, of the conventional meaning of the words used, or an aspect of it. Indeed exactly the same sentence may be uttered by my friend at my home in reply to my enquiry regarding his complaints about noises heard in his flat. (Presumably Grice would claim that my friend implicated that the noises came from the garage.) The allegedly conversational implicature cannot be conventional.

At first glance therefore, Grice seems to be right in offering the following data on which the hearer must rely to work out the presence of a particular conversational implicature:

- (1) The conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references which may be involved;
- (2) The Cooperative Principle and its maxims;
- (3) The context, linguistic or otherwise of the utterance)
- (4) Other items of background knowledge;
- (5) The fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants, and that both participants know or assume this to be the case.

(1975, p.50)

However we should not fail to notice that what is under consideration here is an 'adjacency sequence' (Sacks and Schegloff, 1974) which suffices to delineate precisely the type of situation at issue. This talk-exchange or, more specifically, A's utterance, without any introductory remarks describing the situation at hand, enables any human being who shares our most elementary knowledge of facts about cars to 'fill in the picture'. As Brazil *et al.*, 1980, would put it, the grammar and the lexis of (86i) are "sufficiently suggestive of a rudimentary discourse setting" (p.84). We will understand that A must not be very far from an immobilized car and we will also understand that A's first priority at that moment is to get his car moving again. This understanding is due to our social competence, and not to purported implicatures of the utterance 'I am out of petrol'. (One may want to attribute this social competence to implicatures of this utterance, but we will come to that later.) The first utterance (86i) therefore — not to mention the description prefacing it — occurs in a very specific situation, one which involves a matter of great urgency for the person involved. The 'set up' requires that the next utterance must contribute, if minimally, towards a possible resolution of A's predicament; it dictates that the second utterance has to fall within a rather narrowly delimited domain of discourse in order to satisfy the requirements set by the first utterance. Indeed, A's utterance is one of those utterances belonging to a class that Grice would characterize as fixing the purpose or direction of the talk-exchange right from the start (1975, p.45). In other words, it places heavy constraints on the acceptable purposes (degree of 'variationability') with which the next utterance can be uttered. This is an important social correlate of speech which must not be ignored.<sup>2</sup>

The function, therefore, of the first utterance in this case is to call on the next utterance to be 'in line' with it, i.e. to meet at least some of its requirements. However, this bounding of the domain within which the second utterance has to fall must be flexible, as far as its coherence is concerned.<sup>3</sup>



The hearer, on the other hand, must have some latitude at his disposal ('permissible variation'<sup>4</sup>) to adjust his response to the requirements and, hence, expectations set by the first utterance.

Imagine what other utterances would be satisfactorily produced in response to the first utterance. Those utterances will be termed 'satisfactory' or 'well-fitted', which will not, at least minimally, fail the social expectations which the speaker trusts that the hearer will fulfil. Consider the following talk-exchange:

A: I am out of petrol.

B: I've got some in my car.

According to Grice B would be implicating by his utterance that his spare petrol is in a portable tank in the boot of his car (and not in his car tank, as in the latter case his petrol would be of no avail to A). (Gloss: B would be infringing the maxim 'Be relevant' unless he knows that the petrol he has got in his car can be used in my car. As the petrol in his car tank cannot be transferred to my car, he implicates that the petrol in his car can be used to set my car rolling again — should one find this reasoning adequate, or should one proceed as follows? Therefore he implicates that he keeps this petrol in a portable tank in his car.) Or, perhaps, he would be implicating that — although the petrol is in the car tank — he keeps a pump in the boot of his car which can be used to put an end to A's plight.<sup>5</sup>

In short the number of implicatures attached to any utterance can be, in principle, vague and indefinite, following Grice's account. An account of implicatures along these lines does not seem to be adequate, because it does not offer an answer to the question of how speech functions; neither does it offer a systematic description of the generation of implicatures. It should not escape our notice that in this case the pivot, on which the interpretation of B's utterance depends is determinate; it is A's very utterance. A is trying to work out, if this is not obvious, in what way B's utterance

satisfies A's immediate needs revealed to B — if not by the situation — by A's preceding utterance. Upon receipt (uptake) of B's utterance, A will categorize it as relevant (contributory) to a possible resolution of his troubles, and will act on it accordingly. (He may get a container out of the boot of his car, or he may ask B if he has one, or he may ask B to help him push the car to the petrol station, etc.) B's utterance is intuitively relevant;<sup>6</sup> it raises A's expectations with regard to putting an end to his predicament. It would still be relevant if the utterance were as follows:

B: There's a garage round the corner, but it is closed on Sundays, uttered on a Sunday, as it would count, as a comment on A's troubles there and then. But it would not be relevant if uttered in exactly the same circumstances on a Monday morning because the speaker would be changing the topic set by the first utterance, before it had been, at least minimally, dealt with. In other words, B would be ignoring 'the conversational demand' set up by A's utterance, or he would not be correctly identifying the priority of a resolution of A's predicament set by A's utterance. To put it in the ethnomethodological terminology — which however of late seems to be finding its way into the linguistics literature (see Levinson, 1978, Freedle, 1979, Holdcroft, 1980) — B would fail to exhibit 'recipient design' in his next utterance.

The following utterances by B are also acceptable uttered on a Sunday:

(i) B: There's a garage round the corner and you are lucky that it is open on Sundays.

(ii) B: There's a garage round the corner and it is open on Sundays.

The second clause in (i) and (ii) is offered in anticipation of A's relevant query. However the utterance 'There is a garage round the corner' is intuitively relevant uttered on a weekday during normal business hours; it needs neither any qualifications by the speaker nor any construal by the hearer to make it fail within

that range of utterances which is delimited by the first utterance as intuitively relevant and, therefore, satisfying the conversational requirements set by it. The sentence 'There is a garage round the corner' uttered in these circumstances during normal business hours on a weekday is not apt to prompt any question from the hearer as to whether the petrol station is open or closed. However, the same utterance on a Sunday afternoon, or on a late evening is very likely to prompt such an anxious question. This purported conversational implicature, occasioned by B's utterance, seems to be very much 'time-dependent'. One is left wondering.

Indeed B may have no idea whatever as to whether the garage is open or not. All he knows is that there is a petrol station round the corner and this is what he wants to convey to A, knowing that this piece of information is welcome to him. Wouldn't his utterance still be appropriate? And would he still be implicating according to Grice's account that the garage might be open? Grice's gloss can be taken, if a bit strained, to cover this case too. But the status of such a conversational implicature is very flimsy indeed. But doesn't all this boil down to the same point? If B knows that there is a garage round the corner and if he knows what garages are for (and he must know that much to say what he did in response to A's utterance) then both A and B must have a pretty good idea about the hours of business of garages.

Consider the following talk-exchange:

- A: I am out of petrol.  
 B: There's a garage round the corner.  
 A: It can't be open at this hour.  
 B: Oh yes, it is.

Does A fail to take up B's conversational implicature in this exchange? If he does, why should this be so? On our view, there are other factors in the situation at hand that determine the 'status' of B's utterance, whether, that is,

it is likely to be taken as a piece of helpful information or as a mere comment.

Suppose that there were maps on roads indicating the location of nearby petrol stations; suppose that our traveller came out of his immobilized car, walked a few yards and came across such a map. On that map he could read that there was a petrol station a mile away from his car. Now if this took place during normal business hours wouldn't our stranded traveller have high hopes that the garage would be open and have petrol to sell? Wouldn't his expectations be low though, if it were 10 o'clock in the evening and if he knew that such businesses were not likely to be open on a 24-hour basis? Clearly the sign on the map did not imply anything; neither was it meant to implicate anything; it was intended to offer the information about the location of the nearest garages and service stations (and possibly other information that might prove relevant in different situations). Yet this sign on the map can function in exactly the same way as B's utterance does: they both raise A's hopes (generate conversational implicatures, Grice would say) that his troubles may soon be over.

A socially acceptable response to A's utterance might be some sort of action taken by B — possibly not accompanied by any linguistic correlates — with the intention of bringing about an end to A's plight: for instance, if, upon hearing A's utterance, B walked to his own car, opened the boot and took out a container with petrol, which he kept there for an emergency. Seeing B going away without saying anything, A might be either puzzled,<sup>7</sup> or think that B was refusing to adopt the role that was socially expected from him; but upon seeing B coming back with the petrol, A would consider B's behaviour justifiable and only seemingly unacceptable; B would be seen to be doing what was expected from him after all.

A's utterance, therefore, lies on the borderline of those initiating utterances which are made with the intention to elicit, at best, a behavioural

response from the hearer to the satisfaction of the speaker. The spectrum of the responses may extend from a word of sympathy to a positively contributory behavioural response. Whereas a first utterance that is heard as a request or command usually has 'sequential implicativeness' for an unspoken next action to borrow a term from ethnomethodology,<sup>8</sup> an utterance like (86i) 'I am out of petrol', spoken in the context described, can have "simultaneous' (cf. Atkinson, 1979) sequential implicativeness for a spoken next turn, whether accompanied or not by an activity other than speech. (86i) therefore can elicit either an unspoken next action, or a spoken next activity, or both, that is, indeed, a wide range of 'nexts'. This is due to the formulation of the first utterance which makes it possible for the next party, the addressee, to direct his next (whether spoken or unspoken, or both) to any of the levels of the purpose (intention) with which the first utterance was made (see Weiser, 1974).

By uttering 'There is a garage round the corner', therefore, B is not implicating anything at all. If we accept that what is at issue here is a case of conversational implicature, then the very concept of conversational implicature will be trivialized. We have seen that such alleged conversational implicate can be indefinite in number. It can be argued, moreover, that even if B's utterance were: "There is a garage round the corner and it is open", by the same token, Grice would still be forced to maintain that there is a case of

B's implicating that the garage which is open has petrol to sell and does sell it.<sup>9</sup> (Gloss: B would be infringing the maxim "Be relevant" unless he thinks, or thinks it possible, that the garage had petrol to sell; so he implicates that the garage does sell petrol.) We think that this gloss offends against our most basic linguistic intuitions and the assumed indisputability of our most rudimentary knowledge of the surrounding, perceptible, factual world. Yet all we have done was to take Grice's gloss just one stage further, in an

attempt to explicate what purportedly underlies B's utterance. On this point it might be constructive to cite Frege, 1972:

A strictly defined group of modes of inference is simply not present in [ordinary] language, so that on the basis of linguistic form, we cannot distinguish between a 'gapless' advance. ... and an omission of connecting links. We can even say that the former almost never occurs in [ordinary] language, that it runs against the feel of language, because it would involve an insufferable prolixity.

(p.85)

Stating the putative conversational implicature by conjoining it to the utterance, that allegedly generates it, will result in the odd utterance,

(a) There's a garage round the corner and it sells petrol.

As R. Lakoff, 1971, would put it "the oddness arises out of the conjunction itself: the first point involves certain presuppositions that make the second party empty" (p. 124). Now if the conjunction were,

(b) There's a garage round the corner and it is open,

the oddity of (b), uttered during normal business hours, would arise, not out of the conjunction itself, but because of presuppositions pertaining to our knowledge of the factual world around us, which is shared by all participants in a conversation.

Now, Grice might opt to claim that, although 'It is open' is a legitimate conversational implicature of the utterance 'There's a garage round the corner', at least under the circumstances at hand, 'It sells petrol' is not. However, he has not provided us with any procedure, whereby the conversational implicature of 'It is open' is legitimately generated, whereas that of 'It sells petrol' is not. On the contrary, by parity of the reasoning he has offered, we are forced to accept the legitimacy of the generation of both implicatures *by the same utter-*

once under the circumstances. Further, he may want to claim that it is a condition that conversational implicatures cannot be stated explicitly by conjoining them to the utterances generating them. In this case, however, he would be in the impossible situation having to rule out, as unacceptable, an utterance like (b), which is a perfectly acceptable utterance issued, for instance, on a Sunday, or during non-business hours.

We want to argue rather that the case at issue here is a case of an intuitively well-fitted (relevant) utterance whose purpose is not determined independently by what B wants to implicate. The delimitation of its purpose is determined by A's utterance. If the same sentence is uttered by B in A's house as a response to A's enquiry about the reason for B's complaints about the noise heard in his flat, A would not conclude that the garage was open or closed at that moment; neither would B be implicating anything at all as this would be beyond the requirements set by A's utterance. A would be expected to understand that the garage was responsible for the noise, but that understanding would not be implicated in any reasonable sense.

What should be stressed here is that if B's utterance imparts more to the hearer than what B actually says by it, this is not because of what B intends to implicate, as Grice suggests. Rather it is because of features of the whole social setting in which the utterance is issued; more specifically, in this case, it is the first utterance (A's utterance) that serves as the touchstone in classifying the ensuing utterance. Rather than look at an utterance in isolation and dump whatever else we understand by it in a basket labelled 'implicature', we should view it as part of an integrated whole, the talk-exchange or the discourse at hand (cf. Holdcroft, 1978b); this will most probably help to place it within a social context which will provide us with the necessary clues. Social correlates should not be ignored or termed the speaker's conversational Implicatures in issuing an utterance.

A connected point that could be made here is that if a taxonomy of linguistic situations is envisaged, (cf. Levinson's, 1978 $\alpha$ , sketch of activity types) then there is a strong likelihood that our example would be categorized under some such heading as 'emergency cases'. Among the various specifications characterizing this class there would probably be some such maxim as the following:

When he has understood what is said<sup>10</sup> the recipient of the message must try to do what he can to help the sender in his problem situation. He must return, at least, a word of sympathy, or a piece of information that has a bearing on the sender's predicament (priority at that moment).

The degree of predictability of the content of the prompted linguistic utterance or behaviour is much higher than, say, in a casual conversation. Put differently, the degree of permissible variation is lower.

Seen in sociological terms this talk-exchange may be taken to constitute a 'supportive interchange' (Goffman, 1971, p.3). The main formal feature that such acts seem to have in common is, as described by Goffman, "the ritualization of identificatory sympathy. The needs, desires, conditions, experiences, in short, the situation of one individual, when seen from his own point of view, provides a second individual with directions for formulating ritual gestures of concern" (Goffman, 1971, p.92). The utterance 'I am out of petrol' in the specific situation invites the offer of a "free good", i.e. a relevant piece of information or some other helpful gesture, in the case at issue.

We would now like to turn to the question of the data mentioned by Grice, on which the hearer relies to work out the presence of a particular conversational implicature (this has been given on p. 151 ). It is not clear whether Grice attaches any importance to the order in which the data are given. If this is the case we would like to argue that it seems fairly obvious that factors (3) and (4) - (3) the context, linguistic or otherwise of the utterance, (4) other items



of background knowledge — seem to precede factor (2), the Cooperative Principle and its maxims, as far as their order is concerned in the deduction of the conversational implicature. The grounds for this claim is as follows: the observance of the CP and its maxims by both (or all) participants is a priori to any talk-exchange; it is in the background of any potential talk-exchange and its observance by any one of the participants is not called into question unless something goes wrong in the flow of the conversation.

Parenthetically, it should be noted that what we understand to obtain in all types of discourse is an attenuated form of CP, or rather, various maxims of it. For a relevant discussion, see Holdcroft, 1978. He writes:

... CP as it stands certainly is not universally applicable;

.....  
 .....The claim that acceptance of CP and of its general- ized version can involve the acceptance of different sets of maxims in different discourse- types, and even within different discourses of the same type carried on with rather different ends in view, is plausible, but frustrating.

(pp.140, 141)

For example, in cross-examinations, even though the participants have opposed interests and the participation of one party is enforced rather than voluntary, there still obtains at least one maxim, that of Relation, that if the cross- examinee say anything, it should be relevant to the accepted or enforced purpose of the corss-examination. Moreover, as noted in Holdcroft, 1978b, a general principle of Cooperation must be understood as operative in such discourses institutionally. In this connection it can be noted that Levinson, 1978b, too, sees different degrees of cooperation in a model of interaction in which interactants can cooperate on lower-order goals but conflict on higher order ones.

To close the parenthesis, therefore, it is evident that the CP and its maxims are not called into the foreground before the hearer has made full use of the

other data at hand. It is only then that the hearer can decide whether the violation is real or apparent; and, it should be emphasised, he will utilize all the data at hand to help him come to the conclusion that it was only apparent (as the observance of some form of the CP and its maxim is granted a priori). If he comes to a different conclusion then he must seriously pose the question about the normalcy or rationality of his interlocutor, as his flouting of the maxim will not be merely confinable to a linguistic violation of the CP, or to one of its maxims, or to a plurality of them, but may also reveal some sort of defect in the social competence with which all members of a society are supposed to be equipped.<sup>11</sup> In this case the so-called implicature, 'The garage is open', follows merely from what is said ('There is a garage round the corner'), and what is assumed ('Garages are open on weekdays, and it is a week-day today'), without any special further assumption as to whether the CP is being complied with or not. However, what is assumed is triggered by the previous linguistic context, and that is to say, not merely by what is said, 'There is a garage round the corner', but by what is said against the background of the previous linguistic or situational context; in this case this context consists in A's utterance: 'I am out of petrol.'

With regard to this example, therefore, we have contended that B's utterance does not generate any conversational implicatures as the CP is followed and, hence, there are no grounds for calling its observance into question (consciously or intuitively, after all, what does "intuitively" mean here?). Indeed Grice seems to add support to our contention in the following quotation:

In this example ... the unstated connection between B's remark and A's remark is so obvious that, even if one interprets the super-maxim of Manner, 'Be perspicuous' as applying not only to the expression of what is said, but also to the connection of what is said, with adjacent remarks, there seems to be no case for regarding that super-maxim as infringed in this example.,

(1975, p.51)

Next, if we try to apply the vehicles of implication offered by Grice in his CTP to this example we will see that none of these vehicles is applicable to B's utterance even if it is viewed as following from A's utterance (i.e. within its context). A brief glance will answer the question:

- (a) 'What the speaker said' does not carry the implication as the hypothetical test 'If there is a garage round the corner then it is open' fails.
- (b) 'The speaker' cannot be the vehicle of the implicature independently of previous linguistic context, as (86ii), in isolation from (861), does not seem to generate any such implicatures in the first place.

Moreover, if an implicature is carried over by the speaker then the question arises as to whether the implicated message is not meant to be more significant, i.e. have a higher degree of intended communicative content than the actual sentence uttered. Any such intentional implicature is annulled or trivialized on the assumption that the sentence is uttered on a weekday during normal hours of opening.

- (c) 'The words the speaker used' is not applicable either, as the alleged implicature can in no way be part of the meaning of a word, or some words, used in the utterance, or part of the conventional force of the whole utterance.

It is less clear, however, whether the last candidate,

- (d) 'His saying that' can be the carrier of the alleged implicature. This vehicle seems to break down in all its formulations when we try to apply it to our example:
- (di) 'His saying that in that way' is obviously ruled out; (di) clearly makes reference to the speaker's intentionality in respect of his utterance. The speaker has to give a clue to his intention if the hearer is to grasp it. But this he can only do by something special about his saying what he does [hence (di)] and there is not anything in (86ii).

- (dii) 'His saying just that there is a garage round the corner and no more' seems to elevate our assumption of the most rudimentary shared knowledge of our world to the status of a well calculated, conversational implicature. (cf. the 'professor' example)
- (diii) 'His saying that rather than something else' seems to be guilty of effecting the same trivialization of the concept of implicature.

In short, this example does not seem to be amenable to any such analysis of its purported implicature; we conclude that this is the case just because there is no conversational implicature to be analysed.

### 5.3.2 Topics: conversationally implicated?

In the foregoing we examined in detail two cases of what Grice calls particularized, conversational implicature, i.e. an implicature generated by saying that p on a particular occasion, and in virtue of special features of the context, whereas the utterance of p would not normally carry this implicature. We contended that both of them were not genuine cases of conversational implicature. In the case of the former example, (87) ('Jones didn't pay the bill'), the purported conversational implicature can be more adequately, fruitfully and systematically handled in terms of intonational meanings, whilst in the latter, (86) ('There's a garage round the corner'), it was accounted for in terms of mutual general background knowledge and specific assumptions. In short, with (86) it was found that what Grice calls a conversational implicature amounted to no more than the hypostatization of knowledge shared by the participants of a talk-exchange, against the back-ground of which linguistic events take place.

In what follows we will consider briefly some more examples of particularized, conversational implicature, as described by Grice, only to be shown that these, too, cannot be regarded as instances of a uniformly defined class of homogeneous linguistic phenomena.

Another example of particularized, conversational implicature, falling into the group of cases in which no maxim is violated, is the following:

(88) A: Smith doesn't seem to have a girl-friend these days. B: He has been paying a lot of visits to New York lately.

Grice writes,

B implicates that Smith has, or may have, a girl-friend in New York;

and he adds,

In both examples [he refers to (88) and (86)] the speaker implicates that in which he must be assumed to believe in order to preserve the assumption that he is observing the maxim of relation.

However, (88) is a rather otiose example of a conversational implicature. In the first place, B need not be taken as implicating that Smith has, Or may have, a girl-friend in New York, in order to preserve the assumption that he is observing the maxim of relation. Indeed, a number of interpretations can be given to B's utterance depending on the assumptions in relation to the subject matter (Smith) shared by A and B. Couldn't B's utterance be taken to mean (B<sup>i</sup>)?

(88) B<sup>i</sup>: Indeed, he doesn't. He has been paying a lot of visits to New York lately.

That is, could (88)B not be taken as performing the act of accepting as correct — as is clearly the case in (88)B<sup>i</sup> — rather than as rejecting, A's preceding statement, and further supplementing it with what seemed to B to be evidence that A's utterance was true? This understanding of B's utterance, however, would depend on common assumptions such as, for example, that Smith's parents live in New York, and that Smith is more likely to pay a lot of visits to his parents when he does not have a girl-friend, and so on and so forth. Or

perhaps such an understanding as (88) Bi of (88) B could depend on A's and B's shared knowledge that there are a lot of brothels in New York city, but not in the village in which Smith lives, and apparently, this is the attraction for Smith's frequent visits to New York, given his present state and, probably, his past habits, too. In both cases, B's utterance is understood as having the force of concurring with, and corroborating A's statement. Suffice it to say that the intonation contour assigned to B's utterance is as significant, as is mutual background knowledge, for the understanding of its force.

Having shown that there are no grounds for supposing that a conversational implicature attaching to B's utterance is necessarily of the content described by Grice, we will now turn to his claim that the supposition of the presence of the implicature is needed for preserving the assumption that B is observing the maxim of relevance. Suppose B's response to A's utterance was (88)Bii:

(88) Bii: He has (may have) a girl-friend. He has been paying a lot of visits to New York lately.

It is quite clear that Grice would not want to claim that there is any case of implicature in (88)Bii attaching to B's utterance, since "the implicature" is stated in the first clause of B's utterance, i.e. (a)

(a) He has (may have) a girl-friend.

However, the question that should be raised is what is the status of (a) in B's utterance? Does it not refer to, or is it not a reformulation of the topic, as this was initiated and formulated in A's utterance?<sup>12</sup> If this is so, then what Grice calls a conversational implicature, the presence of which must be assumed for the preservation of the assumption that the CP is observed, is no more than an idle inference, as a duplicated, and hence redundant, invocation of a topic can be called. Once the topic of a conversation, or talk-exchange is formulated and established, it need not be reiterated in each new contribution to it. More- over, the fact that in Grice's example the topic was lexically formulated, that is,

explicitly stated and thereby established in A's utterance, eliminates any need for its "reactivation or foregrounding" (cf. Sgall, 1975) in B's subsequent utterance. As the ethnomethodologists would put it, A's utterance provides for the next observation to be heard as about Smith's girl-friend, since it is the question of the possible existence of a girl-friend of his that has been "formulated as the topical focus of some projective conversational activity properly instigated upon uttering" (88)A (cf. Schenkein, 1972). In other words, once the topic has been formulated, the interlocutor's attention is directed to it, and it thus need not be relexicalized in the ensuing utterance. It is worth noticing that when the topic is contextually recoverable, as for example when one of my colleagues throws (b) out at me, while dashing past me down the stairs,

(b) That's a nice colour scheme,<sup>13</sup>

its verbalization is kept to a minimum.<sup>14</sup>

Now Grice might raise an objection of a different form, relating to the identity of the pronoun he in B's utterance. How do we know that he refers to Smith of (88)A? He might want to claim that it does so by way of conversational implicature so that B's utterance is presumed to be relevant to A's utterance. However, this would be a further trivialization of the concept of implicature. Following Schenkein (op.cit.) we could counter this rejection, were it to be raised, by saying that once the referential solution has been provided by a previous conversational formulation (Smith) "it need not be resolved de novo at each juncture" (p.360). Indeed, it is 'referential cohesion' that is "a primary text-forming agency" (cf. Halliday, 1977)

Although Grice does not argue that the maxim of relation is violated in (86) and (88), he does nevertheless appeal to it in a rather obscure way, in constructing the gloss of the reasoning to the presence of the conversational implicature. The status of this appeal to the CP on the part of the hearer is

Not clarified in Grice's account, and we believe that the analyses of these two examples have made it clear that if indeed such an appeal to the CP is to be made, it would be trivially made. Therefore, there is no reason to believe that participants in a talk-exchange will trivially appeal to the CP or maxims thereof. Indeed, Grice himself want to exclude cases of trivial invocation of the observance of the CP (cf William James Lecture III, 1978, p. 114).

Moreover, it has been argued in relation to (88), not only that understanding the force of what is said can be governed by the specific assumptions pertaining to the speech event, but also that what Grice calls conversational implicature amounts to no more than an inferred reformulation of the topic of the talk-exchange. We believe therefore that we have shown that (88), too, is a bogus case of conversational implicature. We will now consider some more of his examples of conversational implicature.

#### 5.4 More bogus cases

Grice describes an example of conversational implicature exhibiting a kind of interaction between his maxims, as follows:

Suppose that it is generally known that New York and Boston were blacked out last night, and A asks B whether C saw a particular T.V. programme last night. It will be conversationally unobjectionable for B, who knows that C was in New York, to reply "No, he was in a blacked-out city". B could have said that C was in New York, thereby providing a further piece of just possibly useful or interesting information, but in preferring the phrase "a blacked-out city" he was implicating (by the maxim prescribing relevance) a more appropriate piece of information, namely, why C was prevented from seeing the programme. He could have provided both pieces of information by saying, e.g. "He was in New York which was blacked out", but the gain would have been insufficient to justify the additional conversational effort.

(William James Lecture III, 1978, p. 114)



Apparently, this example would belong, together with (86) and (88), to the group of conversational implicatures in which no maxim is violated. However the status of the purported conversational implicature is as obscure and odd as is the claim that A would prefer the phrase "a blacked-out city" to the more concise and incremental Proper Name of the city, i.e. "New York". Once more Grice feels that the common assumptions in this case, i.e. the knowledge that New York was blacked out, have to be explicitly stated in B's response, as in "He was in New York which was blacked out", or as in "He was in a blacked-out city". He thus overlooks the common sense fact that (c),

(c) No, he was in New York,

as a response to A's question, and uttered against the background of the assumed common knowledge that New York was blacked out, triggers off this knowledge and it thus constitutes a relevant ipso facto, cooperative response, with the minimum of lexicalization and the maximum relevant information.

To exemplify this point, think of a case in which someone expresses his surprise at the fact that doctor X shows expertise in tropical diseases that is unusual for doctors in the U.K. It is common knowledge that tropical diseases are very uncommon in the U.K., and, as a consequence, doctors trained and practising in this country are not expected to have a high degree of familiarity with such diseases. In giving an answer to satisfy his curiosity I may say either (i) or (ii):

- (i) He worked as a doctor in Malawi for two years,
- (ii) He worked as a doctor in Africa for two years.

But, on the assumption that I am in a position to say either (i) or (ii), I certainly do not choose to say (iii),

- (iii) He worked as a doctor in a country (continent) with a tropical climate, where people suffer from tropical diseases,

unless I am talking to my five-year-old son or to an ignorant idiot. Both (i) and (ii) turn on our shared background knowledge of the world (SBKBs, cf. chapter 7).

To take another example that would illustrate the way mutual specific assumptions (CMCAs, cf. chapter 7) are brought to bear on the production and understanding of utterances, think of a case that is very similar to Grice's, in which B explains to A the reason for her stomach upset as in (iv),

(iv) I had to drink beer; I had lunch with John,

when it is a well-known fact to both A and B, that B is averse to the consumption of beer, and that John, a common friend, is a fellow who insists that his co-lunchers have beer with him. We think it is obvious that no one would like to claim that a more relevant piece of information would be implicated in a response like (v), in those circumstances.

(v) I had to drink beer; I lunched with a fellow (friend) who insists on treating you to beer.

Grice would claim that the speaker in (v) implicates a more relevant piece of information by way of selecting a relative clause that actually furnishes the information that the proper name would call up in this instance.

Yet, the speaker's formulation of a reference term in his actual response is geared to the hearer's knowledge, both general and specific (cf. chapter 7), and to an orientation for a minimal use of means, that would, however, be relevantly maximally incremental. Sacks and Schegloff, 1979, have pointed out two preferences that are widely operative in conversation in relation to the domain "reference to persons", those for "minimization" and for "recipient design". Reference for minimization is evidenced in the speakers' use of single reference forms. The notion of "recipient design" could be extended to include the speaker's orientation to "design" his utterance in such a way that it effectively takes into account his knowledge of the recipient's relevant assumptions, beliefs

and knowledge. Consequently, utterances are oriented towards being relevantly incremental but at a minimum cost.

It can be pointed out that in all our examples proper names were preferred to descriptive expressions. Sacks and Schegloff's observations seem to carry over to references other than just personal ones. They note,

names are prototypical and ideal recognitional in part because they are minimized reference forms as well; and the stock of minimized forms includes a set (of which names are only one sort) which are for use as recognitional.

(*ibid.*, p. 18)

However, it must be pointed out that reference by way of proper names is often preferred on the grounds that it can function as a triggering device that will recall knowledge which is relevantly informational. If such knowledge cannot be assumed as possessed, then the speaker will have to select some other form of reference, albeit more verbose.

Concluding, it is worth quoting Jespersen, 1924, who, in relation to referencing, writes:

You have to make a selection, and you naturally select those traits that according to the best of your belief will be best fitted to call up exactly the same idea in the other man's mind. More than that, you select also those that will do it in the easiest way to yourself and to your hearer, and will spare both of you the trouble of long circuitous expressions. Therefore, ... instead of 'male ruler of independent state' you say 'King' etc. Thus whenever you can, you use single special terms instead of composite ones.

(p. 64)

It is evident, we conclude, that this example, ('a blacked-out city'), is rather unfortunate, and, in any way, it does not stand to reason to claim that something or other is conversationally implicated by it.

Conversational implicatures can be generated, according to Grice, either when the CP is observed at the level of what is said and when no maxim is infringed, or when there is an apparent violation, but the CP is observed at the level of what is implicated. But there is also another kind of implicature, though rare, that can be achieved by "real, as distinct from apparent, violation of the maxim of Relation" (Grice, 1975, p.54). One such example of the latter group is cited in his William James Lectures, II:

At a genteel tea party A says "Mrs. N is an old hag." There is a moment of appalled silence, then B says "The weather has been quite delightful this summer, hasn't it?" B has blatantly refused to make what he says relevant to A's preceding remark. He thereby implicates that A's remark should not be discussed, and perhaps more specifically, that A has committed a social gaffe.

(1975, p. 55)

However, the case need not be as described by Grice in this example. The sole intention that could be attributed to the next speaker in relation to his speech activity is one of effecting a topic shift, not one of achieving a conversational implicature. Indeed, in most cases of social gaffes, by shifting the topic the next speaker does not intend to thereby implicate that the previous speaker committed a social gaffe; rather, what he intends to do, and what he does do, is to terminate an embarrassing situation by way of changing the subject. This point is clearly illustrated by supposing that the gaffe was committed by the host, and the hostess, his wife, butts in, so to speak, to remedy the situation. Evidently, she would smother up her husband's inappropriate remark, if she could, or, at least, let it go unnoticed, rather than expose it by way of implicating something or other. So much for the imputed intention to the next speaker.

As for infringing the maxim of relation, Grice puts it as follows:

B has blatantly refused to make what he says relevant to A's preceding remark.

This claim can be countered by considering A's remark,

(89) Mrs. N is an old hag,

and concluding that (89) is not a sequentially implicative utterance that would create a 'slot' for 'a next', i.e. one that seeks a response, and if such a response is not provided, its absence noticed as an event (cf. Schegloff, 1967, Sacks and Schegloff, 1979, Schegloff, 1976, Schenkein, 1972). It is not incumbent upon the next speaker to give a response to (89). It is implausible, therefore, to argue that topic shift at such a juncture would count as a violation of the maxim of relation (cf. Bach and Harnish, 1979, 99ff).

Besides, B could have uttered (89i),

(89i) Could I have another sherry?

which in situations such as parties would have a priority over any other talk, since it expresses a more basic need of the speaker at that moment. (89i) could interrupt or even terminate the conversation on a particular topic, but we would be disinclined to perceive utterances like (89i) in such situations as violating the maxim of relation, and thereby implicating something or other.

This example then, too, has been disputed as a genuine instance of conversational implicature on the grounds that it is not reasonable to attribute to speaker B the intention of implicating something or other, on the one hand, and, on the other, because there is no violation, real or apparent, of the maxim of relation.

Another group of conversational implicatures would involve what Grice calls exploitation of the CP, whereby a maxim is flouted at the level of what is said. As extreme examples of a flouting of the first maxim of Quantity, Grice quotes patent tautologies, such as 'women are women', or 'war is war'. He writes:

I would wish to maintain that at the level of what is said, in my favoured sense, such remarks are totally

non-informative and so, at that level, cannot but infringe the first maxim of Quantity in any conversational context. They are of course informative at the level of what is implicated, and the hearer's identification of their informative content at this level is dependent on his ability to explain the speaker's selection of this PARTICULAR patent tautology.

(1975, p. 52)

Surely, we would not want to dispute the fact that conversational implicatures can be generated when the CP is violated at the level of what is said, but it should be pointed out that patent tautologies have come to acquire a rather standardized meaning, and thus they might qualify as idiomatic phrases or expressions. For example, Venneman, 1975, writes in this connexion,

a statement such as 'A woman is a woman' is never interpreted as a tautology but as something like 'A woman must be expected to behave as male chauvinist pigs expect women to behave.'

(p.327)

Unlike other cases of conversational implicature that would belong to the same group, obvious tautologies do not require a special content to be understood. Neither does their understanding — i.e. their conversational implicate — vary according to context of situation, previous linguistic discourse or speakers' intentions. Besides, such tautologies are not cancellable, either explicitly or contextually. In short, they seem to be conventionalized rather than to belong on an equal footing with instances of conversational implicatures generated by violating the CP, or maxims thereof, as in the cases of other examples discussed by Grice,<sup>15</sup> since they lack most of the features characterizing conversational implicatures.<sup>16</sup> The conventionalized meaning of such patent tautologies is exhibited in conjunctive statements in which the conjunct is but:

'Men are men but women are women.

The tautological meaning of the two conjuncts is incompatible with the meaning

of the conjunctive element 'but' (unless "too' is appended). But 'Men are men and women are women' is acceptable.

#### 5.4.1 Irony: Implicated?

Another linguistic phenomenon that is claimed by Grice to be explicable in terms of conversational implicatures is irony. The example he cites is (90),

(90) X is a fine friend,

uttered by A and addressed to B, in the common knowledge that X, a close friend of A's, has recently let him down. The conversational implicature is a proposition contradictory to the one expressed by (90), and is supposed to be conveyed by way of getting B to reconcile A's violation of the maxim of Quality, evidenced in (90), with the assumption that he is, nevertheless, observing the CP overall. By reasoning to the contradictory proposition of the one expressed in (90), i.e. by reasoning to the conversational implicatum, B has understood A's utterance as complying with the CP at the level of what is implicated.

Irony, however, need not be propositional (cf. Holdcroft, 1976a, b) i.e. involve inversion of what has been said, as has often been assumed (cf. Grice, 1975, Searle, 1979a, Bach and Harnish, 1978).<sup>17</sup> It has been amply illustrated that ironical use of language (verbal irony) is too complicated a phenomenon to be amenable to a Gricean treatment (cf. Holdcroft, 1976a, b, 1981). Furthermore, even in cases of propositional irony, in which the conveyed proposition is intended to be the contradictory of what has been said, it is problematical to claim that anything has been said at all. As Holdcroft, 1981, puts it,

For if to say that p is to commit oneself to defending p, and, inter alia, is meant to provide an audience with a reason for thinking that p, then it is surely wrong to suppose that A said that X is a fine friend. Grice's own remarks about what it is to say that p seem to support a similar conclusion.

(p.15)

Besides, Grice, 1975, p.58, writes,

Since the truth of a conversational implicatum is not required by the truth of what is said (what is said may be true — what is implicated may be false), the implicature is not carried by what is said, but only by the saying of what is said, or by "putting it that way".

Grice's explication of (90) in terms of conversational implicatures, however, does not tally with his claim that while  $\underline{p}$  (what is said) may be true,  $\underline{q}$  (what is implicated) need not be. Since the implicatum of (90) is the contradictory of what is said in it, it is impossible to claim that both  $\underline{p}$  and  $\underline{q}$  are true, since they are contradictory and, hence, mutually exclusive. If  $\underline{p}$  is true then  $\underline{q}$ , of necessity, is false, and if  $\underline{q}$  is true, then  $\underline{p}$  is false. However, this state of affairs is not in Grice's spirit, since he argues that to reason to what is implicated, one must first understand what is said. The only way round this problem would be to argue that 'what is said' is defined in terms of sentence meaning, but such a definition is not in Grice's spirit either.

Besides, irony seems to be tied to the utterance's propositional content in a way that other implicating utterances are not (cf. examples cited in footnote 15). Another point that differentiates ironical utterances from other instances of implicature is that irony often seems to rest on evaluative assessments shared by the hearer, as well (cf. Miller, 1976); and, in so far as this is true, the generated implicature is hardly informative of anything else than, perhaps, the fact that the speaker, too, shares certain assessments of the situation.

However, what is of significance is that Grice groups together cases like (86), in which the speaker means what he says, with cases like (90), in which the speaker does not mean what he says. In the former case, if  $\underline{p}$  is false, so is  $\underline{q}$ , the purported implicature; in the latter case, on the other hand, if  $\underline{p}$  is true, then, of necessity,  $\underline{q}$ , the implicature, must be false. But if  $\underline{p}$  is false then  $\underline{q}$  is necessarily true.



### 5.5 On R. Lakoff's use of the concept

We believe we have argued convincingly that most of Grice's examples of conversational implicature instantiate diverse linguistic facts that do not warrant a uniform treatment. Their heterogeneity precludes the possibility of a principled homogeneous account that could also be fully informative of the intricacies involved.

Yet, the term 'conversational implicature' has been widely, if loosely, used in the literature, as a blanket term to accommodate various forms of unqualified inferences.<sup>18</sup> Recalling, however, Goffman's, 1959, observation that we live by inference, it becomes quite clear why, though convenient, it is utterly uninformative, as argued in this study, to label various inferences we make in language use 'conversational implicatures' and thus sweep them under the carpet, rather than to account for their diverse characteristics.

Robin Lakoff, 1973b, for example, says that if to the question 'What time is it?' one answers as in (91),

(91) My stomach says that it is nearly lunch time,

we must assume that the respondent has trust in the communications of his stomach. If it is prone to suggest that it is lunch time at the wrong hours, this reply is useless to the questioner as an answer to his question. But if we assume it is accurate, then by conversational implicature we can assume further that the complement of this sentence will represent a true situation.

(p.457)

Lakoff goes on to offer a pattern of deduction which runs as follows:

- A. One does not give false or irrelevant information.
- B. Therefore, the complement of the sentence 'My stomach says ...' is believed by the speaker to be accurate.
- C. Lunch time occurs between twelve and one o'clock.

D. Therefore, it is shortly before that time.

(pp.457-58)

It is worth observing that A lies in the background of any linguistic activity. If it is not taken for granted, then the questioner would not expend the effort to ask the question in the first place, since he could not hope for a true or accurate answer. Therefore, A is not included in the questioner's deductive pattern in trying to 'decipher' (91). Consequently, B has to go, too, since it is dependent on A. B can be said to be a felicity condition on the illocutionary act of stating (91) (cf. Heringer, 1976, Searle, 1969) and as such it is a rule of a theory of speech acts. Alternatively, it can be looked on, as an instance of the observation of a pragmatic rule of conversation which obtains universally; hence, if this rule were to be appealed to in (91), it would be so, trivially. In conclusion, it can be said that both step A and B and Lakoff's rendition of the deductive process involved in the understanding of (91) are vacuous, or, more aptly, granted universally.

It is not clear what is conversationally implicated in Lakoff's view, though step B seems to be the most likely candidate according to her account. She seems to conflate distinct issues in it, however. If B is the conversational implicature, then she mistakes felicity conditions for conversational implicature; or, at best, an instantiation of the observance of the maxim of quality is taken to be a conversational implicature.<sup>19</sup> If, on the other hand, step C is to be taken as conversationally implicated, she is liable to the charge of hypostatizing common factual background knowledge by elevating it to the status of conversationally implicated meanings intentionally conveyed by the speaker. In any event, the question that is raised is what the status of D is. If anything is intended to be conveyed as conversationally implicated in this example it would have to be D, since this is the ultimate import of the speaker's utterance (91).<sup>20</sup> If C, however, is meant to represent the conversational implicature, then, taking into account that speech activities are

constantly dependent on background knowledge, the question that is raised is, what the utility is of such an indiscriminate concept. This notion of conversational implicature would be too general to be anything but vacuous.

Besides there is a further unpleasant consequence of such a general and indiscriminate use of the concept: We would not be able to meaningfully account for instances of communication in which what is intended to be conveyed by the speaker is something over and above, or different from what is said in his utterance. (See following discussion) Indeed, according to Grice's account, one tends to think that this is what he originally meant by conversationally implicated meanings.

To illustrate what we would think to be a correct use of the term in the same example, consider a similar case in which the same talk-exchange takes place between a husband and a wife. The wife asks the time in the mutual knowledge (cf. Schiffer's, 1972, definition of "mutual knowledge") that her husband is wearing a watch. On the assumption that he was in a position to give a more relevant(?) or informative answer the wife will try and understand the import of her husband's utterance, and to this end she may have to draw on common assumptions and background knowledge, as well as make use of other facts that might be of significance in the understanding of what has been said. The wife is expected to reason as follows:

- A. It is obvious that the speaker (her husband) can give a more relevant(?) or informative response in conformity with the maxims of relevance and quantity.  
Yet, he does not. He is in breach of the CP.
- B. Moreover, he intends me to see that he is violating the CP or a maxim thereof, since he knows that I know that he can give and is required to give a more relevant(?) or informative answer.
- C. I have no reason to doubt his common sense and hence his cooperation in our communicative activity. Therefore, there must be some reason for selecting a rather deviant

answer to my answer (for violating a maxim). This reason may be that he wants to communicate to me something else or something more than just what my question required.

- D. Given what he has said and given our mutual assumptions and background knowledge that  $\emptyset$ , what he intends me to think is that  $q$ .

It is significant that the addressee may have to resort to shared assumptions and knowledge in order to understand the speaker's import of his utterance. In this case the common assumptions may be any of a number of things. For example, it may well have been agreed that they are going to lunch out. In this case  $q$ , i.e. the speaker's conversational implicature, would be something like 'Let's go', to which the addressee might respond with any of the following:

I changed my mind; I'm not coming.

All right, I'll fetch my coat.

Wimpy, as usual?

It is worthy of note that in this case the speaker's utterance, (91) may have, and be intended to have, a perlocutionary effect, by manipulating the addressee's subsequent behaviour.

In another case the common assumptions may have been that the wife is always expected to cook the lunch, and given that she has not so done, (91) may be intended to conversationally implicate that the addressee had better cook some lunch. Given such assumptions, the addressee makes for the kitchen, or she may retort to (91) with (91i),

(91i) I'm not cooking any lunch, today. You get it.

In both cases, however, what is conversationally implicated, is so, in virtue of the speaker's intentions and contextual features. The presence of the conversational implicature has to be worked out, and to do this the addressee has to rely on all the data given by Grice, i.e.

- (1) the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any references which may be involved;
- (2) the CP and its maxims;
- (3) the context, linguistic or otherwise of the utterance;
- (4) other items of background knowledge;
- (5) the fact (or supposed fact) that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants, and that both participants know or assume this to be the case.

(1975, p. 50)

In Lakoff's analysis, however, this data is not taken into consideration. To be sure, there are no specific contextual features relevant to the situation. Neither is it shown that the main preoccupation of the speaker is to communicate, not , but g. These facts lead us to conclude that the concept of conversational implicature is abused in Lakoff's example.

#### 5.6 Conclusion

We have so far considered cases in which we argued that what was claimed to be conversationally implicated meanings did not exhibit identical features, but, rather, that they were an array of heterogeneous linguistic facts. We conclude, that due to their heterogeneity, it is not plausible to claim that these facts form a homogeneously defined class of linguistic phenomena, as the class of conversational implicature would have to be. Besides, no class of homogeneous criteria would be applicable to such a variety of linguistic facts to identify instances of conversational implicature and distinguish them from other linguistic phenomena.

Furthermore, it has been shown that most of these examples involved cases in which what was called a conversational implicatum amounted to no more than the invocation of mutual background assumptions and knowledge. It is claimed

that a notion of conversational implicature defined in those terms would unjustifiably hypostatize assumed knowledge by elevating it to the status of significant speakers' meanings, intentionally conveyed by participants in a talk-exchange.

In Chapter 7 we will be concerned with bodies of mutual background knowledge, since they seem to play such a significant role in successful communication. By arguing that background knowledge and assumptions are a universal fact — a *sine qua non* — of language use (cf. Searle, 1979b) we hope to show the necessity that language analysts be alerted to the study of such bodies and their relation to language use, rather than camouflage such important issues under the guise of conversational implicature.

In chapter 8 we will examine in detail how bodies of background knowledge bear on the understanding of what has been called "a typical case of the general phenomenon of indirection" (Searle, 1975, p. 61). Our motivation for this case study is the fact that such instances of indirect communication have been implausibly called conversational implicatures.

Before turning to a consideration of the role played by background knowledge in communication, however, we would like to point out the lines along which the notion of conversational implicature should be more profitably defined. To this we now turn.

## 6. PROLEGOMENA TO A REDEFINITION OF CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE

### 6.1 Two paradigms

So far the thesis has been rather negative inasmuch as we considered cases of linguistic facts that, on our view, cannot be plausibly called conversational implicatures. We now wish to examine two of Grice's examples that, on our view, are genuine cases of conversational implicatures, and point out the criteria that would help us define the notion in more stringent, and thus less general and vague terms.

Grice, 1975, defines a group of conversational implicatures as follows:

GROUP C: Examples that involve exploitation, that is, a procedure by which a maxim is flouted for the purpose of getting in a conversational implicature by means of some- thing of the nature of a figure of speech.

In these examples, though some maxim is violated at the level of what is said, the hearer is entitled to assume that the maxim, or at least the overall Cooperative Principle, is observed at the level of what is implicated.

(p.52) He then goes on

to describe an example belonging to this group as follows:

Example (92):

(1a) 'A flouting of the first maxim of Quantity.'

A is writing a testimonial about a pupil who is a candidate for a philosophy job, and his letter reads as follows:

'Dear Sir, Mr. N's command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular. Yours, etc.'

(p.52) The gloss Grice

provides for this example reads thus:

(Gloss: A cannot be opting out, since if he wished to be uncooperative, why write at all? He cannot be unable,

through ignorance, to say more, since the man is his pupil; moreover, he knows that more information than this is wanted. He must, therefore, be wishing to impart information that he is reluctant to write down. This supposition is tenable only on the assumption that he thinks Mr. X is no good at philosophy. This, then, is what he is implicating.

(p. 52)

Another example which Grice would apparently like to include in Group C is described as follows:

Example (93):

Suppose that 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."

(1975, p.43)

Grice's rendition of A's reasoning in those circumstances is as follows:

- (1) 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 CP;
- (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.

(1975, p.50)

## 6.2 A comparison; a criterion en proposed

In what follows we would like to compare these two examples with (86), which has been claimed here to be a bogus case of conversational implicature. This comparison will reveal the lack of a common class of criteria that could



identify as conversational implicatures, linguistic phenomena, such as those manifested in examples (92) and (93), on the one hand, and (86) — repeated below for convenience — on the other.

(86) (i)A: I'm out of petrol.

(ii) B: There's a garage round the corner.

One of the characterizations of the notion of conversational implicature is described as follows:

(2) the supposition that he [the speaker] 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 [that the CP is observed]; and (3) 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, 1975, p.50)

Now apply this to (86)B and the gloss would read as follows; Gloss: "B must be aware that, or think that, the garage is open, (and has stocks of petrol to sell, etc.), to make his saying that there is a garage round the corner consistent with the presumption that he is observing the conversational maxims, or at least the CP." Granted that this gloss is consistent with our intuitions, one should not fail to notice that its significance is not on a par with that of the gloss a potential -hearer might use in the case of (92) and (93). The first point that differentiates this gloss from the one used in (92) and (93) is the following: The hearer in (86) does not make any conscious use of any gloss at all, as is the case with the other two examples. He does not pause to decipher, or reflect on, what the speaker said, as would be the case in (92) and (93). Neither is he left with the impression that what the speaker wanted to communicate to him, was, not  $p$  ('There is a garage round the corner') but the implicature  $q$  ('The garage is open, or it has petrol to sell, etc'). There is no communicative import, other than  $p$ ,

for the hearer of (86) B to work out, as the case is in (92) and (93). In brief, the hearer of (86) B is aware that p is attributed a higher degree of intended communicative content by the speaker than is any possible q. Evidently, this is not the case with the two other examples; in these two, what the speaker really wants to impart to his audience is, not p, but q. He exploits p, which in turn functions as the springboard to get the hearer to argue to q. As Stalnaker, 1977, pointed out,

In the best cases of exploitation [of the rules governing normal conversation], it is the main point of the speech act to communicate what is only implied.

(p. 146)

It is clear that p could be varied along similar lines in (92) and (93), without thereby hampering the felicitous communication of q. In other words, the conveying of q, the implicature, seems to have priority over, and carry more weight than, the conveying of p, the sentence actually uttered. Indeed, it is not clear whether p has any autonomous function at all, other than to serve for the speaker as the vehicle of his implicature. Clearly, this is not the case in (86).

Our claim that the communication of the conversational implicature is given priority to by the speaker, over the communication of what he actually utters, becomes clear in the following examples slightly altered by the added clauses; (The same context is presumed throughout in each case of (92) and (86) B):

(92) Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical.

(86)B There is a garage round the corner.

(92a) Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical; I do not, of course, mean to imply that he is no good at Philosophy.

- (92b) Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical, but he is good at Philosophy.
- (92c) Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical and he is no good at Philosophy.
- (86) Ba There is a garage round the corner; I do not, of course, mean to imply that it is open.
- (86) Bb There is a garage round the corner but it is not open.
- (86) Bc There is a garage round the corner and it is open.

In relation to (92), Grice offers the added clause in (92a) as an explicit cancellation of the implicature generated by an utterance of (92) in the described circumstances. But he adds:

... my whole utterance is intelligible and linguistically impeccable, even though it may be extraordinary tutorial behaviour; and I can no longer be said to have implied that he was no good, even though perhaps that is what my colleagues might conclude to be the case if I had nothing else to say.

(1967a, p.93, emphasis added)<sup>1</sup>

Now compare (92a) with (86) Ba: In (92a), though linguistically disavowed, the implicature still goes through, as Grice hints. Due to this fact the hearer is not left wondering about the purpose of (92); that is, he can see no point in the utterance of (92) in those circumstances, unless the implicature is thereby conveyed. However, this does not seem to be the case with (86)Ba. The wording of the explicit cancellation of the alleged implicature here seems rather clumsy. The word 'imply' seems to be ill-chosen. This may be due to the fact that the hearer, as has already been argued, is not left with the impression of any intended implicature on the speaker's part in (86). Hence, an explicit cancellation of an alleged implicature is misplaced, and falls just short of being unintelligible.

If, however, (86)Ba is formulated as an utterance adding further information rather than cancelling an alleged implicature, then it would go through felicitously

as shown below:

(86)Bai: There is a garage round the corner; I am not, of course, saying that it is open.

or: There is a garage round the corner; I do not know if it is open, though.

But even (86)Bai would not be spared the charge of causing unnecessary prolixity if it were to be uttered during the time when it is common knowledge that such businesses are open; the added clause would then be pleonastic. We conclude that all this is, again, indicative of the lack of any conversational implicature generated by (86).

Now compare (92b) with (86)Bb: In both cases the added clause is the reverse of the implicature in each case, conjoined to (92) and (86), with the conjunction 'but'. (92b) is rather infelicitous due to the fact that, although the two clauses in it both refer to desirable qualities, these are qualities of a different order, for the clauses to be felicitously conjoined with 'but', or with 'and' for that matter. This fact, too, is conducive to the supposition that (92) functions as the means to get the hearer to argue to q; (86)Bb, on the other hand, seems to be a perfectly felicitous utterance. It is uttered as a comment relevant to the preceding utterance ('I am out of petrol'). Note that, in this context, the second clause cannot be uttered independently in any formulation: 'It is closed', 'The garage is closed', (which garage?). (86)B has to be incorporated in some form for the second clause to be intelligible in the given context, as in 'The garage round the corner is closed.' This is not so for (92b), however. The second clause of (92b) is semantically autonomous, and intelligible in its own right, under the given circumstances:

Jones (He) is good at Philosophy.

He is no good at Philosophy.

Should it be granted that the semantic autonomy of the implicated message generated by an utterance is a criterion of the presence of a conversational implicature, then

the above discussion will give support to our argument that (92), in the given circumstances, generates a conversational implicature, whereas (86)B does not.

In other words, the question brought out by the foregoing discussion is whether a conversational implicature is communicable in its own right, i.e. is such that if made explicit, it will not be a conversational implicature any more. The explicit formulation will do away with the sentence, the utterance of which gave rise to the implicature in the first place.

Further, (86)Bb uttered in the given circumstances, is felicitous, though, following Grice, one might be forced to claim that it is irrelevant and, hence, uncooperative. The question is whether Grice would consider the added clause in (86)Bb 'but it is closed1, an explicit cancellation of the alleged implicature generated by (86). However, the following quotation supports the supposition that Grice would consider the utterance of (86)Bb an explicit cancellation of its implicature:

... 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 admissible to add 'but not p', or 'I do not mean to imply that p1;

(Grice, 1978, p. 115)

Supposing that the utterance of the added clause is regarded as an explicit cancellation of the conversational implicature, then the whole utterance would be relevant on Grice's view.

By the same token, however, we would be compelled to accept the utterance of its counterpart, (92b), as an explicit cancellation of the speaker's conversational imp! feature; (92b) is obviously not felicitous in the circumstances. Therefore, it seems as though Grice had to choose between regarding either the added 'but1- clause as an explicit cancellation of the implicatures, or (86)Bb as irrelevant, since it would not be covered by the gloss he offers in the specific example. In

either case his thesis seems to run into trouble. In any event, one wonders what it is that makes the utterance of (86)Bb felicitous in those circumstances, whilst the utterance of its counterpart (92b) is not. Moreover, an equivalent formulation of (93), uttered in the given context, is as unintelligible as is (92b):

(93b) Oh, quite well. He likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet, but he is honest.

Let us now consider (92c) and (86) Be. The question that these two formulations pose, is whether a conversational implicature can be made explicit in conjunction with the sentence, the utterance of which gave rise to this implicature. Obviously, (92c) would leave the professor's audience puzzled or confused. Moreover, an utterance of its counterpart, (93c), in the given context, does not make much sense, either:

(93c) Oh, quite well, I think. He likes his colleagues and he hasn't been to prison yet, and he is dishonest.

On the other hand, (86)Be goes down quite well uttered outside normal hours of opening. This fact shows up the significant function of (92) and (93) with regard to the generation of conversational implicatures. Once the implicature is spelt out the functionality of the implicating utterance is overridden, and hence its presence not required.

### 6.3 A redefinition

Whilst the application of the foregoing tests to (92) and (93) gives identical results, as regards (86) it does not. This fact gives evidence that whereas (92) and (93) instantiate the same linguistic phenomenon, (86) does not. It is hoped that it has been convincingly argued that in both (92) and (93) the main import of the speaker's utterance is not p, what is said, but q, what is conversationally implicated. The various tests applied to these three examples showed that, unlike the other two cases, in (So) the main import of the

speaker's utterance is what is said. What is purportedly implicated, a la Grice, is claimed, here, to be only what is assumed, as part of the co-participants' common background knowledge. Being such, q in (86) cannot have been the speaker's main import of his utterance. Consequently, the speaker cannot be imputed with any specific intention to convey q, by way of saying p. Instead the speaker in (86) says p, intends to convey that p, and q — part of what is assumed as common, factual knowledge — is brought to bear on his utterance, if at all, solely by way of having been triggered by p.

On the contrary, in both (92) and (93), q, the speaker's main import of his utterance, i.e. his conversational implicature, does not constitute, or is thought of as not constituting, part of the hearer's assumed background knowledge. Therefore, q is considered to be new, and possibly significant, information for the hearer.

Moreover, it has been shown that the utterance of p, i.e. what is said, in (92) and (93), is of very little communicative significance. Its formulation can vary, but it can still give rise to the same implicature, given the same circumstances (e.g. 'He hasn't been arrested yet.<sup>1</sup>) Indeed, the truth-value of p does not seem to matter to the generation and truth-valuation of q. As Grice noted, "the implicature is not carried by what is said-, but only by the saying of what is said or by 'putting it that way<sup>1</sup> " (1975, p.58). But whilst Grice argued that "what is said may be true — what is implicated may be false", (*ibid.*, p.58), we would like to add that, indeed, it may well be the other way round, as well. In a genuine implicature, p may be obviously false, and yet one can thereby felicitously implicate that q, and q may be true. It follows, therefore, that the meaning of the implicature is different from the conventional meaning of the implicating sentence.<sup>2</sup> Suffice it to say, that these observations do not carry over to (86).

Furthermore, it should be remembered that, as argued in chapter 5, the question of whether the CP is observed, is not to be raised trivially, as Grice

might have it. The observance of some form of the CP is assumed to hold a priori, that is, it is assumed to obtain in the background of any potential speech activity. Hearers, therefore, do not trivially appeal to it in the obvious case of its observance. The question of the observance of the CP, and its maxims, is raised only in cases in which they are violated in some way. As has been seen, whilst in (92) and (93) the hearer has to actively assume that the CP is observed (i.e. raise the question of whether this is so) this is not the case in (86); (86) does not exhibit any violation of the CP, or maxims thereof. Summarizing, therefore, the important point so far seems to be that:

q, the conversational implicature, must not be:

(i) part of what is assumed by both A and B (speaker and addressee) and known to be such, or,

(ii) such that it follows from what is assumed, together

with what is said, without any assumption that the CP is being observed.

Implicit in (ii) is that in genuine cases of conversational implicature, the CP, or maxims, must be violated. Now, we would like to claim that for a conversational implicature to be generated, at least one maxim must be deliberately and apparently violated. This violation will actually alert the addressee to the presence of the implicature. The violation, being apparent, i.e. at the level of what is said only, will have to be settled at the level of what is implicated. Another feature that is of significance here, is the speaker's deliberate violation of the CP in the process of the generation of the conversational implicature. Therefore, the role of intention in conveying an implicature is significant. On our view, the notion of intention is a sine qua non for the generation of conversational implicatures. We would thus have to argue that the presence of an implicature would have to depend on the speaker's intentions and not merely on his assumptions, as is, perhaps reluctantly, conceded in Grice, 1978, p. 120.



Suffice it to say that since conversational implicature is a pragmatical phenomenon, it is a characteristic of contextualized speech activities and not of isolated utterances. It, therefore, primarily figures in contextualized adjacency sequences.

In conclusion, it has been suggested that the mode of inference characterizing conversational implicature should be as follows:

- I. A says  $\underline{p}$
- II. B's active assumption that the CP is followed.
  - Analysed: (a) A is in violation of the CP as evidenced in  $\underline{p}$
  - (b) A's breach is found to be only apparent on the grounds that,
- III. A, having no grounds for opting out of the conversational activity, must intend B to argue to some  $\underline{q}$ .
- IV. Given  $\underline{p}$  and CK and on the strength of II and III B is to argue to  $\underline{q}$ .
  - A = speaker
  - B = addressee
  - CK = context and common background knowledge  
and assumptions

Clearly, this analysis is given from B's perspective.

The constraints on  $\underline{q}$ , which however are implicit in the analysis, are as in (i) and (ii). It thus follows that  $\underline{p}$  is incremental, and not thought of as part of already assumed facts by B. Whilst conversational implicature have often been identified with items of our common background knowledge in the literature, this definition will not allow instances of assumed background knowledge to be thus-hypostatized. In other words, A is not permissible in this definition:

$$(A) \quad \text{CK} \rightarrow \underline{q} \quad \rightarrow = \text{gives rise to}$$

$$\underline{p} + \text{CK} \rightarrow \underline{q}$$

A definition along these lines is motivated by the view that "the presence of a

conversational implicature must be capable of being worked out" (Grice, 1975, p.50) rather than intuitively grasped. As Cole, 1975, put it:

If cases in which there is an immediate perception of meaning are grouped with cases in which a deduction has taken place, the distinction that motivated Grice's use of conversational principles in the first place will be lost.

(p.272)

#### 6.4 Further criteria: cancellability, detachability, and the vehicles of implicature

The application of the tests of cancellability and detachability can be re-examined in the light of a redefinition of conversational implicature along the lines suggested here, with a view to considering whether they can be sufficient and/or necessary criteria for the identification of the presence of a conversational implicature. We suspect that the outcome of such an examination would be a uniform application of such criteria, as well as, of criteria regarding the vehicles of the implicature. In 5.1, it was found that the vehicles of the implicature in example (92) ('Jones' handwriting is beautiful and his English is good<sup>1</sup>) were (b) 'the speaker<sup>1</sup> and (d) 'his saying that', in the various formulations we proposed therein. There are grounds for believing that these two vehicles will be applicable to all cases of conversational implicature as defined here. There are also grounds for believing that, whilst conversational implicatures will be iron-detachable — identical context presumed — they will be cancellable explicitly, though there is a possibility of claiming that the (conversational) Implicature still goes through. They can also be cancellable according to context; however, there is a caveat: The claim made by Grice that all conversational implicatures are cancellable is vacuous in so far as the cancellation depends on the context. Since conversational implicature is a pragmatical feature of language use, it cannot be identified outside the context of a fully contextualized speech activity.

This redefinition, therefore, has the merit of making it a distinct possibility that the same doctrine in relation to two tests can be applied to all instances for determining the presence of conversational implicature. This would be a positive gain because the systematic application of further criteria would contribute to a more adequate and rigorous account.

Another point to be noticed is that 'MR' ('Maxim of Relation1) seems to be the one most prominently violated in cases of conversational implicature. This supposition goes with the assumption that 'MR' is weightier than the remaining maxims (see the next section). Characteristically, in adjacency pairs featuring conversational implicatures, in which 'MR1 is violated, the need for other contextual factors in its derivation is often significantly diminished. For example, in relation to (92) it can be plausibly claimed — contra Grice — that the professor gives primarily irrelevant information, rather than less than is required. Had he been in a position to have said that Jones is either good or bad at Philosophy, nobody would have required the information he actually gave about his handwriting and his proficiency in English. Hence, we are inclined to say that it is 'MR' that is violated — or at least primarily 'MR1 — rather than 'M.Quant', as Grice claims.

#### 6.5 On the significance of Relevance

It was mentioned in 6.3 that context, both linguistic and situational, is of paramount importance in cases of conversational implicature. Further, it was noted that, being a pragmatical feature, conversational implicature figures mainly in adjacency pairs, as these constitute the minimal formulation of interactional speech activities.

Adjacency sequences give rise to certain expectancies in relation to what comes next. This kind of expectancy is to be thought of as part of the domain of the Maxim of Relevance. However, little work has been done in the area

of Relevance (but see Kosher, 1976, Dascal, 1977, Holdcroft, 1980, Wilson and Sperber, 1979) and even less is understood about the way this maxim works. Grice acknowledges this fact in his William James Lectures; he writes that among the unanswered questions is that of relevance:

Also needed: a clarification of the notion of relevance, and a more precise specification of when relevance is expected (filling out the maxim of relevance) and also a further consideration of why there is a general expectation that this maxim (and indeed all maxims) be observed.

(V, p. 12)

Besides, the maxim of Relevance is the only one to be left completely un-explicated; Grice does not distinguish any submaxims therein, but instead he writes:

... its formulation conceals a number of problems which exercise me a good deal; questions about what different kinds and foci of relevance there may be, how these shift in the course of a talk exchange, how to allow for the fact that subjects of conversation are legitimately changed, and so on. <sup>3</sup>

(1975/P.46)

He also notes that a specification of the nature of conversation depends in a large measure on the specification of "the nature of Relevance and of the circumstances in which it is required" (*ibid.*, p.49).

Although Grice acknowledges the significance of this maxim, he does not seem to think that it is weightier than the rest. On the contrary, he writes in relation to the maxim of Quality, that its importance "is such that it should not be included in a scheme of the kind I am constructing; other maxims come into operation only on the assumption that this maxim of Quality is satisfied" (1975, p.46). He does not propose a hierarchy of the maxims though, partly because of the equal role they seem to play in the generation of implicatures.

However, we feel that the maxim of Relevance is weightier than all other maxims in so far as it determines the structure of conversation, and because other maxims often seem to be governed by it. For instance, the maxim of Quality enjoins truth in our everyday conversational transactions, but it is a patent truth that this is not so (cf. O'Hair, 1969, Sacks, 1975, Heritage, 1978). Whether our conversational contribution should be a true one, depends, to a great extent, on relational parameters that would belong to the domain of the maxim of Relevance: Who is it addressed to? What are his presumed background assumptions? What is the relevant focus of conversation at the moment of our contribution? What is the overall conversational goal? or What do we take the local intentions of the other party to be in relation to our talk-exchange or his utterance? For example, as shown in Sacks, 1975, our answer to a 'How are you?' is often determined in relation to who the recipient is. To one we may answer with a 'Fine', to another with a 'Lousy', and this is why, as Heritage, 1978, points Out, "the milkman remains untroubled by the endless round of 'fines' in response to his daily queries. He does not assume the universal felicity of his customers because he is not oriented to the truth content of their response but rather to the sequential implicativeness of those responses, to the fact that they do not project the relevance of any further enquiries" (p. 1-9).

Funny situations are often engendered by violating some form of the maxim of Relevance, as when we make our response relevant to what was previously said, but not to the intention with which it was said; i.e. when we (deliberately?) mistake one illocutionary force for another, or, as Searle, 1975, would have it, when we make our response relevant to the secondary rather than to the primary illocutionary force of the previous speech-act. Consider, for example, a scene in a reputable restaurant, where a customer all of a sudden starts stripping off. The waitress goes up to caution him:

Waitress: Please, Sir, remember where you are.

Customer: I know very well where I am, at the Barn Restaurant.

Or a talk-exchange in which A asks B the reason for his visit to Chicago.

A: What brought you from Finley to Chicago?

B: A plane.

Or, another scene, in which an ex-army officer opens a trunk full of rifles at his house and in the presence of a friend, picks up one, and, apparently intending to tell a story, assumes an appropriately mysterious expression and asks B:

A: Do you know what these are?

B: (looking at A nonchalantly) Rifles?

All these funny situations depend on some form of failure in making our response relevant to the previous speech-act, by way of either ignoring the other party's intention and purpose in his utterance, or failing to take into account the presumed common assumptions pertaining to the speech activity (i.e. We all know and we know that we know that they are rifles).<sup>4</sup> It need not be pointed out, though, that they are all truthful responses, and hence the maxim of Quality can be said to be therein observed. Besides, there is no obvious way in which it could be plausibly claimed that 'M.Quant' is at fault ('violated', 'flouted', 'infringed'; Grice's use of these terms is rather indiscriminate and vague) without having to appeal to 'MR' first.

A similar example, exhibiting inattention to other party's presumed factual knowledge, is provided by Lodge, 1962:<sup>5</sup>

'One what?' exclaimed Ludlow.

'One egg-poacher'

(i) 'What the fugg's that for?1

(ii) 'For poaching eggs.'

'I know its for poaching eggs you funny bastard.

What's it doing in the P.R.I, cupboard?1

(p. 77)

Yet, not only is (Π) a truthful response, but it is also in conformity with the maxim of Quantity. Nevertheless, it is irrelevant to (i) in certain respects, and hence infuriating for the other party.

Further, the speaker's intentions often determine whether, or to what extent, he should observe 'M.Qual'. The truth quality of our utterances may be geared to the perlocutionary effect we want to achieve, rather than to what we believe to be true. As for the role of scruples, it often seems to be insignificant. Recall Anthony's speech to the mob and the repetitions of what he believed to be untruths:

I do desire no more.

And Brutus is an honourable man.

I speak not to disprove what Brutus spoke.

Anthony's utterances, being governed by his intentions, leave little room for truthfulness. It is not here argued that there is not a maxim enjoining that our utterances be truthful. But it is pointed out that it often seems to be subordinated to other considerations relating to relevance.

Relational parameters, like rank, office and status of the parties involved in a talk-exchange also seem to outweigh maxims of Quality. An example is to be found again in Lodge, 1962:

It was the special delight of the N.C. O.s to ask questions which could only be answered to one's disadvantage within the framework of military discipline. In the following illustration the words in italics [here underlined] represent possible truthful replies which had to be suppressed for obvious reasons.

'What's all this shit?'

'I don't see any shit.'

'I don't know, Sergeant.'

'Well, I'm telling you, it's shit. See?'

'No'

'Yes, Sergeant'

'Did you clean your kit last night?'

'Of course I did as you very well know.'

"Yes, Sergeant"

'Well you didn't clean it properly, did you?'

'Yes'

'No, Sergeant'

'Why not?'

'Firstly, I don't accept that my equipment isn't properly cleaned. Secondly, if it isn't cleaned to your satisfaction, that's because you are not to be satisfied. Thirdly, you know and I know that it's a question of no importance, that you have to pick on some- thing to establish your authority, and that we ore going througn an elaborate and meaningless ritual to create the illusion that! am being mode a soldier of.'

'I don't know Sergeant1

'... What are you?'

'A bloody sight more intelligent than you, for a start.'

"Idle, Sergeant"

(pp.58-59)

By focusing on the maxim of Relevance we do not want to imply that the rest of the maxims are unproblematic. For example, one of the submaxims of Manner instructs: 'Avoid ambiguity<sup>1</sup>. Yet, there are instances in which we deliberately build our utterances ambiguously without intending the addressee to perceive the ambiguity, and hence without implicating something or other thereby (cf. Weiser, 1974). Another submaxim instructs: 'Be brief. But often brevity is sacrificed in the names of politeness (cf. Leech, 1981), chivalry, or prudence (cf. R. Lakoff, 1973a). But these issues, too, often seem to be governed by such factors as attention to social setting, or status of addressee, or relationship between the parties involved. In other words, we can see the maxim of Relevance "raising its ugly head" again (Kempson, 1975). But even when relational parameters do not seem to affect other maxims, we do not under-



stand why someone who has said "She has gone to her final rest", thereby breaching the maxim 'Be brief, does not implicate anything (cf. Holdcroft, 1976b), whereas someone, who has said "Miss X produced a series of sounds which corresponded closely with the score of 'Home Sweet Home' " (Grice, 1975), has thereby generated an implicature.

Kosher, 1976, dispenses with the CP7 as described in Grice, 1975, and instead sees the conversational maxims as derived directly from a rationality principle:

(R) Given a desired end, one is to choose that action which most effectively, and at least cost, attains that end, ceteris paribus.

(p. 205)

(R), he claims, is in Grice's spirit (cf. Grice, 1975, p.47). By disposing of a mediatory, general cooperative principle of linguistic action, the advantages accrued are that the maxims "do not presume the existence of mutual ends for talk-exchanges, but merely the existence of an advantage for limited cooperation, in favor of each of the participants according to his own ends" (*ibid.*, p.210).

This approach seems to solve the problem raised with the notion of co-operation concerning our linguistic acts in certain situations, such as in courtrooms (cf. Holdcroft, 1978b, Levinson, 1978b). The two parties' (defence-prosecution) incompatible goals in their speech acts can be viewed as conforming to some form of a general rationality principle, rather than too cooperative principle. E.g., the precision with which language has to be used in courtroom situations, in which there are conflicting goals, is, but one characteristic.<sup>6</sup> For example, the following fragment, cited in Pollner, 1979, p.232,

Judge : How do you plead?  
 Defendant : Well, I guess guilty.  
 Judge : Well, is it guilty?  
 Defendant : Yes, guilty ...

illustrates the demand for linguistic precision in court.<sup>7</sup> Another example illustrating the manipulation of imprecise language to the detriment of the defendant, would be the following:

Prosecutor : Were you upstairs or downstairs when your father came in?

Defendant : I think I was upstairs.

Prosecutor : (addressing the Jury) She thinks she was upstairs ...

However, from this fact we need not assume that Grice's principles are relaxed in certain situations or, worse, that in everyday linguistic situations parts of what we understand, that are not spelt out, are implicated. To take an example, (i) B is not intended to mean that B has not read the Economist,

(i) A: Did you see last week's Economist?

B: No.

when it is uttered as a response to A who is obviously looking for something. On the other hand, uttered in the context of a discussion on politics, may well be intended to mean that B did not read the Economist. From this, however, we need not conclude that B, in the latter situation, implicates that he did not read the Economist, as has been claimed (cf. Levinson, 1978a). Indeed, one of the meanings of see, given in The Oxford English Dictionary, under the heading [signification and uses] reads: "To look at, read (a book, document, etc.)."

In conclusion, it seems that the conversational maxims had better be seen as deriving from a broader principle of rationality rather than from a cooperative principle. This would be congruent with the view that language be seen within an interactional framework as part of a theory of action. Further, the maxim of Relevance seems to be more crucial in the domain of linguistic activity. Not only does it provide for the coherence of utterances, but it also has to account for the ways speech events relate to situations, and "now the letter

determine the various forms in which linguistic acts are to be understood. These interrelationships are complicated, and very little work has been done in the area to unravel the intricacies involved.

The other question that has to be raised is whether, or to what extent, the maxim of relevance dominates the other maxims and hence, whether they are to be ordered and subordinated to it. (cf. Dascal, 1977). This question, however, presupposes that, at least, a partial solution must first be given to the painful question of how relevance works and in what terms it is to be specified. Obviously, 'semantic' notions of relevance will not do. For example, Dascal, 1977, in arguing that (86)B ('There is a garage round the corner') is not a case of implicature, offers the following argument:

When the semantic connection is obvious, the relevance is obvious and there is no need to make use of the principles of conversation in order to give a satisfactory explanation of the utterance.

However, although he is right about the absence of any conversational implicature in (86)B, he seems to be wrong as far as his explication of the relevance between the two utterances (A: 'I'm out of petrol', B: "There's a garage round the corner") is concerned. Surely, B in (86) could have responded to A's utterance with (i),

(i) B: Garages should sell lead-free petrol,

in which the semantic connections do not provide a method whereby (i) can be construed as relevant to (86)A. Mutatis mutandis, this criticism carries over to Halliday, 1967.

In other words, relevance cannot be adequately defined in terms of either semantic relations, or lexical cohesion and tendencies of collocations of lexical items, (cf. Halliday, 1967) without specifying other interrelations that hold between them and which might warrant us seeing them as parts of structured, stereotypical sets.

Finally, it seems as if we had better study Grice's maxims in a unitary perspective, rather than study and analyse each one of them in isolation from the rest, as has been the case in the past (cf. Kempson, 1975, Gazdar, 1976) since they seem to interact to a considerable degree.

## 7. TWO CLASSES OF CONTEXT: CURRENT MUTUAL CONTEXTUAL ASSUMPTIONS AND STANDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEFS

Lyons, 1968, refers to the general knowledge and presuppositions shared by the participants in a conversation as "restricted contexts" of utterances and notes that they are "comparatively rare, since most utterances depend for their understanding upon the information contained in previous utterances" (p.419). The participants in a conversation draw upon the particular context of the utterance in order to understand it; by 'particular context' we understand not only situational features but also all the utterances in the same discourse that have preceded the one that is in focus and which, therefore, have become part of the context (cf. Lyons, 1968, Winograd, 1972, Isard, 1975, Karttunen and Peters, 1975, Venneman, 1975, Harder and Kock, 1976, Schegloff, 1976, Stalnaker, 1977, 1978, Schnelle, 1979).

It is useful therefore to distinguish between the immediate context of an utterance and the general knowledge and beliefs of the participants in a talk-exchange since the latter are not always activated in understanding what is conveyed in an utterance. We would like to call the former class 'Current Mutual Contextual Assumptions' (henceforth CMCAs), and the latter 'Standing Background Knowledge and Beliefs' (henceforth SBKBs).

### 7.1 'Current Mutual Contextual Assumptions'

In the former class we include first of all the linguistic context of the utterance, i.e. all the utterances preceding the one in focus, which are taken to constitute part of the context. Preceding discourse may extend back in time and may have been interrupted and resumed. Secondly, the relevant status of the participants and spatio-temporal features that are relevant to the understanding of the utterance. In this class we will also include any particular relevant knowledge, beliefs and assumptions shared, and known to be shared, by both or all participants and connected with the conversation at issue and the participants.

A number of such features relevant to the intended understanding of an utterance are given by Holdcroft (1978a, pp.157ff). However, this contextual class must be defined strictly in relation to the ongoing conversation. As Holdcroft puts it:

It is prima facie plausible to suppose that there has to be a principled limit on what can count as part of the relevant context, otherwise it would inexorably unfold to include everything.

(*ibid.*, p. 163)

We call such features current because they are pertinent to the ongoing talk-exchange and because they do not necessarily have any status in felicitous communication in general. We call them mutual because they are believed to be shared by both/all participants in a talk-exchange. We use the term 'assumptions' to do general service for the class of words, like 'knowledge' and 'beliefs', that are relevant to the ongoing conversation. However, 'assumptions' is preferred to 'knowledge' because, firstly, these features may not necessarily be true, but are rather assumed to be true; and, secondly, because the term 'knowledge' may have unwanted connotations with our 'permanent' stock of knowledge, many items of which may not be connected with any ongoing conversation. Indeed we reserve this term for our second contextual class. Further, 'assumptions' is preferred to 'beliefs' because the term 'beliefs' may connote idiosyncratic ways of perceiving our surrounding environment, and because it may also refer to our general beliefs. This term, too, is reserved for the other contextual class. Lastly, these features are called 'contextual' because they are germane to the utterance in focus; they are invoked by the utterance in the process of (our) understanding it and they constitute its immediate context.

In our effort to interpret Lakoff's examples of the 'denial of expectation but' we first appealed, as we have seen, to such contextual features — though

they had to be constructed — that have here been called CMCA's, because we recognized that utterances are not issued in vacuo. They have a 'context', and therefore our interpretation must not divorce them from such a context.

## 7.2 Standing Background Knowledge and Beliefs

The other class of 'context1 — and here "context1 has to be understood in a very broad sense — has been referred to as Standing Background Knowledge and Beliefs (SBKBs). The word 'knowledge1 is meant to cover all our back-ground, general knowledge of the world that has been accumulated in our lives, and the word 'beliefs' is meant to include beliefs that are not so obviously related to factual states of affairs, as well as our beliefs about other people's beliefs. Our knowledge and beliefs are not of course co-extensive with everybody else's, but there is a considerable overlap which facilitates our everyday dealings. Without the existence of this overlap society could not function. Moreover, the terms 'knowledge' and 'beliefs' are meant to cover our knowledge of widespread beliefs and convictions that, however, are not shared by everybody and may not be mutual to both the speaker and the hearer. Therefore, if I hear the following utterance in the context of a discussion about Italian politics,

The fascists struck again,

I can understand that 'the fascists' is intended to refer to the Red Brigade although I, myself, may believe that the members of the so-called Red Brigade are extreme leftists and not fascists, as my interlocutor believes. We call such features 'standing' and 'background' because they form a permanent part of our general knowledge of the world. However, none of these features need be true — they are therefore subject to change. It suffices that they are presumed to be true.

Of course, there is no clear line to be drawn between these two classes, the broadly defined context and the narrowly defined one; the distinction can,

admittedly, be rather fuzzy on the borderline. However we think it is of some utility, and therefore worth making. This distinction is not meant to imply that these two classes are mutually exclusive. Indeed, very often they are both at play; we often have to appeal to both contextual classes in order to understand what is conveyed in an utterance. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that our invocation of any particular part of our SBKBs is always activated by the relevant CMCAs via what we hear or via the perceived context. The need to appeal to SBKBs is always to be found within the CMCAs (which includes, as has been noted, all preceding utterances). It cannot be overemphasized that the immediate context of an utterance (CMCAs) always has precedence over any other context — indeed it could be argued that our SBKBs should not be called ‘context’ at all. However, felicitous communication is often dependent on our stock of SBKBs. For example the answer “It’s not lunchtime yet” to the question ‘What time is it?’ is a satisfactory answer in virtue of the assumption of the existence of SBK. It is part of my standing knowledge of the world that lunchtime occurs between twelve and one o’clock, so the answer to my question was satisfactory and accurate given certain conditions; for example, that I have no reason to believe that my respondent wants to deceive me (in that case I wouldn’t have asked him in the first place); and generally, that the CP is adhered to, which is taken for granted and is not questioned except in particular cases. But the invocation of that part of our SBKBs that, by ‘supplementing’ the respondent’s reply (‘It’s not lunchtime yet’), gives us the sought after knowledge that it is not quite 12 o’clock yet, is activated by the relevant CMCAs — in this case, the preceding question ‘What time is it?’ This need not be the case in a different context in which different CMCAs would obtain.

However, if the answer to the same question is ‘It’s not time yet, dear’, we appeal to the CMCAs in order to understand the utterance. If it is known to the addressee that the speaker is interested in watching a programme on the TV — and he has this knowledge because of something said previously, or because of his



knowledge of the speaker's habitual actions — and moreover the speaker is aware of the addressee's knowledge — then the response she gets has a fair chance of being deemed satisfactory. If however the speaker is interested in knowing the exact time because she wants to time her pressure cooking, then this response is not thought to be satisfactory; the answer 'It's not time yet' to the question 'What time is it?' is not a satisfactory answer if it is to be considered in vacuo, that is abstracted from the CMCA's that are relevant to it. Indeed, if we have to consider the appropriateness of this response we are most likely to resort to concocting an appropriate context in which this response could be appropriately uttered.

This distinction will help us to distinguish between what is conveyed in the utterance of (i) 'I love you like my brother', (drawn from Bach and Harnish, op.cit.) when it is uttered in the context of CMCA's giving us the knowledge that the speaker hates his brother, and when it is uttered in a situation in which no such relevant CMCA's obtain. In the former case what is intended to be conveyed to the hearer is that the speaker hates the addressee, while in the latter case the intended meaning of the utterance coincides with what is said in virtue of the meaning of the word *love*, and of our knowledge that brothers generally love each other. If we do not make such a distinction between these two sets of our beliefs, but lump them together under the term of 'Mutual Contextual Beliefs' as Bach and Harnish do, then we will not be in a position to differentiate between cases of the utterance of the above sentence when the intended meaning coincides with the conventional meaning of the words uttered and cases in which the intended meaning of the utterance is the opposite of that of what is said. The addressee does not have to infer what is meant in the former case. In the latter case, however, the addressee will have to infer what is meant by this utterance. And his inference will not be 'short-circuited', as Bach and Harnish might have it, but conscious.

Moreover, if we do not differentiate between a narrowly defined relevant context on which successful communication depends and the speaker's beliefs in general, there will be no grounds for the determination of relevant circumstances which standardly affect communication. This point is brought out very clearly

in Holdcroft, 1978a, p. 163:

... if the speaker's aim is to bring about a certain effect in an audience, which effect he intends to produce by doing something in certain circumstances, he would have very little chance of succeeding if the relevant features of the circumstances could be anything whatsoever. For the chance that his audience would light on the right feature would in that case be exceedingly small. So the irrelevance of the vast majority of S's beliefs is hardly surprising. If any one of them could be relevant, then

it is very unlikely that the speaker would guess which one was. Additionally, if any belief whatsoever could be relevant in each case, it is difficult to see how there could be any systematic way of marking and classifying the ways in which it was relevant.

### 7.3 The significance of SBKBs and CMCAs exemplified

Background knowledge (SBKBs), by supplying the means, i.e. the relevant information, for interpreting sentences or clauses relative to each other, may often play a central role in understanding what is said or read, as a connected discourse. Let us, then, consider some ways in which items from SBKBs are invoked in understanding what is said.

To begin with, they often aid us in selecting the intended antecedent for a pronoun. Consider an example quoted in Wilks, 1976;

- (1) John went into a supermarket and put some soap in the basket. On impulse, he put a bar of chocolate in his pocket, but, when he reached the checkout, his face went red and he said 'I didn't mean to take it.'

As Wilks points out, "Example (1) established the need of an item of knowledge";

that is, in order to decide the reference of the pronoun it in (1), we must know what constitutes bad behaviour in a supermarket.

However, Clark and Haviland, 1977, report results of a study by Springston, which claim that the listener generally tries for antecedents for simple pronouns, first in the same clause, and then moves backwards» His choice of the correct one is determined by a process of elimination. Upon locating a non-eliminable antecedent, his search is terminated. Therefore in (2) and (3),

(2) John said that Mary shot him

(3) John said that Bill shot him,

the listener starts his search first in the same clause, eliminates Mary and Bill on semantic and syntactic grounds respectively, and then goes backwards in order to find an antecedent. In finding the first antecedent that is not eliminable, i.e. John, the search is terminated.

Springston's results may provide an explanation for our choice of 'a bar of chocolate' for the antecedent for it in (1) on grounds of proximity. If this is so, then, it may be argued, Wilk's claim that example (1) establishes the need for an item of knowledge, what we would call an item of SBKBs, may be mistaken. However, this can hardly be so, as will be seen below.

Clark and Haviland, 1977, raise some questions regarding Springston's strategy:

If Springston is right, the listener considers some candidate antecedents before others, eliminates them on syntactic and semantic grounds wherever possible, and settles on the candidate antecedent that cannot be eliminated. But this characterization is far from complete. It cannot handle antecedents not directly derivable from prior sentences, and it provides no rule to say when to search further for a direct antecedent or when to draw an implicature for an indirect antecedent.

(p.29, our emphasis)

Note that Clark and Haviland do not consider Springston's strategy implausible, but only incomplete. One deficiency is that Springston's hypothesis does not provide any means for deciding between two or more candidate antecedents when there are no grounds of proximity or exclusion on which such a decision can be based. (4), drawn from Isard, 1975, illustrates this problem, which cannot be handled by Springston's strategy, since it is not clear whether the antecedent for it is 19 or its square;

(4) First take the square of 19 and then cube it.<sup>2</sup>

Even if Springston's hypothesis can tackle cases like (2), without any appeal to 'items' of knowledge,<sup>3</sup> it is still disconfirmed, not because of the problems raised by Clark and Haviland, but, because of cases in which, though there are non-eliminable antecedents in proximity to the pronoun, our SBKBs are activated by the semantic structure of the sentences, and help us to select an antecedent farther away, probably, in a previous sentence, when trying to understand what we hear, or read as a piece of discourse. Consider, for example, (5),

(5) The milkman said he would not deliver milk any longer. John said that his brother insulted him.

In (5), according to Springston's hypothesis, John is the most likely candidate for the antecedent for him, as it is not excluded either on syntactic or semantic grounds, and satisfies the condition that it be the most proximate candidate antecedent to the pronoun. Yet out of 38 subjects, only 9 selected John for the intended antecedent for him. The rest, 28, selected the milkman. (One subject selected 'his brother'.) Subjects can generate a relationship between the two sentences of (5), which is based on their SBKBs, and can thus interpret the one sentence relative to the other. By generating this interrelation the two sentences in (5) can be understood as an integrated whole, i.e. as a text. The motivation for generating such interrelationships, whenever SBKBs provide

fertile ground for it, lies in our knowledge that "language does not occur in stray words or sentences, but in connected discourse" (Harris, 1952, 1964, p.357), and, therefore, in our orientation towards comprehending language en bloc.

The listener will either search for an antecedent in the preceding linguistic context ('anaphora', Halliday and Mason, 1976), or in the situation ('exophoric reference' or 'exophora', *ibid.*). If no such antecedent is derivable, then he expects that the speaker will provide him with one in what is to follow, as in (6), ('cataphora', *ibid.*),

(6) David said that George killed him. Harry was lying in a pool of blood.

The second sentence of (6) solves the listener's or reader's problem.

Clearly, the listener or reader will try to locate or 'compute', as the psychologists would say, the antecedent relations in the immediate vicinity of the lexical item that needs to be comprehended. In the absence of a complete text such relations may have to be computed in the context of the sentence. Springston's predictions are correct as far as the comprehension of isolated sentences is concerned.<sup>4</sup> But if a sentence is part of a broader linguistic or situational context, this need not be the case, and Springston's predictions fail to capture the comprehension processes that are put to work. Arguably, a (linguistic) context has priority regarding the determination of what is understood. Results of experiments confirm the listener's or reader's urge to "comprehend at all costs" what is heard or read, and we should not lose sight of the fact that the optimum environment for comprehending what is said or read is the entire linguistic and/or situative context. We cannot test hypotheses about comprehension processes, as Springston's with such isolated sentences.<sup>5</sup>

In cases in which there is no readily detectable interrelation between sentences, subjects tend to take a longer time in trying to understand what they read as a text. Consider an example in Wilks, 1976, involving a scene from an unfamiliar event, a puberty rite, in which we cannot rely on any assumptions based on SBKBs, in order to understand what is said as a connected discourse. Yet, we are compelled to draw inferences, not warranted by our general knowledge, but by what is said or read, in order to understand the connection between the two sentences in (7),

(7) Little Komarthy's mother accidentally  $\left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{looked away,} \\ \text{dropped her shoga,} \\ \text{touched his arm,} \end{array} \right]$   
 during the puberty rite. The crowd drew back in horror.

Wilks disregards our propensity to understand adjacent sentences as connected discourse when he writes that,

whatever knowledge was required to understand the story  
 ... was provided by general knowledge, in the form of  
 inference rules — what I called the 'Martian's rule',

which he formulates as follows:

[ humans display alarm] — [other human performed bad action]

We may like to call such an inference rule the 'Martian's rule' but, certainly, it is not drawn from, but, simply, is not incompatible with, our general knowledge, as its name indicates after all. The generation of such rules is motivated by our inclination to hear sentences as a story, i.e. each sentence cohering with the previous one. Whether this 'Martian's rule' will be 'stored' together with other bodies of our background knowledge and, therefore, be legitimately called part of our background knowledge on future occasions, is another matter.

It becomes clear, however, that this inference rule is not part of our general knowledge, but is rather not incompatible with it, if the example were made to read as follows:

(8) Little Tom's mother accidentally

looked away. dropped her shoga. touched his arm.
--

The crowd drew back in horror.

Here no situational context is assumed and the expression 'during the puberty rite' is left out. In (8) we would be at a loss to generate any interrelation between the two sentences so that we understand them as a text. It is obvious, therefore, that the inference rule in (7) is drawn via our lack of knowledge that would form a body of knowledge, i.e. a 'script' (see p.226). This script is called up by means of the expression puberty rite, which constitutes a familiar header of a script. The familiarity, however, ends there. It is exhausted by the header. The phrase "during the puberty rite" introduces a script whose episodic structure is not known, as the contents of such a script are not part of our SBKBs. this phrase would be called a Locale Header (Schank and Abelson, 1977, p.49), and is familiar to us merely in the form of a script header. Such headers serve to introduce scripts, i.e. to call up, or activate, units of SBKBs.

In this connection, Bransford and Johnson's, 1973, p.412, results can be noted, of studies indicating subjects' tendency to incorporate "odd" or 'irrelevant' — in relation to the title — sentences into the passage, by devising some sort of 'rationale' for them. In Wilk's example, a body of knowledge, a script, is introduced, whose contents or subparts are unfamiliar, but, whose header is suggestive to us of the existence of a procedure familiar to other cultures. It is this fact that motivates the generation of the 'Martian's rule'. In the same vein (9),

(9) He went into a Wimpy to have a sauna bath,

is rejected as nonsensical by speakers of the language for whom the word 'Wimpy' calls up a specific unit of SBKBs, i.e. the restaurant script (cf. Schank and

Abelson, 1977; 3.2). Some speakers will accept it on the condition that 'sauna bath<sup>1</sup> is a name of a dish, and this "rationale" or inference, call it what you will, is, again, based on our knowledge that restaurants tend to adopt exotic or strange names for their dishes.

Our tendency to understand sequentially placed sentences as a text is distinctly manifested in cases concerning the selection of antecedents for pronouns. Language users are well aware that, typically, in any text, "every sentence contains at least one anaphoric tie connecting it with what has gone before" (Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.293). Subjects, therefore, may select a candidate for a pronoun in a preceding sentence, even if they "can't quite make sense" of the text thus generated, i.e. when an interrelation is not constructive, and despite the fact that a non-eliminable antecedent, a la Springston, is available in the same sentence as the pronoun. Consider (10),

(10) His father was a greengrocer. John said that his brother insulted him.

Out of 39 subjects, 12 opted for his father as the intended antecedent for him; 22 for John and 1 for either. 4 selected 'his brother<sup>1</sup>. When presented with (11),

(11) His father had a heart attack. John said his brother insulted him, out of 39 subjects, 19 selected his father as the antecedent for him, 14 John, and 3 said that it could be either. 3 subjects selected 'his brother'. Subjects generate a relation between the act of 'insulting' and 'having a heart attack<sup>1</sup>, based again on SBKBs. They, therefore, select his father as the antecedent for him and, thus, understand (11) as a discourse. The results of (11), however, are slightly different from those of (5). The significant number of subjects who selected John as the antecedent for him is explicable on the supposition that another part of our general knowledge is also called up; this is our knowledge of the



'family' frame (see p.226) and, hence, our knowledge of interrelationships between its members, whereas in (5) such an invocation of items of SBKBs is not activated. That is, his father can refer to John's father and, consequently, to his brother's father, as well. According to Sacks, 1972, the terms 'his father1', 'John' and 'his brother', can be heard or read as referring to persons who are 'coincumbents' of the same categorization device, 'family'. The further item of our SBKBs invoked in this case, concerns the various inter-dependencies assumed to hold amongst such 'coincumbents1, as was made explicit in some subjects' explanatory remarks accompanying their selection of John rather than of his father. The conclusion to be drawn is that we can still select John for the antecedent in (11), and understand the two sentences as related to each other, i.e. as text.

Minsky, 1975, considers a relevant problem raised in Chamiak, 1974, which constitutes another counterexample to Springston's hypothesis, confirming the significance of SBKBs in selecting antecedents for pronouns, and their precedence over syntactic and semantic rules. In a party situation a friend tells Jane, who wants to buy a present for Jack's birthday:

He already has a kite.

He will make you take it back.

According to Springston's strategy the search for the antecedent for it starts in the same sentence and goes backwards. The first syntactically and semantically non-eliminable antecedent is the lexical item kite in the first sentence. Yet, we all know that it does not refer to the old kite. As Minsky points out,

To determine the reference of the pronoun it requires understanding a lot about an assumed scenario. Clearly, it refers to the proposed new kite. How does one know this? ... Generally, pronouns refer to recently mentioned things, but as this example shows, the referent depends on more than the local syntax.<sup>6</sup>

(P-241)

On more than the semantic structure, too, it should be added.

In concluding, although Springston's hypothesis may not be totally ruled out, it is clear that, upon finding a syntactically and semantically acceptable antecedent in the same sentence, the search will not necessarily be terminated there. As Ziff, 1972a, pointed out,

Syntactic structure constitutes a vector serving to determine what is said but this vector can be modified by the action of other vectors. In particular, there are discourse factors, vectors activated in discourse, that can serve radically to alter the reading of sentences.

(p.33)

The explanation lies in the fact that we do not understand language in isolated sentences but, rather, en bloc, provided that a relation that will unite sentences or utterances in one topical discourse piece is constructive.

It could also be noted in passing that, contra Springston's results, if subjects are given a small clue when presented with a sentence, in which only one antecedent for the pronoun can be located, they may select either this, or an exophoric one, as a small study indicated. 38 subjects were presented with the sentence,

X                    Y                    ?

(12) John said that Bill shot him,

preceded by the question,

What does him refer to: X? Y? Z?

Given this clue, 3 subjects said that it could refer either to X or Z, 8 selected only Z and the remaining 25 selected X. (2 subjects selected Y.) At this point it is worth quoting Winograd, 1972, p. 33:

If we say 'The city councilmen refused the demonstrators a permit because they feared violence', the pronoun 'they'

will have a different interpretation than if we said ‘The city councilmen refused the demonstrators a permit because they advocated revolution.’ We understand this because of our sophisticated knowledge of councilmen, demonstrators, and politics — no set of syntactic or semantic rules could interpret this pronoun reference without using knowledge of the world. Of course a semantic theory does not include a theory of political power groups, but it must explain the way in which this kind of knowledge can interact with linguistic knowledge in interpreting a sentence.

The question that arises, however, is whether such background knowledge (SBKBs) or parts thereof, can be represented in a structured way, and whether they are theoretically formalizable. In a similar example,

(13) The soldiers fired at the women and I saw several of them fall,

Wilks, 1975, proposes that in order to understand the reference of them we need a Common-Sense (CS) inference rule. These rules are called in, he says, only when his proposed formal rules of, what he calls, Preference Semantics (PS), cannot resolve anaphoras as in (13) above. The CS inference rule invoked here will be expressed as follows:

X(((NOTPLEASE(LIFE STATE),OBJE)SENSE) –X (NOTUP MOVE)

or, simpliciter, as ‘x [ hurt ] — x[fall].

CS inference rules are no more than part of our "knowledge of the real world" (*ibid.*, p.343), according to Wilks.

It could be argued, however, that the reference of them is determined by the most proximate noun phrase, and, in the case at issue, by the noun phrase, the women, which can be selected both on syntactic and semantic grounds. But Wilk’s example could be (14):

(14) There were women present. The soldiers fired and I saw several  
of them fall to the ground,

in which the soldiers are neither said to fire at the women, nor is the lexical item women most proximate to the pronoun. Indeed, it could be that the soldiers fired in the air and the women fell on the ground for protection; such an understanding is compatible with (14). In this case Wilk's CS inference rule, as formulated above, would not hold, since the causal relationship between being hurt and falling would not appear to hold. Yet, the majority of subjects selected women as the antecedent for them in (14). It seems, therefore, that such inference rules are not so easily amenable to formalization.

Such items of knowledge, (SBKB), have been called 'presuppositional' (cf. the Lakoffs).<sup>7</sup> However we can hardly call 'presuppositional' items of SBKBs that provide us with the inferences that can relate someone's having a heart attack with somebody else's insulting him, since such interrelations are by no means systematic.

SBKBs have been characterized in Chomsky, 1975, p.30, as "a vast background of unspecified assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and conventions". Although he does not differentiate between the two classes of contextual knowledge distinguished here, so that we cannot justifiably identify SBKBs with what Chomsky may mean by such background knowledge, he does not, nevertheless, seem to include previous linguistic context in such background assumptions. The significance of such knowledge is noted, when he argues that background knowledge and beliefs — roughly what are here called SBKBs — interact with grammar to determine how sentences are interpreted. Thus, he claims that the specific interpretation of, for example, (15),

(15) John's friends appealed to their wives to hate one another, is not solely determined by our knowledge of grammar, but by our facial knowledge

of the world. As Chomsky, 1975, p. 141 , puts it,

The 1-1 correlation between friends and wives derives in part from factual assumptions about monogamy, which also eliminate interpretation of One another<sup>1</sup> of the sort that are possible (indeed, I believe, favoured) when 'their wives' is replaced by 'their children'.

Turning now to the significance of CMCA's in communication, it is clear that such current contextual knowledge can resolve, what has been called, syntactic ambiguity. For example, (16),

(16) Visiting relatives can be a nuisance,

cannot be ambiguous in the presence of CMCA's. As Chomsky, 1965, p.21 , points out,

If a sentence such as 'Flying planes can be dangerous<sup>1</sup> is presented in an appropriately constructed context, the listener will interpret it immediately in a unique way, and will fail to detect the ambiguity.

CMCA's are also the key to resolving semantic ambiguity. For example, consider Katz and Fodor's,<sup>8</sup> 1963, example,

(17) The stuff is light,

in which 'light' may mean either light in colour or light in weight, if (17) is considered in abstraction from its linguistic and/or situational context. However, this can hardly be the case as language is used in speech situations and not in isolation. As Raskin, 1977, p.222, pointed out,

Katz and Fodor's sentence in isolation does not have a meaning for the simple reason that no sentence exists in isolation.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, as argued in Olson, 1970, linguistic elaboration to disambiguate<sup>10</sup> (17) is not needed in linguistic situations, because,

a perceived context [knowledge of the referent] may have precisely the same effect.

(p. 260)

Lehnert, 1980, p. 80, writes,

People are able to 'effortlessly' arrive at the proper sense of words which are potentially ambiguous. In fact, improper word sense interpretations are never even considered. ... previous context provides suitable interpretive constraints.

Further, Fulmore, 1977, notes that "it is misleading to separate a word from its context". However, it seems gratuitous to talk about the power of CMCAs for disambiguating utterances, since, as so succinctly put by Schegloff, 1976,

The theoretically depictable ambiguities are derived by procedures that are not relevant to naturally occurring interaction, and therefore in natural contexts the ambiguities are not there to disambiguate.

Finally, a figure in Winston, 1975, can be taken as a graphic representation of the significance of context (CMCAs) in understanding. The importance of the role played by CMCAs can be schematized graphically in figure 10:

Figure 10



While object B seems to be a trick, object D seems to be a wedge. As Winston

This is curious because B and D show exactly the same arrangement of lines and faces . . . But of course context is the explanation.

(p. 205)

in a similar vein, not only can our understanding of utterances and whole passages be determined by specific CMCAs — often by way of activating different units of SBKBs — but, also, the inferences drawn from them will be different, according to the different CMCAs, in the context of which they are uttered (cf. Bransford and Johnson's, 1975, p.415, 'stockbroker/unemployed man1 passage).

#### 7.4 Experiments pointing to the particular nature of CMCAs as against the universality of SBKBs"

It has been noted that SBKBs can be inferred, provided that they are sufficiently activated during the ongoing speech activity and they do not clash — are not incompatible — with other items of SBKBs. Therefore, upon hearing (18),

(18) He is a communist but he is not aggressive,  
in the absence of any particular CMCAs, the hearer will understand it via inferring that the speaker's SBKBs include an item such as 'Communists are generally aggressive1.

However, CMCAs can also be inferred, though this is not so common. Consider an example quoted in Bransford and Johnson, 1973, p.389:

(19) The floor was dirty because Sally used the mop,  
which can be understood, by way of inferring a particular circumstance pertain! to the speech act in (19), i.e. that the mop was dirty. As Bransford and Johnson note, (19) is not 'self-contained1 as it would be if 'so' were substituted for 'because' in it.

It is customary, however, in our speech, to leave out detailed conditions belonging to our SBKBs, just because they are, or can be, assumed to be generally held, and/or because they are easily inferred. Moreover a detailed specification of everything we mean would impair rather than facilitate communication, as noted in Ziff, 1972, p. 64:

Discourse would tend to break down under the strain of explicitness. It is not merely that the resulting prolixity would be aesthetically unbearable: there would be a general failure of communication.

On the other hand, CMCAs, being always connected with specific situations, end, therefore, constituting antecedent conditions for the comprehension of the speech act in question, are either linguistically, or situationally, specified prior to what is intentionally conveyed in the speech act. Indeed, in this respect, CMCAs can be identified with what is presumed to be given in a speech situation. For example, the speaker of (19) would either assume that his audience is aware of the fact that the mop was dirty, or, else, he would be more likely to utter (20),

(20) The floor was dirty because Sally used a dirty mop.<sup>11</sup>

Experiments indicating that detailed specification of CMCAs is often a prerequisite for understanding new information, when this hinges upon such antecedent conditions, have been reported in Bransford and Johnson, 1972, 1973. Subjects were presented with a passage (balloon passage)<sup>12</sup> that made little sense without it being preceded by other previous information, since it discussed events that could happen, given some sort of a particular situation as a conceptual base. However, the situation was not described in the passage. The subjects' ratings of comprehension were very low as compared to their comprehension ratings, when they were presented beforehand with a picture illustrating the specific situation on which the passage was based. It must be pointed out that comprehension in this case is expected to improve by advance presentation of either



a detailed picture illustrating the specific situation or a detailed linguistic description of it. This prerequisite can be attributed to the fact that the passage was based on particular CMCA's, what Bransford and Johnson call 'novel contexts', as against SBKB's, what they call 'familiar contexts'. With regard to the 'balloon' passage, which, as noted, is based on CMCA's, a title, given in advance, did not facilitate understanding. Bransford and Johnson, 1975, p.406, conclude,

Presumably, information about the specific structure of the serenade [the topic of the 'balloon' passage] ... is necessary for understanding the balloon passage. Knowledge of a relevant topic alone was not sufficient to increase comprehension and recall scores.

This can be attributed to the supposition that in the balloon experiment, ... it was very unlikely that the appropriate prerequisite context was (in all its details) part of the pre-experimental knowledge of the [subjects].

(Bransford and Johnson, 1972, p.721)

By contrast, in the well-known 'washing clothes' passage, (Bransford and Johnson, 1973, 1972) — an equally incomprehensible passage about the familiar procedure of washing clothes in a laundry — which has been so constructed that, unless the topic, 'washing clothes', is given in advance, comprehension is almost impossible, the mere mention of the topic, ahead of time, suffices for satisfactory comprehension.

The reason why the 'balloon' passage needs detailed specification of antecedent conditions in order for it to be comprehended, whilst, regarding the 'washing clothes' passage, it suffices that we be given the title beforehand, sums up the difference between CMCA's and SBKB's. The former are derived from the previous linguistic context and particular antecedent conditions (circumstances) pertaining to the specific speech situation, characterizing it,

and, therefore, constituting it. The latter, on the other hand, can be likened to itemized, stored knowledge, which is shared by the majority of a speech community. In order that such a unit of knowledge be called up, it suffices that we be presented with a cue word or phrase like the phrase 'washing clothes' in this example. Such a clue can be called a 'topic', because it is pivotal for the invocation of a 'stored' unit of knowledge. Wilks, 1976, argues that the application of frames (see p.227) to natural language might settle the problem of 'topic', and, hence, disambiguate word senses via the knowledge of the specific area of discourse in question.

However, the topic is important not only because it can disambiguate word senses or because it "enables the listener to compute the intended antecedents of each sentence in the paragraph" (Clark and Haviland, op. cit., p.33), but also because it enables us to "generate (or reconstruct) ideas that are consistent with the topic, and, coincidentally, with the passage" (Bransford and Johnson, 1973, p.402). In other words, to speak in Schank and Abelson's, op. cit., language, when it forms a script header, a topic can activate, or "put on the alert", so to speak, all subparts and scenes of the relevant script. This can hardly be the case with particular CMCA's, since such knowledge or assumptions are situation-specific and not general and stereotyped. Bransford and Johnson, 1972, 1973, however, do not differentiate between these two classes of context, but refer to both of them as 'knowledge structures'.

Workers in Artificial Intelligence have attempted to describe our background knowledge as organized around stereotyped situations and activities. Schank and Abelson, 1977, proposed the concept of script for accounting in a generalized way for the specific knowledge systems that are brought to bear on the interpretation of language.<sup>13</sup> The motivation for their approach is their assumption that this knowledge is highly structured. Scripts are usually big, congruous, homogeneous classes of specific knowledge that has been acquired through the repetition of similar event sequences, such as riding a bus, or eating at a restaurant, or visiting

the doctor. Such standard sequences are recognized by the episodic memory of humans, and serve to "fill in the blanks" in understanding. The concept of script is supposed to reflect the economic storage of similar episodes, which are recognized by components of memory in terms of a standardized, generalized episode. A trip, for instance, is stored in memory as a standard event sequence of the conceptualizations of what happened on the trip.

Schank and Abelson's theory seems to be an elaboration of Minsky's 1975, "frame theory. According to Minsky, 1975, our background knowledge is individuated into stereotypically structured situations, called 'frames'. Frames equip us with the knowledge of not only how to use them, but also what to expect and what to do if our expectations are not confirmed. He defines frames as follows,

We can think of a frame as a network of nodes and relations. The 'top levels' of a frame are fixed, and represent things that are always true about the supposed situation. The lower levels have many terminals — 'slots' that must be filled by specific instances or data.

(p.212)

However, frames, unlike scripts, are not designed to represent primarily episodic knowledge, although they can do that, too (scenarios). Frames are constructed to represent static knowledge as, for example, what to expect from a room since "our 'expectations' usually interact smoothly with perceptions" (*ibid.*, p.221). Minsky notes that "just before you enter a room, you usually know enough to 'expect' a room rather than, say, a landscape. You can usually tell just by the character of the door. And you can often select in advance a frame for the new room." The concept of 'frame' could be used to explain the oddity of such sentences as "They both climbed up the tree and rang the bell.<sup>1</sup> However, both scripts and frames are similar conceptual schemes in that they both represent knowledge stored in memory and acquired

through the repetition of event sequences, or through the observation and accumulation of similar "data".<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Lehnert, 1980, interpreting Minsky's idea of frame as "a strategy for expectation-driven information processing" (p.85) views scripts as one type of frame.

## 8. A CASE STUDY: CMCAs and SBKBs AT WORK

In this chapter we will see how the distinction between the two classes of contextual knowledge can be brought to bear on a more stringent delimitation of the class of phenomena that have been coiled instances of implication. Arguably, this distinction will be of some utility in differentiating between various cases of what is purportedly said "by implication", as has been discussed in the literature.

As a first step, it will be argued that cases of 'implication<sub>1</sub>, the understanding of which depends on the evocation of SBKBs — with or without the aid of CMCAs — should not be lumped together, as instances of the same linguistic phenomenon, with cases of so-called implicated meanings; in the latter case understanding implicated meanings hinges on particular CMCAs, to the exclusion of the regular SBKBs, which would, otherwise, be relevant to the understanding of the speech act at issue.

### 8.1 On Ziff's example of implication

Ziff, 1972a, thinks that what is said by (IB), (IB) I have work to do, when this is uttered as a reply to an invitation or a proposal to play tennis, is said 'by implication<sub>1</sub>, and should be put on a par with cases in which (IB) is meant to be understood, not as 'I can't<sub>1</sub>, but as 'Yes, I'll be delighted to play tennis.' According to Ziff, what is said in both cases, is said by implication, and depends on our knowledge of the speaker. He writes,

If the speaker is an ordinary sort then perhaps he was saying by implication that he couldn't play. But he needn't be an ordinary sort. Perhaps he's a queer sort who plays and is delighted to play only when he has work to do. If I know this about him and he knows I

know it, then by implication he has managed to say that he would be delighted to play. Or what if he had replied 'It is snowing in Tibet? Then possibly again he has managed to say that he would be delighted to play, but that would depend on him and on my knowledge of his quirks and his knowledge of my knowledge and so forth. Any fact known to us may be a factor serving to determine what is said by implication, but such factors cannot be effectively enumerated.

(*ibid.*, pp.26-27)

Indeed, such factors cannot be enumerated, but, at least, distinguishing between these two classes of contextual knowledge would enable us to account for what is said by (IB), when the predictable invocation of SBKBs is not thwarted by particular CMCA's, as in the latter case in which (IB) is intended to be understood as 'I would be delighted to play.<sup>1</sup> That is, when particular knowledge of the speaker's peculiar habits of ignoring conventional uses of expressions in a systematic way need not be drawn upon. Moreover, cases in which such

particular CMCA's, that do not motivate the invocation of SBKBs, but, rather, come into conflict with them in a systematically predictable way, come very near to constituting a private language, some sort of code, obtaining between the speaker and the hearer. Communication, in this instance, is not achieved, either "by force of precedent" or "by force of salience" (Lewis, 1969). And, of course it is not achieved by "tacit convention" either. It is determined by special stipulation, and the use of the utterance 'I have work to do<sup>1</sup> to mean "I'll be delighted to play tennis<sup>1</sup> will be a nonce use. It is, therefore, worth making the distinction and concentrating on cases in which understanding what is said, whether by implication — in Ziff's sense — or not, does not depend on our knowledge of the speaker's whimsical ways of speaking, if any headway is to be made in gaining an insight into how speech functions.

### 8.1.1 Structural criteria applied

Let us, then, examine Ziff's example, and see how we can account for the speech act that (IB) performs, i.e. when it is used and understood as all members of a linguistic community would use it and understand it in this instance; that is, as meaning 'No, I can't. I have work to do' and not as 'Yes, I'll be delighted to play tennis.' Consider:

- (1) A. Let's play tennis. (or: Shall we play tennis?)  
       B. I have work to do.
- (2) A. Let's play tennis. (or: Shall we play tennis?)  
       B. No, I can't.  
       B1 I have work to do.  
       B2 No, I can't. I have work to do.

The first thing that comes to notice is that (1) is a sequence, a dyadic interaction, if you will, which consists of two closely connected, utterances. These two utterances constitute an adjacency pair in virtue of their tiedness<sup>1</sup> (Sacks, 1967, (1976)), or connectedness; (1) A is a proposal and as such it should be responded to, either by acceptance or rejection. Adjacency pairs have been said to have the following characteristics:

- (1) two utterance length,
- (2) adjacent positioning of component utterances,
- (3) different speakers producing each utterance.

(Schegloff and Sacks, 1973)

The construct of adjacency pairs, initially introduced by Schegloff, 1967, and hinted at in Sacks, 1967 (1976), was developed by Schegloff and Sacks, 1973, and is described there as follows:

The component utterances of such sequences have an achieved relatedness beyond that which may otherwise obtain between

adjacent utterances. That relatedness is partially the product of the operation of a typology in the speakers' production of the sequences. The typology operates in two ways: it partitions utterance types into 'first pair parts' (i.e. first parts of pairs) and second pair parts; and it affiliates a first pair part and a second pair part to form a 'pair type'. 'Question-answer', 'greeting-greeting', 'Offer-acceptance/refusal' are instances of pair types. A given sequence will thus be composed of an utterance that is a first pair part produced by one speaker directly followed by the production by a different speaker of an utterance which is (a) a second pair part, and (b) is from the same pair type as the first utterance in the sequence is a member of. Adjacency pair sequences, then, exhibit the further features (4) relative ordering of parts (i.e. first pair parts precede second pair parts), and (5) discriminative relations (i.e. the pair type of which a first pair part is a member is relevant to the selection among second pair parts).

(1974, p. 238)

The main feature, therefore, of an adjacency pair is the connectedness between the two utterances that constitute it. Indeed, it is mainly in virtue of this characteristic that an adjacency pair can be singled out. That is, given a first pair part, the provision of a second pair part is made 'conditionally relevant'<sup>1</sup> (Schegloff, 1972), in the same way, in which B, in (3), is heard as 'Yes, I'm going to the party',

(4) A. Are you going to the party tonight?

(5) B. Yes,

and not as 'Yes, it is raining'. However, while in cases of elliptical responses our knowledge of English syntax in conjunction with a rule of discourse<sup>2</sup> can provide an answer to how we hear (3)B as 'Yes, I'm going to the party', and not as 'Yes, it is raining', the situation becomes more problematic when other activities than a straightforward question-answer are involved in an adjacency.<sup>3</sup> pair.



(1), for example, is an adjacency pair whose first pair part constitutes a proposal, which has to be either rejected or accepted in its second pair part. Such an acceptance or rejection is made conditionally relevant on the occurrence of the first pair part.<sup>4</sup> That is not to say, however, that a rejection or an acceptance cannot be preceded by comments of appreciation, as in fragment 9, for example, quoted in Heritage, 1978, and taken from Schegloff, 1972, p.98;

Fragment 9

B: Uh if you'd care to come over and visit a little while this morning, I'll give you a cup of coffee.

A: Hehh1. Well that's awfully sweet of you, I don't think I can make it this morning, hh uhm I'm running an ad in the paper and - and ah ! have to stay near the phone,

or have an 'insertion sequence' between a first and a second pair part (Schegloff, 1972) as in the fragment below:

Fragment 10

A: Are you coming tonight?

B: Can I bring a guest?

A: Sure.

B: I'll be there.

(Schegloff, 1978, p.78)

However, what the speaker of the first pair part is looking for in the addressee's next utterance (response) (in the second pair part) — though this may be deferred — is the satisfaction of this rule of discourse: That the addressee will ultimately provide a response<sup>4</sup> that will satisfy the speaker's 'query'. 'Query' is here to be understood, in a very broad sense, as an utterance which needs to be responded to, either linguistically or behaviourally. As Schegloff, 1976, pointed out,

Adjacency pairs are especially strong constraints, a first pair part making relevant a particular action, or a restricted set of actions, to be done next.

The speaker of a first pair part expressing a 'query' creates a 'slot1 (Schenkein, 1972), which has to be filled in by the next speaker's utterance, or behavioural response, a filler.

However, the 'satisfaction1 cannot consist in a pure comment of appreciation in cases in which a 'query' is addressed to the hearer.<sup>5</sup> For example, whereas a rejection or acceptance becomes necessarily relevant to the proposal "Let's play tennis', a rather unspecific proposal or invitation like "Why don't you come to my place some time?1, can be, either passed by, or satisfactorily responded to with a mere comment of appreciation, as, for example, in 'That's very sweet of you1, the response thus matching the instigating utterance's lack of specificity, immediacy and commitment. This question is dealt with at length in Heritage, 1980. He concludes that this question "cannot be heard as 'real' ... Any attempt to deal with the utterance as a real question will imply unwillingness to come, a refusal of the invitation and to disregard the literal meaning of the question entirely. 'Therefore, Schegloff and Sacks', op.cit., proposal that the formulation of an utterance as a question is sufficient inducement for the employment by the second party of "the chance to talk to produce what is appreciable as an answer" (p.239), does not seem to be a sufficient condition. Because if a perfunctory offer or invitation is either not replied to,<sup>6</sup> or is responded to with an airy comment of appreciation, which does not constitute, by any measure, either a rejection or an acceptance, the conditions for the presence of an adjacency pair do not seem to be satisfied. As Schegloff and Sacks, op.cit., pointed out,

Whenever ... there is reason to have the appreciation of some implicativeness made attendable, 'next utterance' is the proper place to do that, and a two utterance sequence

can be employed as a means for doing and checking some intendedly sequentially implicative Occurrence in a way that a one utterance sequence can not.

(ibid., p.240)

And, of course, they do not have in mind interrogative forms constituting illocutionary acts of asking questions only, when they talk of forming utterances upas questions. A more stringent criterion, therefore, like the notion of 'query' which will be defined in terms of the notion of immediacy looks more promising as constituting a sufficient condition for engendering adjacency pairs.

To return, however, to (IB), we see that it is not a straightforward acceptance or rejection of the proposal (1A). Apparently, this fact constitutes Ziff's motivation for claiming that what is said in (IB), to the extent that this is an answer to (IA) , is said "by implication'. But, if we allow Hie term 'implication1 to qualify the method of how what is said in (IB) is said, then it would seem but a small step to concluding that, in this loose sense of the word 'implication', the bulk of communication takes place 'by implication'.

Rather than be content with such a conclusion, we should try to understand why the utterance of (2B) is not really deemed necessary for the felicitous conveying of a rejection of a proposal, in view of the utterance (IB) , and, also, why the latter functions in exactly the same way as (2B) would. In other words, why is it that 'No, I can't' is understood 'by implication', in Ziff's terminology, in (IB) when this is uttered in response to (1A) ?

It is clear that most language analysts would here appeal to Grice's co-operative principle in trying to account for the cohesion of the second pair parts to the first. However, it is claimed here that sequencing rules, as developed by ethnomethodologists, can be subsumed under the domain of the maxim of Relevance, though this maxim should embrace many more issues than just sequencing rules (cf. Dascal, 1977, Holdcroft, 1980). As these rules

have been better explicated and understood than has the overall maxim of Relevance, v/e would rather rely on the findings of ethnomethodologists in what follows.

Ethnomethodologists have posited structural criteria in conversational analysis for the identification of the organization of conversation. They analyse conversation, therefore, in terms of the sequential placement of utterances. As pointed out in Schegloff, 1972, p.77,

The very recognition of an utterance as 'an answer<sup>1</sup> may turn on its placement, its sequential relationship to 'a question<sup>1</sup>, there being no independent linguistic or logical criteria for distinguishing the status of an utterance as an assertion from its status as an 'answer<sup>1</sup>.

Not that this necessarily helps with the question at issue — any more than it explains why 'Margaret Thatcher will address the Conference (this afternoon)<sup>1</sup>, is thought to be a satisfactory response to the proposal to play tennis, given certain circumstances, when it is well known that the conference takes place in Blackpool, while the talk-exchange takes place in Coventry.

On the other hand, we cannot invoke any syntactic or semantic, or even some pragmatical features (our knowledge, for instance, of what is an enumerated account of various Occupations the speaker may be engaged in) that might help us to determine which next utterances would qualify as 'responsive' to A. For example, the utterance (i) 'I have to take out the garbage' is related to (IB) in form (syntactically) and content — they both specify activities the speaker has to do. Yet, it cannot perform the act of acceptance or rejection<sup>7</sup> (cf. Searle, 1975). Not only will the proposal or invitation remain unanswered if there is no utterance forthcoming, that can be heard as 'responsive to' it, but, moreover, speaker A will notice the non-occurrence of an answer as an event (cf. Lyons, 1968, p.415 "silence is 'marked' and may serve as a positive communicative function", Goffman, 1971, p. 109 "Social nature abhors an empty slot", Schegloff, 1972, Speier,.1972, Sacks, 1972, Kosher, 1976).

The existence of the operation of a typology that results in the relatedness of the adjacency pair parts is, mainly, to be found in our expectations, emanating from our knowledge of how discourse functions, or, rather, of what is the sequence of social acts, i.e. that a particular first pair part must, eventually, be responded to, by the corresponding second pair part. That is, we know, and, hence, we expect, that if a question is asked, a proposal or an invitation made, an answer<sup>8</sup> or an acceptance, or a rejection, are in order, respectively. However this knowledge does not help us to determine which utterance can be understood as an appropriate second pair part and which can not, since structural criteria alone, though significant, are not decisive in this respect. The claim of ethnomethodologists that "there are inferences ... from the structure of a conversation to the role that any one utterance plays within it", as neatly put by Levinson, 1978a, can be only partly true. In other words, our knowledge that a particular speech act is in order, does not equip us with the ability to discern whether the next utterance constitutes the speech act that was, indeed, expected (cf. Searle, 1975, p.63, step 3 of his inference scheme). Therefore, the question that arises, is how we know that (1 )B, 'I have work to do1, is "from the same pair type as the first utterance In the sequence [i.e. 'Shall we play tennis?'] is a member of". And, as we have seen, sequential placement alone cannot provide the whole answer.

In fact, what we are dealing with here, is step 6 of Searle's, 1975, inferential strategy, offered in the analysis of a similar "case of the general phenomenon of indirection".

STEP 6: I know that studying for an exam normally takes a large amount of time relative to a single evening, and I know that going to the movies normally takes a large amount of time relative to a single evening (factual background information).

(p.63)

However, no more consideration is given to the question of how or whether factual

background knowledge is structured, what it consists of or how it is activated. Instead, it is taken for granted that it plays a significant role in ways that are inexplicable.

Now, as has been pointed out in the literature, it is quite common for explanations or reasons to follow rejections or disconfirmations, as this is usually dictated by social cooperation or a sociable disposition towards the first pair part speaker. Consider, for instance, how rude a rejection of an invitation or an offer can sound, if it is not accompanied by some comment of appreciation or some explanatory account (see, e.g. Heritage, 1980, p.23). These explanations have been termed "post-expansions", as a second pair part (a rejection or a disconfirmation) is qualified by the provision of such an explanatory account. These expansions, as has been pointed out in Heritage, 1978,

are frequently addressed to the felicity conditions appropriate to the rejected activity. On the whole, it can be suggested that the citing of such felicity conditions in post-expanded rejections exhibits recipient design. That is, it exhibits attention to time, place, circumstance, social relationships, and so on, and, in so doing, this marks them out and reconstitutes them.

This argument, admittedly, goes some way towards explaining why B could not have replied with (1) ("I have to take out the garbage") to A's invitation or proposal, and believed that what was thereby conveyed could have been taken as sufficient grounds for his not having the time to play tennis, i.e. for not satisfying a felicity condition (Heritage, 1978). However, unless we can envisage the possibility of a typology of sentences that can act as establishing or rejecting felicity conditions, and unless felicity conditions of speech acts can be defined and enumerated, an alternative way of seeking a solution has to be explored.

### 8.1.2 The inadequacy of Labov's proposal

Labov, 1972a, b, argues that features of "shared knowledge", which are not part of any linguistic rule, determine the connection between 'what is said<sub>1</sub>' and 'what is done<sub>1</sub>', i.e. between linguistic forms and the speech-acts that these linguistic forms are used to perform. Considering a similar talk-exchange, i.e. (4),

(4) A: Are you going to work tomorrow?

B: I'm on jury duty,

he formulates the following rule of discourse:

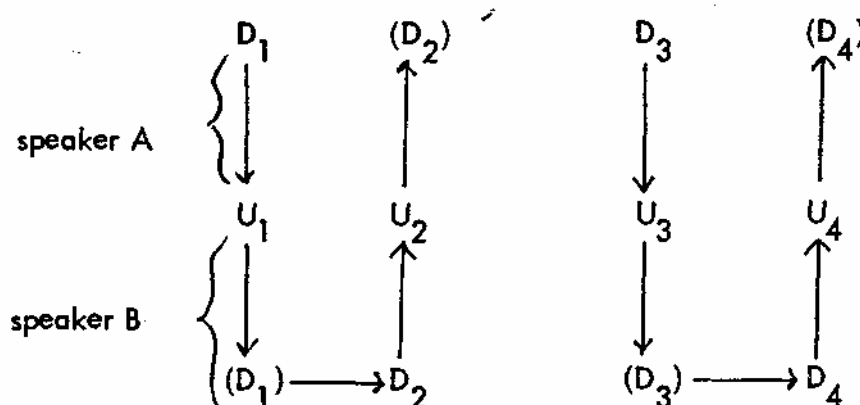
If A makes a request for information<sup>9</sup> Q-S<sub>1</sub>, and B makes a statement S<sub>2</sub> in response that cannot be expanded by rules of ellipsis to the form XS, Y, then S<sub>2</sub> is heard as an assertion that there exists a proposition P known to both A and B:

If S<sub>2</sub>, then (E)S<sub>1</sub>

where (E) is an existential operator, and from this proposition there is inferred an answer to A's request: (E)S<sub>1</sub>.

(1972b, p.122)

The following figure represents the two types of discourse rules: "rules of interpretation UD (with their inverse rules of production DU) and sequencing rules DD which connect actions" (*Ibid.*, p. 123).



As Labov points out,

Any statement  $S_2$  will not do in these sequences. If B had replied 'De Gaulle just lost the election', A would reasonably complain 'What has that to do with your going to work tomorrow?' The rule tells A to search for a proposition P that will make the connection; if he fails to find it, he will reject B's response. But the operation of the rule is invariant. A must inspect  $S_2$  as a possible element in a proposition 'if  $S_2$  than (E) $S_1$ ' before he can react.

(1972b, p.123)

Therefore, Labov seems to claim that we search for a proposition  $\underline{p}$ , that is, presumably, stored as part of our knowledge, and, upon locating such a proposition, we can embark on inferring the speaker's 'answer' to our query.

However, an old question has to be asked, namely, given that some 'answers' have to be inferred, how is the truth of such hypotheticals required by the corresponding inferences? Ryle, 1971, argues that the point of learning 'if  $\underline{p}$ , then  $\underline{q}$ ' statements, is to be found in our subsequent readiness and ability to infer from  $\underline{p}$  to  $\underline{q}$ . An hypothetical statement can be likened to an inference precept in that it licenses the corresponding inference. Having learned 'if  $\underline{p}$ , then  $\underline{q}$ ', we are authorised to argue ' $\underline{p}$ , so  $\underline{q}$ ' provided that  $\underline{p}$  is given, or else 'not  $\underline{q}$  so not  $\underline{p}$ '.

Knowing 'if  $\underline{p}$ , then  $\underline{q}$ ' is, then, rather like being in possession of a railway ticket. It is having a license or warrant to make a journey from London to Oxford. (Knowing a variable hypothetical or "law" is like having a season ticket.) As a person can have a ticket without actually travelling with it and without ever being in London or getting to Oxford, so a person can have an inference warrant without actually making any inferences and even without ever acquiring the premises from which to make them.

(ibid., p.308)

However, it seems rather implausible to assume that our stored knowledge includes myriads of such stereotyped hypothetical statements, as the ones



described by Labov and Ryle, that may warrant an inferential process which will facilitate communication. As Minsky, 1975, p.211, writes,

The "chunks" of reasoning, language, memory, and "perception" ought to be larger and more structured, and their factual and procedural contents must be more intimately connected in order to explain the apparent power and speed of mental activities.

We cannot, in other words, claim that part of our stored knowledge consists of such hypothetical statements as in (5),

(5) If one has work to do, one can't

}	play tennis
	go to the theatre
	go out for a walk
	and <u>ad infinitum</u>

at the same time.

Moreover, we add the qualification 'at the same time', though we are aware that this is what the hearer understands without the speaker specifying it. That is, when the speaker says, 'I am on jury duty', as a response to the question "Are you going to work tomorrow?", he is interpreted as having said that he is on jury duty tomorrow and not this afternoon or the day after tomorrow. It is in virtue of this understanding that the utterance 'I am on jury duty' is regarded as relevant to its first pair part; or, is it the other way round? Is it so understood just because this is presented by the conversational rule that the next utterance be relevant to the first utterance? This issue is reminiscent of the two sides of the same coin. The fact is that it is still not clear what principles are at work here (cf. Ziff, 1972a, ch. VIII).

To return to Labov's claim, such hypothetical statements rather seem to be instantly constructed by virtue of our SBKBs which afford us the ability, for example, to compare various activities and detect compatibilities and incompatibilities along different dimensions. For instance, parts of our SBKBs related

to the temporal structure of activities give us the knowledge that taking out the garbage takes only two minutes and, therefore, cannot be a bar to playing tennis; while being on jury duty, or having work to do, takes a considerable amount of time, enough to prevent one from working in one's office, or from playing tennis at the same time. 'Working in the office' and 'being on jury duty' denote activities that are comparable along the temporal parameter in that they cannot both occur in the same time span by the same agent. What is stored, therefore, as part of our SBKBs, cannot be such hypotheticals as indicated by Labov, because even an immense array of such statements would not suffice to exhaust all the possible hypothetical statements that might, on given occasions, afford us the means to understand what we hear as relating to the current stage (point) of the conversation. In other words, these hypotheticals would be better seen as the product of the "infinite use of finite means"; it is these finite means that should be seen as part of our SBKBs and whose structure should be analysed and clarified. Indeed, the need for structuring background knowledge and assumptions, and for incorporating them in a theoretical account of language has been long recognised in the linguistics literature (cf. Hamblin, 1971, Stalnaker, 1972, Lewis, 1972, Thomason, 1973, 1974, Dijk, 1977, Gazdar, 1978, Mutsch, 1980).

### 8.1.3 'Scripts' on loan

Let us, then, borrow the concept of 'script' from artificial intelligence and try to account for our understanding of the utterance 'I have work to do' as performing the act of rejection, in the case at issue. It can be argued that, upon hearing the utterance 'I have work to do', and understanding its semantic structure, the relevant script is activated, which, in this case, might bear the header 'working' (SCRIPT NAME). The activation of the script affords the hearer the means to generate and elaborate connections that are implied rather than stated. (For experiments confirming this see Bower *et al* 1979.) This script represents or describes a 'chunk' of knowledge,

which has a more or less stereotyped, but general structure. This 'chunk' is part of our SBKBs and is shared by all members of our cultural community. However, its structure is rather unspecified with regard to the various scenes and subparts that such a script would include. In this sense, the script, labelled 'working', may be argued to be a 'hyperscript', which will have a genus to species relationship to other, more specific, and highly structured scripts, such as 'working in an office', 'working in the garden', etc.<sup>11</sup> The script 'working' will, however, be specified along the temporal dimension, 'n that the procedural structure of the activity or activities, specified in it, must involve the concept of time as a concomitant factor for its or their representation in a script, and, therefore, for the correct conceptualization of the script. The conceptualization of the script 'working' involves the conceptualization of the incorporation of a considerable time span, as a necessary condition for its characterization.

The script for playing tennis has also been activated by the previous utterance, (IA), and is already in operation. This script is highly structured and one of its specifications must be related to the duration of the activity thus represented.

On the other hand, equipped with our knowledge of the sequential rules of conversation — as has been argued in the writings in ethnomethodology — we, as speakers and hearers, are oriented towards interpreting the next utterance, as satisfying the conversational needs set by the co-conversationalist's preceding utterance. We, therefore, understand that the speaker of (1B) has work to do during the same period of time as the one proposed for playing tennis — though this has not been specified by him. Consequently, we are induced to compare the two activities along the temporal dimension — this being the obvious relational point between the two scripts — and, thereby, detect their incompatibilities. Thus, we understand B as constituting the speech act of rejecting what was proposed in the previous utterance, i.e. as meaning 'No, I can't. I have work to do.'

The concept of script, therefore, seems to provide a method of structuring part of our background knowledge in an acceptable way, i.e. in a way that reflects, more or less precisely, the organization of such knowledge in our memory or minds. If, however, scripts seem capable of representing all our background knowledge, why not dispense with such labels as SBKBs? It must be noted that scripts are designed to represent our specific episodic knowledge, but they cannot handle our general knowledge. Until more work has been done on the representation of the structure of our knowledge systems, we will have to rely on such unspecified classes, called 'background knowledge' or 'general beliefs' or MCBs (Bach and Harnish, *op.cit.*), or 'factual background information' (Searle, 1975), or what have you, whose contents and structure are as obscure as they are powerful in determining our understanding of speech and language. For example, how is our knowledge that taking out the garbage does not take longer than a minute, to be represented? How do we know that the utterance,

(6) I have to tie my shoelaces,

as a response to (7)

(7) Let's go to the movies tonight,

(Searle, 1975),

cannot constitute the act of acceptance or rejection, and is not relevant in any other way, either. That is, it cannot be an inserted question ('Can you get me a baby-sitter?'), or a comment of appreciation. How do we know that (6) is irrelevant, 'non-responsive' to the conversational needs set by the preceding utterance (by the speech act of the preceding utterance). How do we know that the speaker of (6) violates the cooperative principle — in Grice's language — without thereby intending the generation of an implicature? How do we know that (6) breaches all conversational principles?

It has been shown that (IB), i.e. 'I have work to do', activates a script, or, even, a hyperscript, whose temporal structure can be compared to that of another script already in operation. We can, thus, understand the response as intending to juxtapose the temporal structures of the two scripts.<sup>12</sup> This, however, cannot be the case with a response such as (6) or (i) 'I have to take out the garbage'. Is another script invoked via such a response, and, if so, what could its structure be? Could we have scripts for just tying shoelaces and taking out the garbage? If we conclude that these activities can constitute autonomous scripts, then the utility of the concept will go out of the window. We would be faced with the same problem if we counted the existence of such individual statements, with no general content, as part of our SBKBs, as we faced with the hypothetical statements advocated by Labov and Ryle. In other words, the notion of script would be trivialized, since it would not be deployed in labelling and, thereby, structuring big "chunks" of knowledge.

One way out of this impasse might be the supposition that such activities as 'tying shoelaces' or 'taking out the garbage' could be represented as the conceptualizations of scenes, or subparts of scripts; that is, they could constitute subparts of the scripts "getting dressed" and "doing housework", respectively. In other words, we search our background knowledge for a script furnishing points of reference on which the relevance of the response to the previous utterance, could be anchored. Such points are readily available, by the script "working" or "doing housework", but not by their subparts, such as 'taking out the garbage', or "having to take out my writing paper".

However, even on this hypothesis, (6) cannot be rejected as inappropriate on the grounds that it references a subpart of a script, rather than the script itself, since the invocation of the whole script via the utterance 'I have to get dressed', would still not count as a rejection or acceptance of the speech act performed in the previous utterance. Therefore, we cannot conclude that the

inability of (6) to meet the conversational demands set by the previous utterance, lies in the fact that it only references a subpart of a script and is, thus, unlikely to have a temporal structure comparable to that of another script as that of 'going to the movies'. As Schank and Abelson, 1977, pointed out,

There is a very long theoretical stride ... from the idea that highly structured knowledge dominates the understanding process, to the specification of the details of the most appropriate structures. It does not take one very far to say that schemes are important: one must know the content of the schemes.

Moreover, such specifications, relating to the temporal structure of scripts, have not been described in the literature on scripts. Apparently, they have to be inferred from a conglomeration of other specifications of subparts of scripts. It may be argued that such significant conditions should be directly included in the specification of the structure of scripts, rather than have to be inferred — after all scripts are supposed to mirror our entire knowledge — since they constitute a significant part of the conceptualization of the corresponding script. However, it may be that such concomitants are necessary conditions for the existence of any homogeneously specifiable chunk of episodic knowledge, that can be called a script. But this amounts to little more than mere speculation.

Besides, according to Schank and Abelson, 1977, who developed the apparatus of "script", the time parameter cannot be a necessary condition for the characterization of scripts, since they have constructed scripts such as the instrumental or the personal scripts. It can be argued, however, that the temporal concomitant is a necessary condition for the characterization of situational scripts. But even on this assumption, it is not clear whether the utterance, 'I have work to do' will necessarily call up a situational script. One problem might be the fact that in such a script there is no more than one player involved, whilst in situational scripts there is usually more than one player involved. Another problem is posed by examples such as,

(8) I have work to do for an exam.

Is a situational script called up by (8)? Or is it an instrumental script that is invoked by it? However it may be, it seems rather implausible to assume that scripts, at their present stage of development, can provide the means for accounting in a systematically structured way for our knowledge system relating to matters of time.

It may be that such knowledge that affords us the means to compare activities along the time dimension, or, In general, to find the relational grounds between them is part of our general knowledge of coordinating inter-relations rather than part of our specific knowledge that has been claimed to be organizable in scripts. Therefore, although it would seem that the construction of the apparatus of the script is a step in the right direction towards the representation of the organization of stored knowledge, we still need a more general class that will encompass such general knowledge that is not, as yet, specifiable in any systematized, generalized way.

Schank and Abelson, op.cit., recognized the need for means, other than scripts, to connect pieces of information; they write,

For any two conceptions that are related by their occurrence in a story, we must be able to trace a path between them. This path must be based on general information about the connectivity of events when specific information about the connectivity (i.e. a script) is not available.

(p. 70)

To account for such cases, they introduced the notion of the plan, which is,

The repository for general information that will connect events that cannot be connected by use of an available script or by standard causal chain expansion.

(P-70)

An alternative route, in the case at issue, would, therefore, be to view the relation between the two utterances as emanating from the fact that they are setting up diverse, and, thus, incompatible goals.<sup>13</sup> However, the incompatibility of the plans in question, again, hinges on the temporal structure of the activities introduced by the plans. This becomes evident in utterances like (6) ('I have to tie my shoelaces'), or like 'I have to take out the garbage.' The reason for this is that if 'I have work to do' is defined as a plan and not as a script-header, or as the Main Conceptualization (MAINCON) of the relevant script, then, arguably, it activates the relevant script, since scripts originate in plans. Once plans can introduce scripts, interactive points between active scripts relating to the temporal structures can be readily found. Similarly, the utterance 'I am hungry' is goal directed, and as such it activates the eating script, whose execution is incompatible with the simultaneous execution by the same agent of the tennis script. Thus, it can be explained by the utterance 'I am hungry', as a response to 'Let's play tennis', is not only relevant, but can also constitute a rejection as well as generate a next speaker's utterance referring directly to the main parts of the eating script as in (ii),

(ii) You can have dinner later.

We'll have a nice meal at a Wimpy later.

Dinner is not ready yet.

and so on. However that may be, it need not be claimed that the incompatibility, spelt out in the phrase 'No, I can't', is implied (Ziff) or 'implicated' in any way that would ascribe a specific intentional status to the speaker. Arguably, it is superseded by a more informative response (utterance), and, in this sense, it can be claimed to be inferred.

Moreover, it must be objected that (IB) ('I have work to do') is meant to be understood merely as a rejection of the proposal, i.e. as 'No, I can't', as Ziff and Labov claim; and to say that an utterance constitutes a direct illocutionary act of rejection whilst another performs an indirect act of rejection,



is not to account for all the differences between them, at our present stage of knowledge. Rather, (IB) is intended to be understood as a rejection-cum-explanation, i.e. as 'No, I can't because I have work to do', which is not the same as saying 'No, I can't'. Note that the utterance (1B)7 that performs the speech act of rejection, contributes to the ongoing conversation to a greater degree than a flat rejection like 'No, I can't' would. Leaving aside matters of appropriacy, rudeness and so on, emanating from a flat rejection, that might engender dire social consequences for the co-conversationalists,<sup>14</sup> the utterance 'I have work to do' is potentially consequential for the direction of the ongoing conversation. It can provide the ground for the next topic of the conversation, often via the introduction of a new script (cf. e.g. 4). In other words, the first utterance (1A) can be seen as introducing Topic A. However, whilst (IB) can address Topic A, introduced by (1A), as well as introduce Topic B, in exactly the same way as 2(B)2 can, (2B) can only address Topic A. As Weiner and Goodenough, 1977, p. 223,

note:

The initial statement of Topic B maybe understood in one way if heard as part of Topic A, and in another way if heard as part of Topic B.

## 8.2 Conclusion

What is brought out, however, in this discussion, is that our SBKBs, in one form or another, have an important role to play in communication. It must be stressed, though, that items of SBKBs are activated via CMCA's, which, as has been noted, include previous linguistic context, as well.<sup>15</sup> CMCA's are pivotal for the understanding of what speech act the next utterance is intended to perform. However, previous linguistic context is central to the understanding of the next speech act, but not only because of our knowledge of the sequential nature of speech acts. That is, our knowledge that an acceptance or a rejection is in order, when a proposal has been issued, for instance,

does not, in itself, equip us with all the requisite means for discerning which next utterance can perform the expected act. It merely orients us towards this expectancy. It is items of SBKBs that are invoked via CMCA's which, in the end, help to determine which next utterance can appropriately perform the expected act.

On the assumption that scripts can represent homogeneous chunks of knowledge, the utterance 'I have work to do' will call up such a chunk; one of its specifications — which are assumed to be part of our stored knowledge and need not be explicitly mentioned to be called up, but are evoked via the activation of the main conceptualization (MAINCON) of the script — might provide the ground for relating this script to the one already activated by the initiating utterance. But, as noted in Bower et al, 1979, there is no indication in script theory of how simultaneous execution (enactment) of several scripts is to be handled. Neither is there a way of accounting for our ability to discern interactive points between instantiations of scripts. As Bower et al noted,

What is harder to model are interactions between the goals and resource-allocations among several simultaneous scripts.<sup>16</sup>

However that may be, the reference points that might provide the relational grounds between the two utterances — i.e. the interactive points between the envisaged enactment of the two scripts evoked — and, consequently, between the two acts performed, are activated via CMCA's, and, in the case at issue, via the preceding utterance, which called up a specific script.

An attempt has been made, in the foregoing discussion, to view such means that enable us to detect the relevancies between utterances and, hence, acts, as part of structured chunks of knowledge. The purpose of this discussion has been to expose the implausibility of such claims as Ziff's,<sup>17</sup> that what is said by (1B), for example, when this is uttered in response to (1A), is said 'by

implication". Such a claim, by necessity, equates utterances such as (IB) and (2B), on the one hand, as if they had an identical role to play in the conduct of conversation, and, on the other, it differentiates between utterances such as (2B)1 and (2B)2 — assuming that they are all uttered in response to (1A). It has been shown that understanding (IB) as performing the act of rejection in relation to the proposal in (1A) is a function of our knowledge of conversational organization (sequential rules), and our general background knowledge (SBKBs). If it is established that such background knowledge is highly structured and shared by all members of a linguistic community, then the implausibility will become apparent, of elevating instances in which such knowledge schemes are put to use (invoked) to interpret language in context (linguistic or situational) to the status of implicated meanings or implicatures.

## 9. GENERALIZED CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE

A type of generalized, conversational implicature, as described by Grice, attaches to the use of definite and indefinite articles. For example, anyone who utters (1),

(1) X is meeting a woman tonight,

would normally implicate that the woman X was meeting, was not X's wife, mother, sister, or even a platonic friend. Another example would be the following:

(2) I went into a house yesterday and found a tortoise inside the front door,

whereby it is implicated that it was not my house I was referring to. Grice writes,

I could produce similar linguistic phenomena involving the expressions 'a garden', 'a car', 'a college' and so on. Sometimes, however, there would normally be no such implicature ('I have been sitting in a car all morning'), and sometimes a reverse implicature ('I broke a finger yesterday').

(1975, p.56)

He, then, goes on to explain the generation of this kind of conversational implicature as follows:

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, and is classifiable as a failure, for one reason or another, to fulfil the first maxim of Quantity.

(ibid., p.57)

So conversational implicature has yet another part to play in explaining yet another set of linguistic phenomena. In short, the notion of conversational implicature is used as a device that is summoned to account — according to Grice — for a vast variety of extra-logical meaning aspects in a theory of language. This would be quite a plausible solution if it were able to explain them adequately. Instead, it does not seem to go very far. Disguised as conversational implicatures the most intriguing aspects of language use are left untreated and unaccounted for. Besides, it is unreasonable to claim that items which exhibit variegated linguistic behaviour can lend themselves to a uniform treatment. As has been argued, such an account would explain very little, if anything at all, though it would rescue a rather uninteresting corpus of facts that could be called logical semantics.

In the case in point, Grice does not pay due attention to the fact that quite distinct rules govern the use of the definite and indefinite articles, but wants, instead, to claim that their use can be explained in terms of implicatures. However, as he himself acknowledges, it is often the case that conversational implicature proves unable to account for the use of the articles. An adequate theory of the use of the definite and indefinite article should cater for all instances of their use.

Consider, however, some uses of the article that cannot be accounted for in terms of conversational implicature:

- (3) I own a house, all right, but the roof needs mending, a window needs replacing, and the master bedroom and a small bedroom need redecorating.
- (4) I have a sister who lives in a bungalow and has a cat.
- (5) She brought me a book.
- (6) She was wearing a pretty nightie.
- (7) The cat is John's favourite pet.

(8) I live in  $\alpha$  house.

The use of the articles in (3) to (8) can hardly be explained along the lines suggested by Grice. Surely, the house in (3) belongs to me since I own it, as do the windows, roof and bedrooms to the house. Grice might want to claim that the connection between the speaker and the house is expressed by the verb 'own'. But then further rules should be added to cater for such instances; at any rate, why use a and not the, since the implicature attaching to the former is that there is no relation between the house and the speaker. Besides, why do we say 'the roof, but 'a window', 'the master bedroom', but 'a small bedroom', when it is clear that they are all associated with the same house. Grice's account cannot predict or explain their use.

Of course, it could be counterargued, Grice talks about the possible connection of 'an X', or 'the X' with a person only, and not about relationships between objects. But this is another deficiency of his theory, since another account would have to be provided to explicate the distribution of the article in relation to inanimate entities or objects.

In (7) the referring expression 'the cat' does not denote a particular cat associated with John, since it is here used generically. In (5) it cannot be plausibly argued that the implicature attaching to a is that the book is not hers, or the speaker's for that matter,<sup>1</sup> or that, at least, the speaker is not in a position to know. In (6) it is most natural to assume that the nightie she was wearing was not borrowed, and in (8) that the house is the speaker's ('I live in a house, not in a bungalow'). In any event, the speaker would know whether the house was his or not, and, according to 'M.Quant', he was presumed to give this piece of information. But, it is clear, that 'M.Quant' does not function irrespective of other parameters, as the case appears to be in Grice's account. In short, leaving it to a CP, or some vague maxim thereof, to specify the conditions under which appropriate reference is to be made is to throw too much out of the window.

Hawkins, 1978, in an insightful and thorough investigation of the use of articles writes:

The assertion of set membership ('There is a Prime Minister of England', etc.) is normally appropriate when the hearer does not have knowledge of it, or when the knowledge which he does have is being deliberately ignored ('I have a head', etc.). Hence by already presupposing shared knowledge of set membership, the definite article instructs the hearer to locate the referent within a set whose members are already known to him. And this then prevents an interpretation from being assigned with have and be in which no presupposition of locatability is made, and in which the members of some set are being defined into existence for the hearer.

(p.223) He concludes defining

a group of 'set-existential' verbs as follows:

... an indefinite descriptions referring inclusively is ... possible with ... verbs which function semantically to define existence within a set. I shall refer to all such verbs (including have and be) as 'set-existential' verbs.

(ibid., p. 223)

(4), therefore, could be accounted for, as suggested by Hawkins. Whether we could include in the group of 'set-existential' verbs, verbs like 'live' and 'wear' is a question that will have to be asked. However, this account can give a satisfactory explanation for the use of the indefinite article in relation to verbs like 'have' and 'be', when it is clear that the items thus denoted are closely related to persons therein referred to. This aspect — amongst others — of the use of the indefinite article is left unexplicated in Grice's theory. Moreover, the above explanation is not an ad hoc account to suit the data. It is well integrated within a more or less well defined and comprehensive theory of the use of the definite and indefinite article.

Hawkins develops a theory of definite and indefinite descriptions in terms of two notions, 'inclusiveness' and 'exclusiveness'. The familiar 'uniqueness-condition' of definite descriptions is considered to be a manifestation of a more general regularity, which Hawkins calls 'inclusiveness within pragmatically defined parameters'. The fundamental distinction between the and a, in Hawkins' view, is that the former refers inclusively to all the objects that are relevant in a pragmatically delimited set,<sup>2</sup> whilst the latter refers 'exclusively', i.e. there are supposed to exist more objects within the same set which are excluded in the reference at issue.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, Hawkins' theory is able to explain the use of the articles in (3). We talk of 'the roof and not of 'a roof, because it is to be understood "inclusively" — there is only one roof to the house — while we talk of 'a window', because we thereby 'exclude' the rest of the windows belonging to the same set, i.e. the house referred to, and so on. Within the framework of these two notions, 'exclusiveness' and 'inclusiveness', Hawkins can explicate indefinite and definite article facts, which Grice's implicatures are unable to handle.

Consider Grice's example of inalienable possession,<sup>4</sup> which, however, is referred to the indefinite article;

(8) I broke a finger yesterday;

the implicature here would be the reverse of what Grice predicted. Hawkins notes some similar examples. For example, with regard to (9),

(9) Bill lost a finger in the war,

he writes; "Human beings have ten fingers" (p. 180), a fact which makes (9) possible; but we cannot say 'Fred broke a head', meaning thereby that it was his own head he broke, for the simple reason that there is only one head to the



human body, and, therefore, we cannot refer to it 'exclusively' but only 'inclusively'."

To return to Grice's example (1) of conversational implicature, one could say that it is rather bizarre. Why understand 'by implicature' that the woman to be met is not X's wife, sister or mother? If the speaker wanted to say that X was meeting his wife or mother, he would say so. What is the difference between Grice's claim, then, that this understanding comes byway of implicature and a similar claim that in (10) below,

(10) Jane went out with a friend,

there is a conversational implicature attaching to the expression 'a friend' to the effect that the person Jane went out with was not her brother, father, husband, or even her close friend, Robin, who, in fact, the speaker might know was the person Jane went out with. By the same token, it can be reasonably argued, that when we say "a table' by implicature we mean something else than 'a chair', 'a door', 'the desk' or, indeed, anything at all. But this view leads to an intolerable trivialization of any explanatory concept, to the extent that it ceases to be a valuable 'working concept'. In other words, it results in a reductionistic approach to language.

As for the problem that Grice seems to face regarding such examples as 11),

(11) I have been sitting in a car all morning,

in which no generalized, conversational implicature attaches to the use of the indefinite article imparting that it is not my car that is here referred to, it simply does not arise, given a sufficiently understood grammar, semantics and pragmatics of definite and indefinite reference in conjunction with an understanding of the function of conversational maxims. The reference of the expression 'a car' is left 'non-committal or vague'. Hawkins claims that indefinites can have a specific as well as a non-specific reading:

The identity of this referent will generally be arbitrary for the hearer unless identifiability can be guaranteed despite the indefiniteness of the reference.

(Hawkins, op.cit., p. 212)

The speaker's judgment in this case is apparently that it does not matter to the hearer whether it was his car or someone else's he was sitting in, this point being considered inconsequential and irrelevant to the purpose of his utterance. It is here considered to be sufficient for the hearer to understand by the expression 'a car' any car at all. This is an instance indicative of the need for some form of hierarchy in the ordering of the maxims. For example, 'M. Quant' is not operative irrespective of 'MR' in this case, at least.

It is quite clear that our understanding of definite and indefinite reference is not geared to the speaker's obscure implicatures. The speaker's use of referring expressions is governed by specific rules, which relate, not only to the syntax and semantics of the sentences, but also to our perceptual and cognitive understanding of the world, or more specifically, to cognitive schemes by which this understanding is represented. Dismissing the significance of these facts in terms of individual speaker's implicatures is tantamount, as has been claimed, to relinquishing the task facing the language analyst of giving a systematic account.

Not only is Grice's account of generalized, conversational implicature incapable of accounting for all uses of 'an X' and 'the X' expressions (cf. his Urbana lectures) but, also, it fails to capture the generality underlying such uses which reflects our perception and understanding of the world. Why do we understand "the Mummy" in

(12) The baby cried. The mummy picked it up,  
as referring to the baby's mummy (Sacks, 1972)? How could conversational implicatures account for this understanding?<sup>5</sup> Why do we understand the

denoting expressions in (3), as referring to objects belonging to that particular house, therein mentioned, and not to any other? How do we come to understand the expression 'the captain' in (13) as referring to the particular captain of the cruise mentioned in the first clause?

(13) Last summer we went on a cruise. The captain was a very pleasant fellow.

Grice's account cannot furnish the answers.

Hawkins, 1978, in his insightful study of the article, accounts for these linguistic facts in terms of what he calls an 'associative relationship' holding between the underlined nounphrases in (13) and in (3). He distinguishes between two situational uses of the definite article, the immediate situation use, in which the hearer is instructed to 'locate' the referent in the immediate situation as in (14) and (15)

(14) Don't go in there, chum. The dog will bite you.

(15) Pass me the bucket, please,

and the larger situation use, as when we talk of The Prime Minister. In (13), therefore, cruise will trigger off the associative term captain and in (3) house will trigger off associative terms like window and bedroom. "Immediate situation uses of the seem to differ, therefore", he writes, "from larger situation uses which do require either some general knowledge or a specific knowledge of the existence of certain objects in various situations" (*ibid.*, p. 121).

Although Hawkins is aware of the generality of specific and general knowledge since referents are to be located "within one of a number of sets of objects which are pragmatically defined on the basis of different types of shared speaker-hearer knowledge and the situation of utterance" (*ibid.*, p. 17), he does not seem to fully appreciate the power of knowledge stereotypes. For example, failing to capture the stereotype underlying the utterance of (14), he classifies it



off strangers and households with butlers to receive callers. Although we do not possess specific prior knowledge (CMCAs) in these cases regarding the specific dog and butler referred to in (14) and (17), yet, they can both be channelled into the relevant stereotypes (SBKBs) of which we do have prior knowledge — a point Hawkins fails to grasp. We possess no such stereotypes in relation to (16) or (15), and that is why either a visibility condition, or prior knowledge of the existence of the referents (i.e. special content, CMCAs) is needed for the reference to be successful.

Stereotypes (SBKBs), or frames, as they have been called can be likened to knowledge trees having a variety of nodes with dummies at their ends, which, however, are filled in in linguistic situations with items from admissible categories. So we cannot say, or understand (18),

(18) They climbed up the tree and rang the bell, while we can (19), or (20),

(19) They walked up the stairs and rang the bell.

(20) They climbed up the tree and ate the fruit.

We have prior knowledge stereotypes that will receive (19) and (20), but not (18).

His failure to capture such knowledge stereotypes leads Hawkins to wonder what "the parameters defining the set of possible associates" are in (21).

(21) The man drove past our house in a car. The dog was barking furiously.

Understandably, he is unable to find any associative links between a car and the dog. The expression a car can trigger off a number of associated objects, for example, the steering wheels, the gears, the hood, the boot, the clutch, etc., but certainly not the dog, although, he notes, we are familiar with situations where dogs travel in cars. Thus he fails to pick up the expression our house

which actually triggers off an associative relation between the concepts the house and the dog. Consider (22),

(22) The man drove past the tree. The dog was barking furiously,

in which CMCA's are needed to provide special context as in (15) and (16). To use the terminology from Artificial Intelligence, two scripts or frames are triggered off (activated) simultaneously in the same sequence in (21).

In his Urbana lectures, Grice claims that existential presupposition<sup>6</sup> can be represented as conversational implicature by regarding the first two clauses of the Russellian expansion of a definite description as having common ground status, and not as being controversial or likely to be challenged. For instance, he says, when you say,

(23) My aunt's cousin went to the concert,

when you know that the hearer is not aware of the existence of your aunt, let alone of her cousin, the supposition is not that their existence is common ground, but rather that it is uncontroversial "in the sense that it is something which you would expect the hearer to take from you" (Urbana lecture IV). However, Grice does not question the grounds of such a supposition on which an utterance such as (23) can be accepted (received) unquestionably, i.e. is felicitous as regards its definite description my aunt's cousin; that is on the assumption that the speaker has an auntie and the auntie has a cousin, on what grounds does the hearer take his (the speaker's) word for it? (23) will not, as Grice rightly notes, invoke any clarificatory question, unless the hearer actually believed the opposite. But how can conversational implicature account for the definite description in (24), uttered during a discussion about peanuts?

(24) My snake likes peanuts, too.

Not only will (24) invoke a wh- or a yes-no question, if the hearer is not aware

that I keep a snake as a pet, but it will also thereby effect a shift of the topic of conversation. Why is it that in (24) the existential condition of the definite description 'my snake' cannot be taken as common ground, i.e. as implicated, neither can the hearer take the speaker's word for it, so to speak, whilst in (25) he can?

(25) My dog likes peanuts, too.

These are facts that Grice would have to address.

This discussion of Grice's generalized, conversational implicature, has served inter alia to point out once more the significance of stereotypes of knowledge in language use and language understanding. As has been seen, background knowledge has been represented in the form of scripts and frames by workers in Artificial Intelligence. Sacks, 1972, formulated some part of our knowledge schemes in terms of categorization devices. (Also cf. Schegloff, 1967, p. 156) The similarities of these two methods are obvious. More work could be done and must be done in this area, but until the time comes when a better working concept is formulated, we had better make use of what we have in hand.

## 10. CONCLUSIONS

In the first part of this thesis we focused on linguistic items that, according to Grice, give rise to conventional implicatures. The linguistic behaviour of 'therefore' and 'but', the paradigms of conventional implicatures, were examined in detail. It was found that there is a significant degree of divergence between the behaviour of these two items. This led us to the conclusion that they cannot be characterized as instances of the same linguistic phenomenon, as Grice claims. It was suggested that the inclusion of all aspects of meaning of 'therefore' within a semantic theory would not raise as many issues as an inclusion of all the meaning aspects of 'but' would.

As concerns 'but', it was found that its conventional implicata are variable and idiosyncratic, rather than invariable as predicted by their conventional character. Whether we would opt to handle non-truth-functional meaning aspects of 'but' in terms of a pragmatic account in the guise of conventional implicatures, or account for them within a broadly defined semantic theory, or a unitary theory of language, is very much an open issue. However, we feel compelled to point out the factors that are conducive to the supposition that the class of conventional implicatures is misbegotten, and that what has been called conventional implicature is really part of the meaning proper of the lexical items involved:

### Features of conventional implicatures

- (1) Conventional implicatures are not dependent on what is said and yet,
- (2) They are not dependent on features of discourse either.
- (3) They do not arise from an interplay of what is said with the CP and maxims.



- (4) No other independent procedure is available to determine them.
- (5) They are generated by the conventional meaning of particular words.

Conventional implicatures form a class that has been rather neglected in the literature; hence, not many proposals have been made about how they might be treated, either within semantics proper as truth-functional meaning aspects, or within an alternative framework. Katz and Langendoen, for example, favour the former approach, since they regard them as semantic entailments. But, then, they do not consider 'but' at all; their view, therefore, reflects their consideration of 'therefore' only. Harnish, is equally reluctant to concede the existence of a class of conventional implicature. Ferret, 1977, on the other hand, claims that, though conventional implicatures can be represented in a pragmatic construction, yet they can be explained truth-functionally. However, it is not very clear how the various systems of regularities work within his pragmatic representation. In contrast, Moravcsik, 1976, draws a sharp distinction between natural languages and formal languages, partly because of the inadequacy of the latter to handle linguistic phenomena such as 'lexical implications'.

However, the only formal treatment that exists to our knowledge is that by Karttunen and Peters, 1975, 1979. Their treatment is based on Montague's framework. The concept of meaning is extended by allowing conventional implicate to be represented in it, as well as a heritage function that assigns implicatures of argument phrases to the complex phrases that are constructed from them. The meaning of an expression, in their treatment then, consists of an extension expression  $\underline{a}^e$ , an implicature expression  $\underline{a}^i$  and a heritage expression  $\underline{a}^h$ . Their notion of conventional implicature is, however, wider than Grice's, since sources of implicatures can be, not only lexical items, but certain grammatical constructions as well. More specifically, they hope

that certain phenomena that have been called pragmatic presuppositions can be profitably handled as conventional implicature in their framework.

As regards 'but', it has been suggested that in an interactional representation of language, it could be viewed as 'signalling' and 'labelling' our next move in relation to the local purpose of our utterance, or to the overall direction of the conversation. This is a very general and tentative proposal, and its tenability largely depends on the viability of an interactional model of language representation, which at the present stage of research, does not seem to be available.

In the second part of the thesis our primary concern was with the concept of conversational implicatures. Our aim was to reconsider the notion, and see whether it has been used to describe a homogeneous class of phenomena. To this end we looked closely at some of Grice's examples of conversational implicatures, and it was found that a wide range of linguistic facts have been handled in terms of conversational implicature. The class of conversational implicatures, therefore, was found to be heterogeneous. It was concluded that the term 'conversational implicature' was a misnomer for a variety of linguistic facts, which however were, not only misleadingly but also inadequately, accounted for in terms of conversational implicature.

Grice never gave a specific definition of conversational implicature, nor did he propose any sufficient or necessary conditions for its identification. The advantages such a loose characterization of conversational implicature accrues are obvious, and, in many quarters, welcome. A variety of intractable linguistic facts that resist an explanation within the framework of semantics can be claimed to be conversationally implicated.

What are the demerits then of such a view? The question to be asked is how much is thus explained. True, Grice offered a theory of Conversation,

and specified certain rules of discourse therein, which shed some light on what goes on when we engage in conversation. However, neither the structure of conversation nor the notion of implicature are fully clarified to warrant an adequate explication of linguistic phenomena in terms of conversational implicature. The view taken here is that it is unrevealing, and hence unappealing, to account for a variety of intriguing phenomena in terms of a poorly described and insufficiently defined notion.

Furthermore, it is obvious that a more rigorous definition of the concept of implicature will have as a result the exclusion from the class of the vast majority of the phenomena therein housed, leaving behind however a homogeneous class of linguistic facts that could be profitably accounted for in terms of conversational implicature. In chapter 6, therefore, we suggested some criteria towards a more stringent redefinition of conversational implicature. It should be admitted that this definition is bound to come up against a lot of problems, but then this is only to be expected when more stringent conditions are set out.

We did not look at cases of purported conversational implicatures in which the notion is used to explain phenomena that relate closely to the linguistic form of utterances (cf. for example, Kempson, 1975, Wilson, 1975, Gazdar, 1976, 1979). It goes without saying that, in our view, the notion is misused, though conveniently so, in these cases. It is also clear that an approach to the study of language that anticipates sharp dichotomies between semantics, on the one hand, and pragmatics — that most often than not serves as a 'waste-basket' — on the other, is rather not favoured in this study. In any event, the sort of stiff orthodoxy, characteristic of the interpretive approach, to the analysis of language, epitomised in Katz' work, is obviously not countenanced in this thesis. This approach fails to capture the most intriguing linguistic facts by insisting on the doctrine of pure grammaticality.

Our examination of the examples of conversational implicature was motivated by our view that it is uninformative and misleading to view bodies of knowledge, against the background of which all linguistic activity takes place, as being conversationally implicated. As Dretske, 1972, would put it,

To elevate an assumption or presupposition made in the premises to the conclusion of one's argument is, if you will, to commit a pragmatic fallacy.

(p.434)

And since a conversational implicatum in an utterance is what the speaker intends to ultimately convey to his audience, it can very well be likened to the conclusion of an argument.

It has been argued that (87),

/

(87) Jones didn't pay the bill,

which according to Grice gives rise to conversational implicatures in certain contexts, can be more profitably and systematically handled in terms of intonational meanings. It can be noted though, that originally what goes wrong in this example is the fact that Grice considers it in abstraction from any context, and then tries to associate it with some form of context via implicatures due to intonational features.

Intonational aspects of meaning are very complicated and difficult to handle since they intertwine with linguistic facts that are not well understood or described in linguistic theory such as presupposed knowledge (presuppositions), focus and topic, theme and rheme, etc. However, the significance of these aspects of meaning (intonational) has often been stressed, and it has been claimed that they must be treated in the grammar of the language (cf. for example, O'Connor and Arnold, 1961). For instance, Halliday, 1970, writes:

The different meanings carried by various possible intonation patterns are part of English grammar ... The distinctions expressed by the choice of different tones are also distinctions in meaning, and they are of the same general kind; so they too belong in the realm of grammar (and, within grammar, the realm of syntax). Intonation is one of the many kinds of resources that are available in the language for making meaningful distinctions.

(p. 21)

Searle, 1968, notes that "deep syntactic structure, stress and intonation contour" are "bearers of meaning", as well as the uttered sentence and its surface structure. He adds that stress and intonation contour are also "crucial determinants of illocutionary force".

In chapter 8 we tried to view communication as a meaningful process that takes place against the background of shared assumptions and beliefs which have been thought to be segmented into more or less distinct chunks. These chunks of knowledge have been called 'scripts', when they are episodic, or 'frames' when they are static. The speech-act performed by an interactant would call up a specific chunk of knowledge which would help to place it in a certain frame or script. However, physical contextual features interact with our linguistic acts to place the latter in a specific frame or activity type (cf. Levinson, 1978). Thus an interpretation of the utterance spoken would be made available. This process, aided by some form of the CP or coupled with sequencing rules would predict and delimit a class of next utterances, or next activities more generally, out of which 'a next' would be selected.

As has been shown in chapter 8, this is not always a viable proposition, however neat such a procedure seems to be. Besides, the members of a thus delimited class can be infinite, a point that is worrying if no specific constraints can be placed on membership in it. Moreover, a script or an activity type,

for that matter, is not always identifiable. As a last resort we had to rely on the invocation of largely unspecified classes of knowledge and assumptions which we called respectively SBKBs and CMCA's in order to enable ourselves to account for linguistic events. It maybe the case, then, that such notions as scripts and frames (Artificial Intelligence), 'schemata' (Hudson, 1980) activity types (Levinson), Frames (Goffman, 1975), and speech events (Hymes, 1972) can be of some utility in conventionalized, and thus more or less predictable, uses of language (see Strawson, 1971) or in "formal settings" (see Atkinson, 1979) such as rituals, ceremonies, courts, games, dramas, etc.

A promising approach to linguistic problems is offered in Levinson, 1978a, 1978b. He sketches an interactional model of conversation<sup>1</sup> which, in conjunction with Grice's maxims claims to mimic the way in which language functions. This model is the product of the union of a theory of language and a theory of interaction. Key notions in his model are the goal-driven and dual-controlled nature of conversation, the interlocking of actors' goals, the recipient-design and rationality-based structure of dialogue, amongst others.

This model is set up to explicate, inter alia, 'multiple-duty' utterances, which are not accountable within the framework of speech-act theory. Therefore, to a question such as (1) A,

(1) A: Is John there?

B: You can reach him at extension thirty four sixty two,  
one con answer as in (1) B, which is not o direct answer to A's question and yet is a cooperative response. This fact is explained by Levinson, 1978, in terms of his notion of the goal-driven nature of conversation. In answering A's question, B responds to a higher-order intention (goal) of A's question (cf. also, Cicourel, 1972).

Levinson's proposal, indeed, seems to be a very promising and commendable approach to a description of how language works. However, it is immediately noticed that all the examples considered by Levinson are cases of responses aiming at prior speaker's higher-level goals of their utterances as in (1). This is all well, but the question that arises is whether the interactional model in question is capable of accounting for a majority of speech events. For instance, can examples such as the ones extensively considered here, i.e. (86) and (2)<sup>2</sup> — in which the responses do not seem to address a (higher-level) goal in A's utterance — be satisfactorily accounted for within Levinson's framework? In both (86) and (2) B's utterance seems to be an appropriate and cooperative response to A's utterance and yet it does not constitute an explicit rejection of the preceding proposal in (2) nor a direct suggestion of where petrol is to be found in (86). So much so, that Grice had to devise the notion of conversational implicature to account for the fact that utterances such as (86)B are in fact cooperative responses to the utterances preceding them.

Clearly, Levinson's notion of the goal-directed nature of conversation, so prominently figuring in his account, is not the key issue in what is going on in these examples, i.e. in (86) and in (2). In both examples, B does not address A's (higher-level) goals in producing his utterance. After all there are no — or at least there need not be any — higher level goals in a proposal like (2)A in an ordinary context. Instead the problem lies in (2)B's multi-purpose utterance ('I have work to do'), in the 'how' it constitutes a co-operative response. There is no 'interlocking of goals' in evidence in such cases. - What then?

In a previous section we argued that (86) B is a cooperative and appropriate response to its preceding utterance (86)A on the grounds of assumed mutual knowledge — which we labelled SBKBs. Items of this class are triggered by

current assumptions — dubbed CMCA's in this study — which place constraints on the selection and interpretation of the next utterance. These conditions in conjunction with the cooperative principle, or some form of it in the guise of sequencing rules of conversation, have been said to enable us to interpret the next utterance as cooperative, i.e. as cohering to the preceding one. Whether they can also provide constraints for defining and delimiting a class whose members could constitute an appropriate 'next' is very much a moot point. The same method was followed in trying to explicate in what ways (2)B constitutes not only an appropriate next, but also performs the act of rejecting the proposal made in the previous speech act.

However, in considering which conditions make (2)B a cooperative response to (2)A, we tried to view such bodies of knowledge as SBKBs and CMCA's as more or less structured chunks of knowledge. This enterprise has failed in a large measure — at least in cases of interaction which do not take place within the frame of specifiable, conventionalized activities, as seems to be the case with (86) and (2) — leaving us with two vague and unstructured bodies of knowledge. Admittedly, CMCA's are a motley of unspecified assumptions pertaining to each speech event and constraining it to a certain extent. The members of this latter class could be likened to the items that fill in the dummy symbols at the end nodes of a tree which would represent our conventionalized static or episodic knowledge of the world, thought of as being part of the class called SBKBs.

Is then Levinson's notion of activity type a viable proposition for tenttively structuring items which in our account would fall within the purview of our two classes? Let us see how he defines activity types: An activity type is taken to refer to "a fuzzy category whose focal members are goal-defined, socially constituted, bounded events with constraints on participants, setting, and so on, but above all on the kinds of allowable contributions"



(Levinson, 1978 $\alpha$ , p.5). Paradigm examples that are cited are teaching (also cf. Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975), a jural interrogation, a dinner party, a football game, and so on. Activities are structured into subparts or episodes, and their structural constraints may define the personnel, as well as the allocation of roles in an activity. Further constraints are placed on the time and place of the activity. More structural constraints are mentioned in Levinson, 1978, which can be more abstract "having to do with topical cohesion and the functional adequacy of contributions to the activity".

Levinson's notion of activity type — a close approximation or the linguistics equivalent of, the concept of script used by workers in artificial intelligence — is appealed to in order to account for utterances constituting specific acts. For example, the utterance of a customer spoken at a green-grocer's shop,

A: That's a nice one,

accompanied by a gesture of pointing at a lettuce constitutes — and is taken as constituting — the act of selecting that particular lettuce. Not only does utterance A count as selecting a lettuce but it also counts as a request that it be wrapped, and an undertaking that the utterer will pay for it. Levinson explains the force of A's utterance in terms of the expectations governing the activity of shopping.

As an interlude, it could be noted that, indeed, many jokes depend on the interaction between utterances and scripts, or activity types, as, for example, when an utterance that would fit in a different activity type is made in the context of another. An example of this instance would be the following talk-exchange, taking place in a pet shop where A is the shop- keeper and B is a customer interested in buying a pet.

- ' (3)       A: How about rabbits?  
              B: Nice in a stew, aren't they?<sup>3</sup>

However, (3) would not be funny uttered in the context of a butcher's shop.

Searle, 1975, considering indirect speech acts, writes:

The question, 'How do I know he has made a request when he only asked me a question about my abilities?'<sup>1</sup> may be like the question, 'How do I know it was a car when all I perceived was a flash going past me on the highway?' (82)

Implicit in this quotation is our appeal to stereotypes of knowledge. For example, we do not expect to see a star flashing along a motorway, though if we perceived the same flash in the sky we would be inclined to say that we had seen a UFO, rather than a car. The incidents of the flash on the motorway and of the flash in the sky channel into stereotypes which have been well learned and are embedded in our conceptual world. Such stereotypes help us to perceive such utterances as,

- (4) Can you pass me the salt?

as indirect speech acts, when these are made in the context of a script or activity type that would predict that (4) is something to be expected in it. But if (4) is thrown at me while I am waiting for my bus at the bus-stop, I would be completely confused.

So much so for cases in which an activity type is identifiable. But what about cases in which the identification of an activity type within which the speech event occurs is not feasible? Moreover, to be in a position to predict the expectations governing a speech activity, we must, in the first place, be in a position to identify the activity type within which it takes place and, hence, specify the rules governing it. The specification of speech activity rules can often be adequate for specifying these expectancies.

However, how do we know which 'next' is a cooperative response to the proposal in (2)A? We saw that a response like 'Margaret Thatcher addressed the conference yesterday' or 'I have to tie my shoelaces' will not satisfy our expectations.

We therefore have to rely on more principles that might help delimit a class of responses — though its members maybe infinite — that would, in theory, satisfy the conversational demands set by the preceding utterance. Indeed, Levinson did not suppose that all problems would be settled within a framework of activity types without the aid of other factors. He assumes that Grice's cooperative principle is an indispensable apparatus, although it seems that some expectations governing activities are but another name for some of Grice's maxims.<sup>4</sup>

It is widely accepted in the linguistics literature that a cooperative principle and its maxims, as described by Grice, 1975, or some form of it, are at play in conversation. This principle, albeit fundamental and powerful in conversation, is very general. Failing to place (86) and (2) within a specifiable activity we would have to rely very heavily on knowledge derived from Grice's cooperative maxims. The maxim that concerns us in this case is that of Relation, which specifies that the next speaker's utterance should be relevant to the previous one. However, it does not specify the terms in which this relation is to be realised and defined, as has been seen. We would therefore come across the same problem: What constitutes relevance? In what terms is it to be described? How does it function to interpret the next utterance?

If activity types or scripts are further studied and their structure is rigorously analysed, it is conceivable that parts of Grice's maxims can be collapsed into rules or expectancies therein described. One, of course, can argue that were something like this to happen, it would result in a

deplorable state of affairs, since general principles applying to all linguistic activities might be lost into idiosyncratically defined particularized activities. This need not be so though. Since such rationality principles, as the CP offered by Grice, describe, or prescribe, man's linguistic conduct, and since activities or scripts are related to man's linguistic conduct, these principles cannot lose their general import. Besides, the content of these conversational rules is too general and totally unrelated to other parameters, at the present stage of research, to effectively constrain linguistic behaviour. The view taken here, therefore, is that future research must start "cutting through the jungle" of language interaction with bodies of knowledge.

## NOTES

### INTRODUCTION

1. Some pragmatic rules foreshadowing Grice's maxims are to be found in Nowell-Smith, 1957. For example, a close approximation to Grice's maxim of Quality would be Nowell-Smith's rule 1 and rule 2, which run as follows:

Rule 1: When a speaker uses a sentence to make a statement, it is contextually implied that he believes it to be true.

Rule 2: A speaker contextually implies that he has what he himself believes to be good reasons for his statement.

A third rule in Nowell-Smith, op.cit., concerns relevance and is phrased as follows:

Rule 3: What a speaker says may be assumed to be relevant to the interests of his audience. (pp.72-73)

Rules of discourse are also implicit in Urmson, 1963. Cf. also Strawson, 1964, his 'Principle of Relevance' (p.97) and his two principles of the Presumption of Ignorance and Knowledge (pp. 86-87) which relate to Grice's 'M.Quant'.

2. Grice also distinguishes between two types of implicatures in general: conventional and non-conventional implicatures. Conversational implicatures, he claims, have a species-to-genus relationship to non-conventional implicatures. However, he does not define or talk about any other subclass of non-conventional implicatures, neither does he specify any set of characteristics of the more general category of non-conventional implicatures.
3. Also cf. William James Lectures, TU, 1978, and Urbana Lectures, JV.
4. However, Grice cites the following example as a case of explicit cancellation of the generalized conversational implicature attaching to 'if  $p$  then  $q$ ':

If you put that bit of sugar in water it will dissolve, though so far as I know there could be no way of knowing in advance that this is what will happen.

(1967b William James Lectures, IV fn.)

The oddity of this statement is acknowledged by Grice.

5. The second lecture of the William James Lectures at Harvard University, 1967, where the Cooperative Principle and the concept of implicature are discussed and the third lecture of the same series are the only ones published (Grice, 1975, 1978). The other lectures remain unpublished.
6. The interested reader is referred to Cohen, 1971, and Walker, 1975, for a discussion of the implicatures attaching to conjunctive, conditional and disjunctive statements.

## NOTES

## CHAPTER 1

1. It should be noted that 'therefore' may be represented by the turnstile, '⊢', in metalogic.
2. Cf. Strawson, 1952, chapter 3, part II for such a view.
3. It must be noted that Grice does not explicitly say that to assert (3) is tantamount to asserting (5). However, to assume that to assert (3) is to assert two different propositions cannot be right, in case the two sentences are inferentially linked (see below). Besides, we have to account for conjunctions of the form 'p, and, therefore, q' (cf. Grice, 1971, p.56), and, also, for negated forms of (3), such as (i)
  - (i) It is not the case that he is an Englishman, and therefore brave.
 In any event, this issue will not be pursued here, as it does not have any decisive relevance on the following argument.
4. 'therefore' is the standard conclusion-indicator; its presence, however, does not always signal the presence of an argument since requests, commands or even questions can follow it (cf. Copi, 1968, p. 16).
5. Cf. Quine, 1952, p. 170: "... the tacit premises ... invoked must always be statements which can be presumed to be believed true by all parties at the outset" (emphasis added). Stalnaker, 1978, notes that the propositions that are presented as common ground or mutual knowledge need not really be common or mutual knowledge: "The speaker need not even believe them. He may presuppose any proposition that he finds it convenient to assume for the purpose of the conversation, provided he is prepared to assume that his audience will assume it along with him" (p.321).
6. Cf. Gazdar, 1976: 3.1, though we would not agree that it is more, or equally, probable that (6) had been asserted prior to (3).
  7. Also see Hempel, 1968, on enthymematically formulated explanations.
  8. Cf. Strawson, 1952, p.195: "To generalise is to'speak generally'."
  9. Hempel, 1968
  10. Grice is not alone in claiming that 'therefore' plays no role in truth-valuation. Isard, 1975, for example, contends that 'therefore', together with some other expressions, "play the same sort of role as these extra trappings in natural deductive systems. That is, they do not affect the truth, with

respect to any model, of the assertion with which they are associated. Instead, they say something about the sequence of changes of belief that the speaker is trying to induce" (p.295).

11. The type of causality is not thought to be relevant here.
12. Ryle, 1971, would claim that (3) cannot be a statement, but only an argument. One of the criteria posited by Ryle for distinguishing between arguments and statements is that no recognisable question can result from the former by shifting its verb and replacing its fullstop by a questionmark as the case may be with statements. Moreover, (3) cannot do the 'promissory job' (ibid.). It cannot be either the premises or the conclusions in arguments. And as Ryle says: "it is patent that arguments themselves are not statements. The conclusion of one argument may be the premiss of another argument, but an argument itself cannot be the premiss or conclusion of an argument" (ibid., p. 304).
13. See Dijk, 1977, on 'indirect derivability' "... B is derivable from A together with a set of propositions: {  $\Gamma$  UA } B. "
14. Cf. Brown, 1955, on inferring: "I do not merely present p as a good enough reason for thinking that q, I also indicate that it is because it is the case that p that I think that q ..." (p.353).
15. At this point it could be pointed out that when Katz, 1972, argues that he cannot find any difference between cases like (3), on the one hand,



and sentence (i) 'The reason he is brave is that he is an Englishman', on the other, what he has in mind is the explanatory interpretation of (3), and not the inferential one.

16. Ryle, 1971, says that 'because'<sup>1</sup> sentences are explanations, and therefore statements and not arguments, but he also notes that "there is a didactic use of 'because' sentences, in which they function much more like arguments than like statements" (p.309). In such cases 'because' is preposed.
17. But note that even so,  $p$  and  $q$  would have to be connected by some form of "truth-dependency"<sup>1</sup> stating that the truth or falsity of  $q$  is entailed respectively by the truth or falsity of  $p$ .
18. Cf. Ryle, 1971, who argues that inferences of the form ' $p$ , therefore  $q$ ' can never be true or false.
19. Cf. Quine and Ullian, 1970: "Often the search for an explanation is the search for a cause." Also note Ryle's, 1949, distinction between active and dispositional senses of predicates.
20. Ryle, 1949, Chapters IV and V.
21. Even on the assumption that the general statement assumed includes the universal quantifier, note that it can only take the form of the statement 'All Englishmen hitherto observed are brave.' Also, it is well known that general statements (proportional generalizations) are not necessarily falsified by a few counterexamples or exceptions.
22. This point need not concern us here as it need not be countenanced. For a criticism see R. Brown, 1957. However, our point is amply illustrated in this quotation.
23. Cf. Alexander, 1967, Chapter XIII

## NOTES

### CHAPTER 2

1. Cf. 'The President of the United States of America is a religious man, and, therefore, the grass needs mowing.'
2. Cf. Grice, 1978, p. 117, who says that 'It is not the case that A but B' is uncomfortable.
3. Cf. Moravcsik, 1965, 1976, McCawley, 1978, Givon, 1978, Brown and Levinson, 1978.
4. Notice that (15) becomes acceptable if 'too' is appended to it.
5. Of course one might answer as in (i):
  - (i) That's not true. He's not an Englishman.

But by uttering (i) one is a fortiori negating the relation of consequentiality or, more aptly, by negating the grounds on which this relation is based, he invalidates any claims for such a relation.
6. Incidentally, it can be noted that Harnish, 1977, touches on the inferential use of 'He is an Englishman, he is therefore brave' when he defines the case of the conventional implicature of 'therefore' as follows: p therefore q: q follows from p (perhaps: p provides good reasons for believing q (our emphasis)).
7. This example is given in Grice, 1960.
8. On the grounds that your reasons for regarding him as brave are different, though you accept the truth of both conjuncts.
9. By means of a conjunction that has a standard (invariant, constant) meaning.

10. Cf. Wilks, 1975, who says that 'humans do not reject utterances but they try to understand them'<sup>1</sup>. Also see Leech, 1974, pp. 106-7.
11. But note that not every contradiction is unintelligible and thus unemployable in conversational situations. For example, 'I am and I am not' as a response to "Are you well now?" is intelligible (see Strawson, 1952, ch. 1, part I, Hungerland, 1960, pp.214, 232, Lyons, 1977, V.2, pp. 417-418) as in 'He is neither rich nor poor.' But such examples show, as Leech, op. cit., notes: 'that a polarity can accommodate a middle ground belonging neither to one pole nor to the other'<sup>1</sup> (p. 108). This is not true, though, of binary taxonomies. In our example, however, there is no case for any such scale of polarity, and what (28) involves is a contradiction, or inconsistency, in any kind of context.
12. That is, independent criteria the employment of which will differentiate conventional implicatures from what can be characterized as meaning proper.
13. But see Sadock, 1978, who argues that there is no principled reason why two words do not differ in meaning in that one includes in its meaning the very implicature that is detached from the other.
14. In the sense of what is asserted.
15. Note that (i) cannot be a report of (24):
  - (!) She said that he was an Englishman and therefore she said that he was brave.
16. See Halliday and Hasan, 1977, p.203, on structural ellipsis. In transformational terms it is repeated material that is deleted. See Gleitman, 1965, on ellipsis in conjunctions; see p.274 for rules for deletion of identical strings in conjunction. Also see Green, 1973, for conjunction reduction.
17. Cf. Z. Harris, 1964(1957), p. 170:
 

Members of the class C ('and', 'but', 'more than', etc.) have in general the property that they occur between two

instances of the same construction. Given an utterance containing *C*, it is in general possible to find a construction *X* immediately before *C* and a construction *Y* immediately after *C*, such that *X* and *Y* have the same status within the next larger construction.

However, this widely accepted observation (cf. Chomsky, 1957) holds for cases in which the contrastive meaning of 'but' is operative within the conjunction and does not extend beyond it.

18. See, for example, sentences like 'p and therefore q' or negative sentences in which the second conjunct has to be conjoined by 'and' as in - (p and therefore q). This is indicative of the absence of any conjunctive aspects of meaning in the case of 'therefore'.

## NOTES

### CHAPTER 3

1. Clearly truth-values are assigned only to what is said in its fuller identification.
2. Cf. Katz/ 1972, p.445.
3. If it is argued that there can be a point of contrast between the two conjuncts in (45) then it is easy to construct a similar example, for example, 'I went to see him but his mother was there', for which the claim that there is a contrast between the two conjuncts would not hold. In any case, it is beyond dispute that a very widespread use of 'but' follows this pattern. Cf. an oft-quoted (Pittenger et al, 1960, Wootton, 1975, Turner, 1976, Heritage, 1978, Owen, 1978) example though for different purposes:
 

'What do you do?'

'I'm a nurse, but my husband won't let me work.'

In this example it is even more evident that 'but' does not contrast the two conjuncts as it is an answer to the question 'What do you do?'
4. Cf. R. Lakoff's, 1971, p.133, definition of 'semantic-opposition-but'.
5. From G. Lakoff, 1971b.
6. R. Lakoff's view of expectations involved in this case are different (cf. p. 133), but they are rejected here on the grounds that they are not considered to be general enough to constitute general presuppositions occasioned by our knowledge of the world. Besides the presuppositions as rendered here seem to us to be more natural, especially in the absence of any context.
7. Our suspicion is that (49) becomes more problematic in cases of 'but' in which the subjects of the two conjuncts are not identical. This jibes with our supposition that cases of 'but' which involve general statements tend to have identical subjects in both conjuncts. But see below.

8. Socks *et al.*, 1974
9. Cf. Wilson's example, 1975, p.119. It is primarily this kind of 'but' that Pascal and Katriel, 1977, have in mind in their study of Hebrew equivalents of 'but'.
10. It can be remarked that the statement of the form  $\underline{A} \rightarrow \underline{B}$  in this case, viz. 'If it's January, it's cold', is generic and general; whilst the one of the form  $\underline{A} \ \&\sim \ \underline{B}$ , viz. 'It's January and not cold', is specific about this January. It is suspected that Dijk's definition is adequate to handle those cases of 'but' that belong to group [3], fig. 9, section 3.3.3. These cases contain '-near-antonyms', on the one hand, as defined by R. Lakoff, 1971 (see below), and 'a flavour' of expectations, on the other. This combination determining the use of 'but' seems to be captured in (49).
11. But see Yorick Wilks, 1975, for a criticism of Lakoff's deductive procedures.
12. See R. Lakoff, 1971, p. 137, for some similar examples, (75) - (79) which, she says, are not accountable for within her analysis.
13. Without relying on the meanings of the two conjuncts.
14. See R. Lakoff, 1971, p.233. Put differently, and as some analysts would like to claim, while (58) functions as an explicit cancellation of conversational implicatures generated by the first conjunct — and (45) as an implicit cancellation of the implicatures of its first conjunct — this cannot be the case in (27) and (57).
15. Consider the following recorded talk-exchange in Vennemann, 1975:
 

Policeman at the front door: 'Does Mrs. Miller, the widow, live here?'

Lady: 'I am Mrs. Miller, but I am not a widow.'
16. We here have in mind those language analysts that do not extend the notion of conventional implicatures to instances of what have been called pre-suppositions of the sentence or pragmatic presuppositions (Karttunen and Peters, 1975, Parret, 1977, Sadock, 1978, Lyons, 1981, etc.) but those who see conventional implicatures as described by Grice, i.e. attached to lexical items and not to larger linguistic units.

17. 'Analysis' or 'citation' refers to the main component of a lexicon entry.
18. 'Directive' refers to an extra component or implication of some dictionary entries, like the indication enclosed in angled parentheses below: "Snub: (adjective) [of a nose], concave'.
19. But see Kempson, 1975, who attributes to R. Lakoff the claim that 'but' has two senses (p.55).
20. This idea of 'Opposition' or 'contrast' between the two conjuncts conjoined by 'but' is not new. Gleitman, 1965, in her pioneering study of conjunction on transformational lines notes the unacceptability of conjunctions with identical conjuncts ("internal similarity' of the conjuncts). She also notes "the kind of 'Opposition' necessary for the natural use of 'but' ", but her analysis is in syntactic and not semantic terms, so she notes that "this opposition is apparently not always syntactically marked" (p.266). She also notes that the purpose of conjunction is to indicate contrast or reduce repetition (p. 268).  
Also cf. Campbell, 1969, p.415: "... the omission of copulatives always succeeds best, when the connexion of the thoughts is either very close or very distant. It's mostly in the intermediate cases that the conjunction is deemed necessary. When the connexion in thought is very distant, the copulative appears absurd, and when very close, superfluous ...".
21. R. Lakoff is not the first to associate the use of 'but' with expectations. Green, 1968, defines 'but' as follows:  

When 'but' conjoins clauses, its use involves a denial that the contrary of the following clause is true, although the contrary of the following clause is to be expected in the light of preceding content. 'But' may thus be considered equivalent to 'and' contrary to (your) expectation.

(pp.29-30)
22. R. Lakoff may have in mind not individual presuppositions — indeed, this cannot be the case — but, rather, the presence of some degree of indeterminacy of criterial conditions in defining the meanings of lexical items. But see Binnick, 1970, who claims that "the criteria involved in definitions exist on different levels and relate directly to one's presuppositions" (p. 150).

23. For a definition of 'antonymy' in terms of semantic markers, see Katz) 1972. See Kempson, 1977, pp.84-86, for overview.
24. Ziff, 1960, argues against the thesis that the word 'good' is an 'evaluative term'; he writes that "the word 'good' is sometimes said to be an 'evaluative term' or a 'term of evaluation'. It isn't."  
(p. 242).
25. It must be made clear that by criticizing Lakoff's extended notion of antonymy we do not raise any objections against the necessity for the assumption of some degree of fuzziness of the distinction made between pairs of antonyms (for example, in cases of binary taxonomies). Neither do we raise any objections in a definition of antonymy against the necessity for envisaging a scalar hierarchy running between polar extremes of antonymic pairs (gradable polarity). (See Lakoff's comment on pairs like 'hot' and 'warm' on p. 134n.) What is objected to is the recourse to 'speaker-related norms' or 'role-related norms' (Leech, 1974) in defining semantic notions. (The concept of norm with respect to polarity in adjectives was introduced by Bierwisch, 1967.)
26. See Fries, 1967, ch. V, for a description of classes of words.
27. Kempson, 1975, points out that such examples as (64) are counter- examples to an account in terms of a semantic component of the contrastive meaning of 'but' because she claims:

This account of "but' should in addition predict that examples such as 'John is rich but John is poor' are non- contradictory because they meet the requisite condition of contrastiveness. There is no obvious way to prevent such a prediction (p.57).

However, this criticism is based on the assumption that indeed Lakoff attributes two senses to 'but'. But it must be noted that she talks about distinct underlying structures (p. 134) and about the inclusion of presuppositions and deductions in our semantic representations (p,121n).

Also see Harder and Kock, 1976, p.21, for a criticism of R. Lakoff's claim regarding the two senses of conjunctions.



28. This is one of the many terms that are left unexplicated in Lakoff's analysis but we will come to that later.
29. Also see Halliday and Hasan, 1976, p.252, on the correlation between although and but structures.
30. On this point it is apt to quote Leech, 1974, p. 109:

Some polar oppositions are basically evaluative, and for them there is not only an object-related norm, but a subjective, speaker-related norm as well. They include good/bad, beautiful / ugly and kind / unkind. These evaluative meanings are logically distinct from other polarities, because we cannot discuss their implications of truth value without distinguishing 'true for Mr. X', 'true for Miss Y', etc. Hence they involve a relaxation of the rules of incompatibility: I cannot maintain that (a), "London is beautiful" and (b), 'London is ugly" are necessarily inconsistent statements, because (a) could be true for one person, and (b) for another ...

Yet a third type of norm, a role-related norm, applies to some evaluative polarities, such as good/bad and clever/stupid: thus a 'good boss" may mean not only "a boss who is good as bosses go' and 'a boss who is good according to Mr. X', but also 'a boss who is good at being a boss'. It is largely because of this three-fold variability of the norm that words such as 'good' and 'bad' are thought to be vague and shifting in their meanings.

Also see Bierwisch, 1967, who distinguishes between those adjectives for which a scale of polarity can be set up with a point indicating the expected average, 'the norm', between the two polar ends (for example, lang(long)/ kurz(short)) and between those for which there can be no such norm between two polar ends (for example, gut(good)/schlecht(bad)).

Not only are these polarities evaluative and unfixed (for example, these adjectives are not treated in Bierwisch, 1967, and for obvious reasons) but Lakoff wants to employ them as criteria for determining other polarities.

Also see Ljung, 1974, who notes that there exists no objective scale for evaluative adjectives and "it is no doubt true that the presence of such a scale facilitates the formation of antonymous adjective.pairs" (p.76).

31. See Kempson, 1977, p.54, for a critical appraisal of this approach.
32. Incidentally, this is conducive to the supposition that but in (73) refers back to (72).
33. However notice what interpretation is given to it in the above described context: John is a Republican (and this is considered an argument in favour of the desired goal (conclusion) in our discussion) but (on the other hand) he is honest (and this is considered an argument against it). According to Davey and Longuet-Higgins, 1976, what you have here is two moves, or rather two aspects of a move, of comparable significance (that is the reason for having them coordinated rather than subordinated; for example: 'Although John is a Republican, he is honest', or vice versa, or 'Since John is a Republican, he is honest.'). So actually the speaker signals with but that the next part of his move is negative in nature as against his first part, and such an evaluation is relative to an ongoing desired end, i.e. is pegged on to either preceding discourse, or to contextual features. So what gets contrasted here is not one state of affairs to another state of affairs, but rather the speaker's evaluation of one state of affairs with another.
34. 'General', in the sense that the resources utilised in such cases are part of the stock of our general knowledge of the world.

## NOTES

### CHAPTER 4

1. Of course, we are not here referring to linguistic negation.
2. These terms are borrowed from Ethnomethodology.
3. If 'and' is substituted here for 'but' it is still heard as a 'but'.
4. It must be made clear that by "the 'but' introduced clause" we do not mean whatever follows 'but' but rather whatever 'but' introduces in the context of syntax. Therefore, subordinate clauses immediately following 'but' are not necessarily introduced by it as shown below:

... but, before she put him on the table, she thought she might as well dust him a little, ...

Also note that 'but' introduced clauses can carry old information when this is made clear by appending phrases to this effect, such as 'as you know', 'Of course', etc. Intonation may be another point worth mentioning here.

5. Also note the unacceptability of sentences like (i) (G. Lakoff, 1970, p. 147):

(i) \* I didn't believe it, although Sid asserted that Max left,

in which the anaphoric pronoun is in the main clause, while the noun phrase is in the following 'although'-clause. If the 'a I though'-clause is preposed, however, the sentence becomes acceptable:

(ii) Although Sid asserted that Max left, I didn't believe it.

Loetscher, 1973, pointed out cases like non-restrictive relative clauses, which bearing a low information rank, do not belong to the intended message level.

NOTES

## CHAPTER 5

1. Grice is not concerned with cases of fixed stress on particular syllables of words, as for example in the pair 'cóntent', 'contént'.
2. See Heritage, 1978, for an introductory gloss of some sequential features in conversation. He notes:

the provision of a first pair part makes the provision of a second pair part "conditionally relevant". That is, it makes relevant the provision of an utterance drawn from a delimited sub-class of all produceable utterances.

(p. 15)
3. By 'flexibility of coherence' we should understand that the link of the next utterance with the preceding one does not have to be explicit (uttered) if this link is more than obvious to both participants, and the speaker knows, or thinks, that it is obvious to the hearer. In short, this link may consist in the mutual assumption of their shared knowledge of certain facts about their surrounding world; in such a case stating such facts, without an introductory remark to establish them as obvious premises of the speaker's following argument, may offend against the hearer's assumed claim of his knowledge of such facts.
4. By 'permissible variation' we should understand a wide range of utterances that would potentially belong to this domain of discourse; they can be varied, but they should all be well fitted to the first utterance which generates the sequence. What constitutes 'well-fittedness' is a difficult matter to determine, though intuitively we know which utterance is well fitted to which.
5. The appropriate gloss along Grice's lines can be easily supplied by the reader.

6. It is not here ignored that the notion of 'relevance' is as intractable as important and pivotal it seems to be in a theory of language. See Dascal, 1977, Levinson, 1978b, Wilson and Sperber, 1979, and Holdcroft, 1980, for relevant discussions.
7. He would be puzzled because he would think that B was acting as if he was refusing to meet — at least minimally — the social expectations thrust upon him by A's utterance; that is, A would think that B was acting as if he was refusing to accept the social role imposed upon him by A's utterance.
8. E. Tripp as early as 1964 notes that the overt behaviour of the hearer is manipulated by utterances which express a request.
9. Indeed, Grice would not be "forced" to accept the presence of such implicature. He endorses them; in his Urbana lectures IV, p.53, for example, he notes,
 

... when somebody asks me where he can get some petrol and I say that there is a garage round the corner, I might be said to imply, not only that there is a garage around the corner, but that it is open, and that it has stocks of petrol, etc. (emphasis added)
10. There may be cases in which the need for a prior receipt of linguistic messages is overridden by the degree of the emergency of the case. Moreover, as Goffman, 1971, p.92, notes "when circumstances make it clear what an individual's need is, help may be volunteered by a stranger, providing the need can be satisfied at little cost to the satisfier".
11. Cf. R. Lakoff, 1977, p.87, who refers to something like a "principle of mutual sanity". Indeed, what seems to be at stake here is the assumption of the other party's rationality. See Kasher, 1976, who substitutes Grice's CP for a rationalization principle: "There is no reason to assume that the speaker is not a rational agent; his ends and his beliefs regarding his state, in the context of utterance supply the justification of his behaviour" (p.210).

12. It must be pointed out that we do not know whether A's utterance initiated the conversation formulating thereby the topical focus. Indeed, prior conversation may have preceded this talk-exchange; for example, A and B may have been talking about Smith (focus) for some time, and A may have now shifted the topic to the question of Smith's girl-friend (cf. Schenkein, 1972, on 'topic-focus'). We prefer Schenkein's use of these two terms, not only because it is conveniently loose, but also because as used here, these terms seem to span across discourse pieces rather than structure isolated utterances (cf. Halliday, 1967, Chomsky, 1971, Hačicova, 1972, 1973, Sgall, 1972, 1975) or question-answer sequences (cf. Venneman, 1975). In any case, there is a great deal of confusion in the application of these terms and, worse, no agreed terminology. For instance, Venneman uses the term topic where Schenkein would use focus and the other way round.
13. The importance of the direction of gaze is obvious in (b). Cf. Goodwin, 1979, on the significance of non-vocal phenomena such as gaze in the construction of sentences.
14. Cf. Venneman, 1975, who introduces a referential constant in the pre-suppositional representation of a topic thus formalizing the minimalization of verbalization, in cases in which topic repetition is necessitated by the syntax of the sentence.
15. Cf. the 'professor' example, discussed in 5.1 and, also, (i) given as a reply to an enquiry about a friend's settling down to his new job: (i) Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet.' (Grice, 1975, p.43)
16. We here have in mind stereotypic tautologies in which a nounphrase is predicated of itself. But see Brown and Levinson, 1978, p.225, for other examples of tautologies.
17. It is not suggested that these writers are unaware of the complexity of the phenomenon of irony. For example Searle, 1979a, p. 113, writes,
 

I am not suggesting that this is by any means the whole story about irony [Interpreting utterances as meaning the opposite]. Cultures and subcultures vary enormously

in the extent and degree of the linguistic and extra linguistic cues provided for ironical utterances. In English, in fact, there are certain characteristic intonational contours that go with ironical utterances.

However, Searle cannot have fully appreciated the intricacies involved in irony or he would not have defined ironical utterances as follows:

Ironical utterance — Speaker means the opposite of what he says. Utterance meaning is arrived at by going through sentence meaning and then doubling back to the opposite of sentence meaning. (*ibid.*, p.115)

This definition must be founded on the view that the majority of ironical utterances involve propositional inversion. He also writes, 1979b, p.118:

[the speaker] may even mean the opposite of what the sentence means, as in the case of irony.

18. Cf. Gordon and Lakoff, 1971, Ziff, 1972b, R. Lakoff, 1973a,b, G. Lakoff, 1975, Green, 1975, Mittwoch, 1977, Parret, 1977, Cogen and Herrmann, 1975, Kempson, 1975, Wilson, 1975, Gazdar, 1976, 1979.
19. This criticism carries over to Gazdar, 1976, who gives an initial formulation of "quality implicatures" as follows:
- Utterance of  $\emptyset$  by a speaker  $s$  implicates  $k \emptyset$  (where for  $k \emptyset$  read  $s$  knows that  $\emptyset$ ).

(p. 58)

20. This claim, of course, reflects the view of conversational implicature taken here, which, however, stems from Grice's specification of the main characteristics of implicatures. But, see also Cole, 1975, for support of this view.

## NOTES

### CHAPTER 6

1. The underlined words are conducive to our supposition that, although the speaker has divested himself of the responsibility of having implicated that q, the hearer is still left with the impression that the professor thinks that Jones is no good at Philosophy.
2. Cf. Cole, 1975, p.271: One of the criteria he proposes for the presence of conversational implicature is as follows:

What the sentence to which the rule applies is understood to mean is different from the literal meaning conveyed by the words making up the sentence.
3. Some of these issues have been taken up by workers in Ethnomethodology.
4. We cannot fail to notice that these examples support the claim (cf. Levinson, 1978a) that utterances exhibiting various levels of intentions do not always stand to a one-to-one relationship with illocutionary forces. In this respect, then, Searle's theory of speech acts does not provide an adequate account for them. (Cf. Weiser, 1974, 1975 for examples.)
5. Would we say that these examples exhibit lack of attention to the factor 'recipient design'?
6. Another characteristic of court-room language is a strict turn-taking pre-allocation system. (Cf. Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson, 19747 on turn-taking systems, and Atkinson, 1979, on noticeable features of language use in court.)
7. The demand for linguistic precision is often characteristic of young children who have not yet built up an adequate body of factual knowledge



to back up language use and understanding. An example is given below:

6-year-old child who has just watched 'Snowwhite' on TV.

(Real  
data)

Child : Mummy, was it naughty that Snowwhite ate the dwarfs' food?

Mummy : Well, she had been wandering in the woods all day, and she was tired and ...

Child : [interrupting] Look, mummy, was it or was it not naughty?

## NOTES

### CHAPTER 7

1. For a discussion of this feature see Bach and Harnish, 1979 (Appendix).

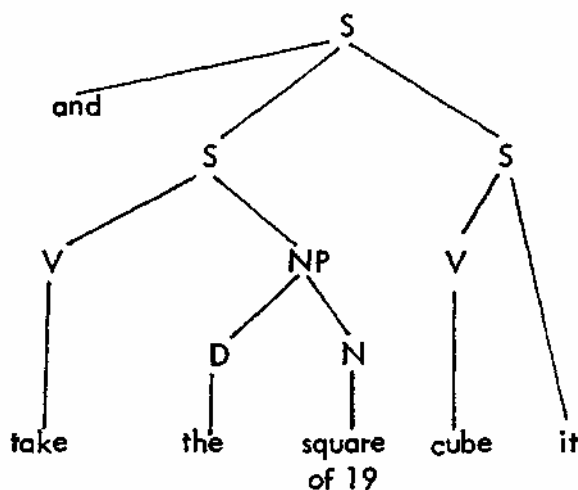
The status of participants, according to Bach and Harnish, is determined by the mutual beliefs regarding their respective Vole standards' or even their 'normative roles' "if it is mutually believed that they meet their standard and they do". They note:

It is important to make the distinctions embodied in these definitions, as the expectations (mutual beliefs activated in particular situations) that are directed at people of a given type or position can be anticipatory, normative, or both. Which they are depends on the type of position, and on people's associated mutual beliefs.

(Appendix)

Also see Cicourel, 1972.

2. As pointed out to me by David Holdcroft, if proximity has to be defined relative to a tree, then the NP 'the square of 19' must be the most proximate to the pronoun as it dominates the noun '19'. This is illustrated in the tree-diagram below:



The 'rule' would then be that the antecedent is the nearest NP subject to

the condition that if NP<sub>1</sub> dominates NP<sub>2</sub>, NP<sub>1</sub> is nearer. Such a rule would make "the square of 19' the unambiguous antecedent. However, consider the pair:

- (a) Take the car from the garage and wax it.
- (b) Take the car from the garage and sweep it out.

If there was such a rule 'the car from the garage' would have to be the antecedent. Yet, in (a) it is clearly 'the car', and in (b) 'the garage'.

3. However in a small study, the paragraph was altered, so that 'the bar of chocolate' appeared first, and the lexical item 'soap' was, therefore most proximate to the pronoun. None of the subjects selected 'soap' as the antecedent for it.
4. But see p.217 below.
5. For a criticism of extending current conceptions of sentence processing see Weiner and Goodenough, 1977.
6. The original example quoted in Charniak, 1972, is as follows:

Janet and Penny went to the store to get presents for Jack. Janet said 'I will get Jack a top.' 'Don't get Jack a top' said Penny. 'He has a top. He will make you take it back.'

Charniak goes on to say,

The trouble here is the it in the last sentence. If we were naively to decide that it referred to the last inanimate object mentioned, we would conclude that the reference was the top Jack currently has. ... it is our knowledge of 'presents' and returning presents, which is coming into play.

7. Also see Venneman, 1975, and Stalnaker, 1977, p.138: "The presuppositions coincide with the shared beliefs, or the presumed common knowledge."

8. CMCA's will roughly correspond to the abstract characterization of a setting, C, as in Katz and Fodor, 1964.
9. Though this remark can be taken to indicate the significance of context, it need not be endorsed.
10. Cf. Bransford and Johnson, 1973, p.425, who argue that,  
... the relation between linguistic inputs and referential knowledge structures can be much more dynamic than is implied by the general notion of linguistic disambiguation.
11. This argument seems to hinge on the definite reference of the nounphrase "the mop", but the issue is more complicated than it appears if you consider examples like,  
Last summer we went on a cruise. The captain was such a lovely man.
12. The balloon passage reads as follows:  
If the balloons popped the sound wouldn't be able to carry since everything would be too far away from the correct floor. A closed window would also prevent the sound from carrying, since most buildings tend to be well insulated. Since the whole operation depends on a steady flow of electricity, a break in the middle of the wire would also cause problems. Of course, the fellow could shout, but the human voice is not loud enough to carry that far. An additional problem is that a string could break on the instrument. Then there could be no accompaniment to the message. It is clear that the best situation would involve less distance. Then there would be fewer potential problems. With face to face contact, the least number of things could go wrong.
13. This background knowledge is brought to bear not only on the interpretation of language, but, first and foremost, on the interpretation of human behaviour, and in general of everyday activities, as noted by Garfinkel.

14. It is worthy of note that such concepts as frames or scenes are finding their way into theories of semantics. Cf., for example, Fillmore's, 1977, 'scenes-and-frames' view of meaning as against checklist theories of meaning. Also cf. Margalit's, 1979, adoption of the notion of 'hard core beliefs' in his attempt to find a natural solution to the problem of "open texture" (Waismann, 1968a). His concept of hard core beliefs seems to correspond to that of prototypical chunks included in the set of SBKBs, or of prototypic scenes (Fillmore, 1977). Also cf. Freede (ed)VII.

## NOTES

### CHAPTER 8

1. The term 'tiedness', however, is used by Sacks, 1967, to identify a chaining relation between adjacent pairs.
2. Labov, 1972a, gives a rule of discourse of the following form:
 

If A utters a question of the form Q-S<sub>1</sub>, and B responds with an existential E (including yes, no, probably, maybe, etc.), then B is heard as answering A with the statement

E-S<sub>1</sub>

(p. 300)

But if we had to give such specific rules for each 'next' utterance type, we could rest assured of the necessity for a multiplicity of such discourse rules, which, however, would all derive from the interpreter's realization of the next speaker's (see Merritt, 1976, for the relevance of this point to monologic discourse, where one speaker or author is involved) orientation towards a coherent and, hence, relevant next utterance. Also see Sacks, 1967, for his notion of 'tiedness'. Searle, 1968, on the other hand, gives a different explanation based on his Principle of Expressibility; he writes:

Often we mean more than we actually say. You ask me, 'Are you going to the party?' I say, 'Yes'. But what I mean is 'Yes, I am going to the party', not 'Yes, it is a fine day.'

(p.415)

3. Adjacency pairs represent sequences of activities.
4. Cf. Schegloff, 1976, "... an adjacency pair is initiated making a second pair part relevant, and the second pair part seems to satisfy whatever formulation of the notion 'answer' one uses. "
5. Note that to an invitation or offer, characterized by the notion of query, a mere comment of appreciation is usually taken as an acceptance, if it is not followed by a rejection.

6. The speaker may not even "pass the conversational turn to the next speaker".
7. It must be noted that the utterance 'I have to take out the garbage' can be heard as an affirmative answer to the invitation, or, at least, as some sort of an answer, if its speaker, for example, makes for the bin. The speaker of the first pair part, then, interprets it as meaning 'I have to take out the bin first, though. Hang on a minute.' But even in this case, it must be assumed that it had been agreed beforehand between the two co-participants, that they would play tennis, or that they habitually played tennis. But even under such circumstances, why should it be taken as constituting the act of acceptance, or, rather, reaffirming acceptance, and not of rejection?
8. Although this is the rule, there are exceptions to it, as when a question is met by querying the speaker's right to ask a question at all, for instance, or by an exclamation at its stupidity, or by pointing out that one is not the appropriate person to reply.
9. The fact that Labov considers 'requests for information' and not invitations or proposals, need not concern us here, since the notion of 'query', as described earlier, characterizes both types of sequences. That is, in a way, (1A) is a request for information, since an answer (though it would have to be an acceptance or rejection) is conditionally relevant upon the utterance of the first pair part. Moreover, the "basic organization' of adjacency pairs is analysed in terms of the utterance sequence 'question- answer' (Schegloff, 1972).
10. But see Levinson, 1978a, for a criticism of this model of conversation.
11. Schank and Abelson introduce the term 'track', which refers to a specific subclass of script situations, as is, for example, the self-service restaurant track in relation to the Restaurant script. Also cf. Bower et al, who note that "Different instances of an activity seem to bear a 'family resemblance' to one another, but they may possess no common features."
12. That, however, does not mean that scripts called up are comparable only along the time dimension, but that, in this case, their temporal structures

seem to provide the only relational ground between the two scripts, as activated by the corresponding utterances.

13. The accomplishment of goals presupposes the construction of plans.
14. J. Heritage, 1980, notes that "dispreferred responses to requests, invitations and the like are regularly expanded by the provision of an account which deals with why the preferred option (e.g. accepting, granting, etc.) is not the one selected." Also see Goffman's, 1976, 'ritual constraints'. As Owen, 1978, puts it, "a bold answer 'yes' or 'no' would have satisfied system constraints, but would have left ritual ones unsatisfied; in short, it would have been offhand or rude." Also see Green, 1975, p. 10.
15. Cf. Heritage, 1980, p.5: "... a primary 'context' to be investigated is the immediate sequential environment of an utterance — the turn that preceded 'this utterance'".
16. Cf. Fillmore, 1977, who, in a 'scene-frame' approach to the description of meaning, argues that "a set of procedures or cognitive operations such as comparing, matching, filling in, and so on", should implement an account of the process of communication.
17. Also cf. Dascal, 1981, for a critical discussion of Ziff's analysis of understanding in terms of deciphering.



## NOTES

### CHAPTER 9

1. In cases in which there are more than two rival referring expressions denoting persons as in (5), Grice has not provided us with any heuristic method whereby the implicature of 'an x' expression is to be understood in relation to one of them, rather than the other.
2. By the way, Hawkins' account would settle Kroch's, 1972, problem concerning the use of the in sentences like (i),
  - (i) John ate the apple;
 the question Kroch raises is that according to Grice's 'M.Quant', the speaker should have said (n),
  - (ii) John ate all of the apple,
 if he wanted to convey thereby that all of the apple was eaten. By conversational implicature, therefore, (i) should be taken as meaning 'John ate at least some of the apple', if it is to be assumed that 'M.Quant' is observed. He concludes that Grice's maxims are too general and vague. Cf. Kempson, 1975, p. 155, who tries to counter Kroch's argument but rather unsuccessfully. Also cf. Wilson, 1975, p. 104 ff, who raises interesting issues in considering the in relation to Kroch's problem.
3. Cf. Habermas, 1970, I. He notes that "the choice between definite and indefinite articles ... does not express a characteristic of the nouns but, rather, certain pragmatic relationships".
4. It could be noted that inalienable possession receives special treatment in the linguistics literature, as it is considered to raise special problems (cf. Fillmore, 1968, Chomsky, 1970).
5. Grice's analysis of existential presupposition of definite expressions in terms of conversational implicatures (cf. Urbana lectures) in which the

expression in question is taken as 'common ground', does not furnish us with any method for determining how to relate one definite description to another, if they are relatable, as indeed is the case in (12).

6. Due to lack of space, familiarity is here assumed with the protracted dispute over the question of definite descriptions and their significance for logical theory. Russell, 1905, analysed denoting expressions in a tripartite conjunction, which, he claimed to represent their true logical structure which was distinct from their misleading surface grammatical form. For example, the familiar example,

(1) The King of France is bald,

is represented as in (2):

(2) (i) There is at least one King of France,

(ii) There is at most one King of France,

(iii) This entity is bald.

If any of these three clauses is false, so is (1). The significance of this analysis for a two-valued logical system is obvious. However, this analysis was severely criticised by Strawson, 1950, who developed the notion of presupposition, first introduced by Frege, 1892. Strawson claimed that if either (2)(i) or (2)(ii) are false, we cannot assign a truth-value to (1). As he put it, "the question simply does not arise". Quine, 1960, coined the term 'truth-value gap' for such cases, Austin invented the term 'infelicities' (1961, 1962) while Searle, 1969, called such utterances 'defective'. But see Strawson, 1964, where his position is significantly modified. Grice's motivation for trading on conversational implicature in the case of definite descriptions is obvious. By claiming that (2)(i) and (2)(ii) are implicated rather than asserted or presupposed, the two-valued logical system is left intact, while our linguistic intuitions are explained away in a purportedly acceptable way. Thus Grice manages to steer clear of both the presuppositional reef and the assertional reef.

## NOTES

### CONCLUSION

1. Of late quite a few analysts seem to favour an interactional approach to language analysis. Cf. Dascal, 1977, Widdowson, 1979, Motsch, 1980.
2. (86) A : I'm out of petrol.  
B : There's a garage round the corner.  
(2) A : Let's play tennis. B : I have work to do.
3. Cf. Loetscher, 1973, and Sadock, 1972, for examples containing clashes of scripts.
4. Cf. R.H. Turner, 1970, p.474: "... norms are at least partially equatable with expectations".

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