

Reviews

Comptes rendus

Sandrine Zufferey, Jacques Moeschler, and Anne Reboul. 2019. *Implicatures*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 251. \$110.00 (hardback).

Reviewed by Yılmaz Köylü, *The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology*

This book examines implicatures, which constitute a key topic in the study of pragmatics, as they represent a broad array of different types of implied meaning. The book is divided into three parts, each encompassing three chapters: Part I, Theoretical Foundations; Part II, Types of Implicature; and Part III, Empirical Evidence.

Chapter 1, “Ordinary Language Philosophy and the Birth of Pragmatics”, situates the field of pragmatics in the larger study of language. Zufferey, Moeschler, and Reboul (henceforth Zufferey et al.) discuss Grice’s (1975) contribution to pragmatics, properties of implicatures, and the problems with the Gricean approach towards implicatures. The authors make a distinction between sentence meaning, or *what is said*, and speaker meaning, or *what is communicated*. Implicatures are a form of implicit communication that goes beyond linguistic meaning. The authors introduce conventional and conversational implicatures. While the former are context independent and tied to the specific meaning of the words, the latter are context dependent and, according to Grice (1975), can be recovered through the Cooperative Principle, consisting of the maxims of Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner; maxims that speakers adhere to in a conversation or intentionally flout, thus giving rise to conversational implicatures.

In chapter 2, “Linguistic Theory and Pragmatics”, the authors discuss the two ways of representing the relation between linguistic form and sentence meaning: it can either be construed as the output of the computational system of grammar, as in the formalist tradition, or it can be conceptualized as the very input of linguistic structures, as in the functionalist approach. While the formalist tradition proposes a cognitive basis for language and only an indirect connection between language and communication, the functional approaches posit a strong relationship between the two. Zufferey et al. also discuss the code model and the inferential model of

communication. The code model encompasses a process from messages to signals, as well as a decoding process from received signals to received messages. The inferential model revolves around the idea of non-natural meaning, and rests on the assumption that to recognize a speaker's informative intention, the listener must first recognize the communicative intention. The authors maintain that both the formalist and the functionalist approaches endorse a code model for linguistic communication. Nevertheless, as current theories of pragmatics revolve around the inferential model of communication, that leads to an isolation of pragmatic theories from linguistic theories.

Chapter 3 introduces relevance theory by Sperber and Wilson (1986), underscoring how it builds on but also differs from a Gricean view of pragmatics. The authors criticize Grice's theory for not being cognitively grounded, and for proposing an unrealistic account of the ways individuals enrich the meaning of utterances to understand speakers' meanings. In Gricean pragmatics, the hearer is guided by the expectation that utterances should meet certain standards, defined in terms of conversational maxims. According to relevance theory, on the other hand, the Gricean maxims are reduced to an overarching principle of relevance. The authors also refer to a paradigm shift in pragmatics, from an implicit-only to an explicit and implicit view of pragmatics. They discuss metaphors and certain cases of scalar implicatures, implicatures in the Gricean framework, and point out that such cases are categorized as the pragmatic enrichment of the explicitly expressed content of an utterance in relevance theory.

Chapter 4, entitled "Particularized Conversational Implicatures: Why There are Conversational Implicatures", addresses the question whether particularized conversational implicatures exist. The authors first point out how a Gricean account of implicature calculation is not cognitively plausible because it requires hearers to attribute mental states to the speaker, and to compare actual utterances with its alternatives, which the authors claim to be "too costly to take place fast enough for linguistic communication" (p. 86). Zufferey et al. show that neither the Gricean account nor relevance theory can explain why conversational implicatures take place. They state that speakers use conversational implicatures when they have no other way of communicating the same content explicitly, or so that they can deny having had the intention of communicating those implicatures.

Chapter 5, "Conventional Implicature and Presupposition: Formal Semantics and Pragmatics", addresses the notions of presuppositions and conventional implicatures. The authors underline the similarities between them: just like conventional implicatures, presuppositions are non-truth conditional due to their "insensitivity to the truth or falsity of the assertion" (p. 89). Moreover, both types of meanings arise because of a word or a construction, and they are cancellable under metalinguistic negation. Given these similarities, a number of linguists have advocated for categorizing presuppositions as a subtype of implicature. However, as the authors point out, these meanings differ in two crucial dimensions. First, presuppositions are part of the common ground in a conversation, unlike conventional implicatures. Secondly, according to Gazdar (1979: 109), factives, semi-factives, modals and aspectual verbs, and negation "make all the presuppositions of the complement

into presuppositions of the matrix”. Zufferey et al. demonstrate that a word such as *even*, known to trigger conventional implicatures, does not project with factive predicates. The authors thus argue that presuppositions and conventional implicatures are two distinct types of meaning.

Chapter 6, “Generalized Conversational Implicatures: Gricean, Neo-Gricean and Post-Gricean Pragmatics”, mainly focuses on generalized conversational implicatures, detailing how such implicatures are interpreted in the Gricean framework, followed by a reanalysis of those implicatures within the neo-Gricean and post-Gricean pragmatics. The authors define a generalized conversational implicature as an instance where the use of a specific linguistic form triggers an implicature. The chapter focuses on quantitative or scalar implicatures as well as informative implicatures. The authors discuss these implicatures within the neo-Gricean accounts, particularly that of Gazdar (1979) and Horn (1972). A significant contribution of Horn is his reduction of the Gricean conversational maxims and sub-maxims to two core principles (the Q-Principle and the R-Principle). Finally, the authors propose an alternative Gricean approach to account for scalar implicatures, according to which they are not derived by default, but rather due to logical reasoning.

Chapter 7, “Implicatures and Language Processing”, emphasizes the proliferation of psycholinguistic research that evaluates the processing of implicatures thanks to new on-line and off-line methodological designs. The authors define off-line designs as those that assess “the processing cost associated with the use of pragmatically enriched meaning to perform a task once it has been accessed” (p. 148). On-line designs, on the other hand, are those that test the time course of implicature generation in sentence comprehension. Zufferey et al. maintain that the processing of implicatures is usually delayed and more costly compared to other logical interpretations. The authors furthermore state that the processing of generalized implicatures is not easier than the processing of particularized implicatures, a claim due to neo-Gricean accounts. Finally, the authors conclude that the derivation of all implicatures depends on hearers’ attributing mental states to the speaker, as well as their evaluation of the speaker’s communicative goals with respect to politeness.

Chapter 8, “The Acquisition of Implicatures in the Course of First Language Development”, discusses the development of the ability to derive implicatures in a first language. Experimental research on scalar and relevance implicatures indicates that, contrary to a previously held belief, even three-year-old children understand the maxims of conversations. The authors underscore the significance of research design in investigating children’s true pragmatic capabilities. They argue that metapragmatic research designs in which children are asked to reason about a situation and verbally explain their reasoning obscures their pragmatic competence. Hence, to investigate the acquisition of implicatures, researchers need to design pragmatic tasks that require children to perform an action based on linguistic stimuli. The authors conclude that the structural components of language and pragmatics are closely intertwined and bootstrap each other.

Chapter 9, “Implicatures and Second Language Acquisition”, is a review of cross-linguistic and cross-cultural differences regarding how individuals comprehend implicatures in a second language. Zufferey et al. illustrate that Grice’s

conversational maxims are not universal, as social and cultural differences impact the ways indirect meaning is conveyed in various languages, contrary to the previously held assumption that implicature comprehension is a universal cognitive phenomenon and that learners should be able to derive implicatures in a second language by utilizing their first language competence. The authors point out that cultural differences and second language proficiency influence the successful acquisition of conversational implicatures. The authors conclude that explicit teaching of pragmatics benefits second language learners and that such instruction would bootstrap linguistic competence.

There is a critical point that needs to be addressed. In chapter 5, the authors underline that presuppositions and conventional implicatures are two distinct types of meaning and that presuppositions should not be reinterpreted as cases of conventional implicatures. To substantiate their claim, the authors focus on two phenomena: backgrounding and projection. They maintain that presuppositions are backgrounded, and that they project, while conventional implicatures are neither backgrounded, nor can they project. However, the projection issue is not that straightforward. The authors convincingly demonstrate that with factive predicates such as *notice*, presuppositions contained in an embedded clause are passed on to the whole sentence (see examples (41)–(44)). In these contexts, conventional implicatures do not project. Potts (2005), on the other hand, indicates that conventional implicatures, but not presuppositions, routinely project out of attitude complements including predicates such as *believe* and *think*. Karttunen (1973) calls such predicates *presupposition plugs*, as they stop the flow of presuppositions from their complements. To illustrate, in (1), the presupposition that Sam owns a kangaroo, which is triggered by *Sam's kangaroo*, does not project up past the attitude context created by the verb *believe*. Therefore, the speaker can deny the proposition (Potts, 2005).

- (1) Sue believes that Sam's kangaroo is sick, but that's ridiculous – Sam doesn't own a kangaroo. Potts 2005, p. 672

On the contrary, conventional implicatures project past presupposition plugs. In (2) below, the infelicity of the continuation shows that the conventional implicature, *a confirmed psychopath*, conveyed through the parenthetical, projects up past the attitude context created by the verb *believe*.

- (2) Sue believes that Chuck, a confirmed psychopath, is a suitable babysitter – #but Chuck isn't a psychopath. Potts 2005, p. 672

The examples above show that conventional implicatures and presuppositions are two different types of meaning. Nevertheless, the contexts in which they project should be carefully established before making broad generalizations.

The critical concern aside, this book provides an in-depth analysis of different types of implicatures within various frameworks of pragmatics, fruitful discussions regarding where to draw the line between semantic and pragmatic meaning, and an overview of the social and cognitive factors that affect the use of implicatures as well as how they are acquired by children and by second language learners. Thus,

it will appeal to both students and teachers interested in linguistics, psychology, and sociology.

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John A. Goldsmith and **Bernard Laks**. 2019. *Battle in the mind fields*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Pp. xix, 725. \$45 (cloth).

Reviewed by Marc Pierce, *University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX, USA*

The work reviewed here represents “a historical account of some central ideas in modern linguistics — an account of some of the ideas and some of the events surrounding their development, debate, and disposition” (p. ix). It is in some ways not a conventional history of the field (as the authors note in the preface), as it regularly crosses disciplinary boundaries and is not structured solely chronologically. Thus, while the book treats developments in the history of linguistics such as the emergence of linguistics in the nineteenth century and the growth of European Structuralism from 1920–1940, it also looks to neighboring disciplines like philosophy, psychology, and anthropology, as well as to historiographic issues like scholarly generations. The book covers the period up until about 1940; a follow-up volume treating later developments is promised in the preface. The result is a fascinating, engaging book (if one that is not always easy to read, as the authors also acknowledge in the preface) that could use a bit of honing in some places (as discussed below).

After the preface, the volume proper opens with Chapter 1, “Battle in the Mind Fields”, setting out the issues confronted in the book, such as the problem of when exactly linguistics became a “real science” (using numerous quotations from works published between 1838 and 2007, and advancing firm opinions on the issue of assigning proper credit for scholarly advances). This is followed by a chapter on “The Nineteenth Century and Language”, which presents a sweeping overview of some of the era’s main developments, e.g., the contributions of early scholars like