

# Linguistics - Lesson 18 - 2023/01/10

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## More examples re' entailment

a) Mary won a nobel prize in Chemistry

b) Mary is a bright scientist

a does not entail b, but implies it.

If Mary lucked out on a discovery, but isn't actually bright

a) Three of Johns cars are blue

b) John has more than two cars

a entails b

- **equivalence** - If a entails b and b entails a
- **contradiction** - A sentence that can not be true
- **anomaly** - a sentence that semantically does not make sense
- **tautology** - a sentence which is always true, and usually provides no innovation

The book that John wrote was a success, and John never wrote a book

The brave pen drank the book

The sentence is grammatically okay, but the adjective *brave* is associated with animacy, and as such cannot be associated with *pen*. Also, *drank* should refer to a liquid.

- \*John am a teacher
- \*pizza yesterday John eating

The previous sentences are grammatically incorrect, but semantically they make sense

The book is a book

Mary is Mary

The previous sentence is in principle a tautology, but in some cases can be useful

"Mary got 100 in the exam"

"Well, Mary is Mary"

The second Mary in this case, refers to the collection of traits that we associate with Mary.

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We will see another type of semantics later on, "lexical semantics", But we are now moving on to pragmatics.

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## Pragmatics

- **implication** - Everything that is implied from what we say
  - entailment - cannot be cancelled
  - Conversational implicature - Context dependent implication. Out of context it can be cancelled.
    - Can come from general knowledge, specific knowledge that the speakers share
    - Nonverbal communication, facial expressions, intonation

The sentence "If you study you will succeed" does not entail "If you won't study you won't succeed", But in many contexts, can be a strong implicature.

Everything that is implied by what we say can be an entailment, but there are other things that are implied that are called **implicature**.

One participant of a conversation can draw one implicature, and another can draw a very different implicature.

If you stay, I'll order another tray of pizza

Implicature - You need a whole tray of pizza, just for you

Other implicature - If you stay, then the threshold passes to add in another tray.

Semantics deals with fixed meaning, while pragmatics deals with meaning of context.

## How we draw conversational implicatures, and how we get meaning beyond what is actually said.

Grice (1975)

- The cooperation principle

Grice's Maxims

1. Quality
2. Quantity
3. Relevance
4. Manner

**Quality** Speak the truth, or at least speak what you believe is true. provide qualitative information.

**Quantity** Provide information in the right amount, not too little - but also not too much

**Relevance** Provide only information relevant to the speaker/discussion. Can overlap with quantity

**Manner** Provide information in the most appropriate manner

- No stupid jokes
- No yelling

Typically we obey these maxims. We try to provide accurate, relevant information in a clear and concise manner.

But sometimes we violate these maxims. These violations can contribute to implicature.

A conversation between X and Y:

X: Rome is in France, right?

Y<sub>1</sub>: Yes, and the sun rises in the north.

Y is violating quality, in order to convey an opposite meaning, and display a derisive attitude to X's question.

This is an **overt** violation. This means the listener should observe the violation and absorb the implicature

Suppose that instead Y replies as follows:

Y<sub>2</sub>: Yes, and English allows an empty subject position

In this case, X would not understand why there is irrelevant information, would probably be confused and not detect the qualitative violation.

This is an example of a **covert violation** and as a result the intended implicature would not be drawn.

When we get a violation, we have to say:

- Is there a violation?
- which maxim is being violated?
- What is the implicature?
- Is the violation overt or covert?

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X: Would you like to go to the movies with me?

Y: Oh, this cake is so delicious

The implicature is probably Y's disinterest in going out with X

This is a relevance violation.

I would consider this an overt violation, but it is culture dependant and in many cases X may not get the implication

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X is a police officer, looking for John. Y is John's partner and know John is in Eilat

X: Where is John?

Y: John is in the south of Israel

This has a quantitative violation. This is technically true, but does not provide all needed information, even though they know it.

This is a covert violation.