

SoSe 2017 Semantics 2

Conventional Implicature

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$\forall x \dots$
 $\exists x \text{ man}(x) \wedge$
 $\text{bel}(\text{Vlad}, \neg \text{bel}(x))$

Vlad bel. everythg not in L_2

In some cases, the conventional meaning of the words used will determine what is implicated, besides helping to determine what is said. 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. I do not want to say that my utterance of this sentence would be, strictly speaking, false should the consequence in question fail to hold. So some implicatures are conventional

(Grice, quoted from Potts, 2007)

What is the difference between:

"He is an Englishman"

and "he is, therefore, brave"?

Examples of CIs

Thora is a baby, but she is usually quiet.

Descriptive content: Thora is a baby, and she is usually quiet.

CI: Babies are not usually quiet.

Isak is still swimming.

Descriptive:

I. is swimming

CI: *I. was swimming before.*

I. is supposed to be done. ← convers I.

Even Bart passed the test.

Descriptive:

B. passed the test.

CI: *Unexpected that B. passed the test*

Other CI triggers

only

, too

already

yet

therefore

Bart managed to pass the test.

At issue/descriptive:

B. passed the test
CI: B. tried hard to pass

Bart failed to pass the test.

At issue:

B. didn't pass
CI: B. tried to passOnly

Only Bart passed the test.

B. passed the test

CI: No one else passed.

too

Kim passed the test, too!

Kim passed the test.

(I: s.o. else passed
the test.

Others

Honorifics

Ich habe Sie gestern in der U-Bahn gesehen.

Ich habe dich gestern in der U-Bahn gesehen.

At issue:

speaker saw addressee in the
underground.

CI: Sie: there is social distance between

du: informal relation.

Expressive markers

Ich habe den blöden Artikel nicht verstanden.

I have the stupid paper not understood

'I didn't understand the f* paper.'

I've just realised I've got to work out my bloody sales tax.

Köter : at issue: dog
 CI: neg. a Hinde
 Gaul : horse
 CI neg. a #.

Balz
 Göre

~~schwarz~~
 protestant
 deaf / Lamb
 Deaf / gehörlos

And yet more

Apposition
 Lance Armstrong, the cyclist, battled cancer.
 at issue: CA battled cancer

CI: LA is a cyclist

Max won the election, which surprised Ali. *NR is*

Max won the election

CI: This surprised A.

Thoughtfully, Jenny picked up her little sister at school.

↑
 CI

at issue

Properties of CI

entailment

presupposition

CI

conversational implicature

Calculable

(7) A: What city does Sam live in?
B: Well, I know he lives in France.

B's calculation:

- i. The city-level information is relevant in this context.
- ii. A cooperative speaker like B will generally provide all the relevant content she can within the limits of her knowledge.
- iii. Thus, B must be conversationally implicating that she does not have specific knowledge about where Sam lives in France.

entailment: no

presupposition: no

CI: no

conversational implicature: YES

Maleable/cancellable/deniable

(7') A: What country does Sam live in?
B: Well, I know he lives in France.

We don't derive: "B does not have specific knowledge about where Sam lives in France."

There is a boy but
she is usually
quiet.
She just jumped
into the water. He is still
swimming.

entailment: no

presupposition: YES

CI: no

conversational implicature: YES

Reinforcable

(7") A: What city does Sam live in?

B: Well, I know he lives in France, but I don't know the city.

Lance Armstrong, the cyclist, battled cancer. #He is (also) a cyclist.

entailment: YES

presupposition: no

CI: no

conversational implicature: YES

Presupposition vs. CI

CI:

but

Lance is a cyclist. #Lance, the cyclist, battled cancer.

Presup:

Lance is a cyclist. But the reporter did not realize that Lance was a cyclist until after their interview.

Explicitly backgrounded presupposition is ok, CI is not.

Projection out of attitude predicates

Presup:

Sue believes that Sam's kangaroo is sick, but that's ridiculous — Sam doesn't own a kangaroo.

CI:

Sue believes that Chuck, a confirmed psychopath, is a suitable babysitter — #but Chuck isn't a psychopath.

Independent truth

If a presupposition is false, the sentence cannot be interpreted.

If a CI is false, the rest of the sentence still can be interpreted.

Kim, who is your best friend, is traveling to Spain.

$\text{travel-spain}(k) \wedge \text{bf}(k)$

Kim's wife is traveling to Spain.

$\exists x (\text{wife-of}(k, x) : \text{travel-sp}(x))$

Sam believes

that I. is still

swimming.

- which is untrue,

because I ~~have~~ haven't
swimming before.

Sam believes that
LA, the role model,
can be T or F
So we know that
LA isn't a role model.

CIs vs. descriptive/at issue meaning

CIs are assertorically inert

A: Kim, who is your best friend, is traveling to Spain.

B: No, that's wrong./ No, I disagree.

CIs are scopally inert

(i.e. they do not interact with scopal elements of the embedding clause)

It is false that Archie is a zombie but also a first-rate jazz musician.

a.) not(Archie is a zombie and a first-rate jazz musician)

b.) Being a zombie usually precludes being a first-rate jazz musician

But: embedding in speech-contexts possible:

Marv: Shaq is huge but he is agile.

a. Marv said that Shaq is huge but that he is agile.

b. Marv said that Shaq is huge and that he is agile.

CI: What to do with them?

- CIs are triggered by lexical items and/or constructions
- They are not at-issue and project over negation, and attitude predicates, though, probably, not over embedded speech operators
- They are truth-conditionally independent of the embedding sentence
- They typically contribute material that is not fully given in the context, but do not put it out for discussion

For next week

- Read Potts 2007
- For an LRS encoding: What could a CI-percolation mechanism look like?

References

Potts, Christopher. 2007. Into the conventional-implicature dimension.
Philosophy Compass 4(2):665-679.
<http://web.stanford.edu/~cgpotts/papers/potts-conventional-implicature-compass.pdf>