

# Article

## ***The Pragmatics of What is Said***

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### **1. *The Gricean Picture***

According to Paul Grice, the meaning of a sentence conventionally determines, or helps to determine, what is literally said by uttering the sentence (the literal truth-conditions of the utterance); for example, the meaning of the sentence 'I have not had breakfast today' determines that, if S utters the sentence on a certain day, what he thereby says is that he has had no breakfast on that day. The meaning of the sentence also determines other, non-truth-conditional aspects of utterance meaning, like those responsible for the difference between 'and' and 'but'. In this paper, I will not be concerned with these 'conventional implicatures', as Grice calls them, but only with Grice's distinction between what is said and the 'conversational' implicatures of the utterance. Conversational implicatures are part of what the utterance communicates, but they are not conventionally determined by the meaning of the sentence; they are pragmatically rather than semantically determined. For example, in saying that he has had no breakfast, S may convey to his audience that he is hungry and wishes to be fed. As Grice pointed out, the generation of conversational implicatures can be accounted for by connecting them with certain general principles or 'maxims' of conversation that participants in a talk-exchange are mutually expected to observe. In the Gricean framework, conversational implicatures are contextual implications of the utterance act—they are the assumptions that follow from the speaker's saying what he says together with the presumption that he is observing the maxims of conversation.

Since what is communicated includes a pragmatic, nonconventional element, *viz.* the conversational implicatures, the fact that a given expression receives different interpretations in different contexts does not imply that it is semantically ambiguous. The intuitive difference in meaning can be accounted for at the semantic level, by positing two different

literal meanings, but it can also be accounted for at the pragmatic level, by positing a conversational implicature which in some contexts combines with what is literally said. Take, for example, the sentence 'P or Q'. It can receive an inclusive or an exclusive interpretation. Instead of saying that 'or' is ambiguous in English, we may consider it as unambiguously inclusive, and account for the exclusive reading by saying that in some contexts the utterance conversationally implicates that 'P' and 'Q' are not both true. When there is such a conversational implicature, the overall meaning of the utterance is clearly exclusive, even though what is strictly and literally said corresponds to the logical formula 'P  $\vee$  Q'.

When an intuitive 'ambiguity' can be accounted for either at the semantic level, by positing two different literal meanings, or at the pragmatic level, by positing a conversational implicature, the pragmatic account is to be preferred, according to Grice. This is the substance of the methodological principle he called 'Modified Occam's Razor': *Senses are not to be multiplied beyond necessity* (Grice 1978, pp. 118–9). This is a principle of theoretical parsimony, like Occam's Razor. Pragmatic explanations, when available, are to be preferred because they are economical, in the sense that the principles and assumptions they appeal to are very general and independently motivated. By contrast, positing a semantic ambiguity is an *ad hoc*, costly move—a move which the possibility of a pragmatic analysis makes entirely superfluous.

The Gricean picture which I have just presented has been enormously influential, and rightly so; but it raises a problem which has been recognized only recently. The problem is connected with the notion that sentence meaning conventionally determines what is said. It must be noted from the outset that Grice is rather cautious in his formulation. Vaguely enough, he ascribes to what is said the property of being 'closely related to the conventional meaning of words' (Grice 1975, p. 44). But how closely? Recent work in pragmatics has shown that the gap between the conventional meaning of the words and what is said by uttering them is wider than was previously acknowledged. As a result, it is no longer possible to contrast 'what is said' with those aspects of the interpretation of utterances that are pragmatically rather than semantically determined; for what is said turns out to be, in a large measure, pragmatically determined. Besides the conversational implicatures, which are external to (and combine with) what is said, there are other nonconventional, pragmatic aspects of utterance meaning, which are constitutive of what is said. The specific issue I want to address in this paper is that of the criteria that can be used to distinguish conversational implicatures from pragmatic constituents of what is said; in particular, I want to discuss a proposal made by Robyn Carston in a recent paper (Carston 1988). Before doing so, however, I shall briefly identify those aspects of the Gricean picture that are inconsistent with due recognition of the pragmatic determination of what is said.

## 2. Pragmatic Determinants of What is Said

Grice is aware that what is said depends not only on the conventional meaning of the words but also on the context of utterance. What is said by uttering 'I have not had breakfast today' depends on who is speaking and when. This is why there is a difference between the conventional meaning of words and what is said by uttering the words. The conventional meaning of the words determines, or helps to determine, what is said, but it cannot be identified with what is said.

But what does it mean to say that sentence meaning conventionally determines what is said? A common answer is that sentence meaning is a 'function' from context onto propositions; it is a rule which determines, for every context, what is said by uttering the sentence in that context. Similarly, the meaning of a word like 'I' is a function that takes us from a context of utterance to the semantic value of the word in that context, this semantic value (the reference of 'I') being what the word contributes to the proposition expressed by the utterance. On this view, made popular by David Kaplan's work on the logic of demonstratives (Kaplan 1977), what is said by an utterance depends not only on the conventional meaning of the words but also on the context of utterance; however, recourse to the context of utterance is guided and controlled by the conventional meaning of the words. The meaning of 'I' tells us what to look for in the context of utterance for a full identification of what is said; once the context is given, what is said can be automatically decoded.

Neat and attractive though it is, this view of the matter is quite unrealistic. In general, even if we know who is speaking, when, to whom, and so forth, the conventional meaning of the words falls short of supplying enough information to exploit this knowledge of the context so as to secure understanding of what is said. Consider a simple example, 'He has bought John's book'. To understand what is said, one must identify the intended referent of 'he'. At most, the conventional meaning of 'he' imposes that the referent be male, but this allegedly necessary condition is certainly not sufficient and does not uniquely identify the referent in the context of utterance. The meaning of the word 'he' provides no 'rule', no criterion enabling one to identify the reference. The meaning of the sentence, in this case as in many others, seriously underdetermines what is said. Nor is this underdetermination limited to the reference of referring expressions. To understand what is said by 'He has bought John's book', one must identify the referent of 'he', of 'John' and (perhaps) of 'John's book'. But one must also identify the relation that is supposed to hold between John and the book. According to Kay and Zimmer 1970, p. 29, 'genitive locutions present the hearer with two nouns and a metalinguistic instruction that there is a relation between these two nouns that the hearer must supply'. 'John's book' therefore means something like 'the book that bears relation  $x$  to John'. To understand what is said by means of a sentence in which the expression 'John's book' occurs, this meaning must be contextually

enriched by instantiating the variable 'x'. In other words, not only the reference but the descriptive sense of the expression 'John's book' is context-dependent. Moreover, as in the case of 'he', there is no rule or function taking us from the context to the relevant semantic value. The only constraint linguistically imposed on the relation between John and the book is that it be a relation between John and the book.

The purpose of this paper not being to review the literature on context-dependence, I will not proceed with further examples. I will simply assume (1) that context-dependence extends far beyond reference assignment, and (2) that it is generally 'free' rather than 'controlled', in the sense that the linguistic meaning of a context-sensitive expression constrains its possible semantic values but does not consist in a 'rule' or 'function' taking us from context to semantic value.

Up to this point we need not depart from the Gricean picture, but simply enrich it. We have three levels of meaning: sentence meaning, what is said, and what is communicated. What is communicated includes not only what is said but also the conversational implicatures of the utterance.<sup>1</sup> The mechanism of implicature generation suggested by Grice is intended to account for the step from what is said to what is communicated. But how are we to account for the step from sentence meaning to what is said? What bridges the gap instituted by there being a 'free' type of context-dependence pervasive in natural language? Grice does not address this issue. However, as many people have suggested (e.g. Wilson and Sperber 1981, p. 156), the pragmatic apparatus by means of which Grice accounts for conversational implicatures can also be used to account for the determination of what is said on the basis of sentence meaning. In the interpretation process, the referent of 'he' and the relation between John and the book in 'He has bought John's book' are selected so as to make what the speaker says consistent with the presumption that he is observing the maxims of conversation. The speaker might have meant that Jim has bought the book written by John or that Bob has bought the book sought by John. The hearer will select the interpretation that makes the speaker's utterance consistent with the presumption that he is trying to say something true and relevant.

Once the Gricean picture is enriched in the manner indicated, a problem arises. Implicit in the Gricean picture is the assumption that there are two, and only two, ways of accounting for *prima facie* ambiguities: the semantic approach, which posits a multiplicity of literal meanings, and the pragmatic approach, which posits a conversational implicature. Modified Occam's Razor provides a reason to prefer the latter approach, when it can be implemented, to the former. These two approaches correspond to the two

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<sup>1</sup> The opposition between what is said and the conversational implicatures survives the claim that what is said is conventionally determined by the meaning of the sentence. *Qua* assumptions following from the speaker's saying what he says, conversational implicatures are, by definition, external to what is said.

basic levels of meaning that are distinguished in the Gricean picture: sentence meaning, which determines what is literally said, and the utterance's overall meaning, which comprises not only what is said but everything that happens to be communicated, including the conversational implicatures. The semantic approach locates the ambiguity at the level of sentence meaning, while the pragmatic approach considers that it is generated only at the level of what is communicated. But in the enriched Gricean picture, there are three basic levels of meaning rather than two: sentence meaning, what is said, and what is communicated. A pragmatic process is involved not only to get from what is said to what is communicated but also to get from sentence meaning to what is said. It follows that there are three ways of accounting for *prima facie* ambiguities rather than just two. Besides the semantic approach, which locates the ambiguity at the first level, that of sentence meaning, there are two pragmatic approaches, corresponding to the second and third levels of meaning (what is said and what is communicated). The classical Gricean approach considers that what is said is the same on all readings of the 'ambiguous' utterance, the difference between the readings being due to a conversational implicature which, in some contexts, combines with what is literally said. The other pragmatic approach considers that the difference is a difference in what is said, even though the sentence itself is not ambiguous; this is possible owing to the semantic underdetermination of what is said.<sup>2</sup>

The important point is that Modified Occam's Razor does not support the approach in terms of conversational implicature as against the other pragmatic approach; it only says that a pragmatic approach is to be preferred, *ceteris paribus*, to a semantic approach. Hence, enriching the Gricean picture in the manner indicated has the result that the classical Gricean approach to multiple readings in terms of conversational implicature can no longer be justified by appealing to Modified Occam's Razor, as it could when it was assumed to be the only pragmatic alternative to a semantic approach. The classical Gricean approach is threatened by the appearance of a pragmatic rival.

Consider, as an example, Donnellan's distinction between two uses of definite descriptions. Donnellan held that what is said by an utterance of 'Smith's murderer is insane' is different according to whether the description 'Smith's murderer' is used attributively or referentially. On the attributive interpretation, what is said is true if and only if there is one and only

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<sup>2</sup> It may be argued that there are not only different pragmatic approaches to *prima facie* ambiguities, but also different semantic approaches. Thus Cohen opposes to the standard 'insulationist' semantics an 'interactionist' semantics in terms of which, he says, those *prima facie* ambiguities which Grice handles within the implicature framework can be accounted for in a way that is immune to Modified Occam's Razor (Cohen 1971, p. 56; for a recent statement of the interactionist point of view, see Cohen 1986). I shall not address this issue in this paper; the Gricean picture will be questioned only as far as the pragmatic approach is concerned.

one person who murdered Smith and he is insane. But if the description 'Smith's murderer' is used to refer to a certain person, Jones, who is known to have murdered Smith, rather than in general to whomever murdered Smith, then the utterance is true if and only if *Jones* is insane: Jones's being the murderer of Smith is no more part of the truth-condition of what is said, on this 'referential' interpretation, than my being the speaker is part of the truth-condition of what I say when I utter the sentence 'I am insane'. This was Donnellan's view. Now a large number of competent philosophers have used the Gricean picture to argue against it. In doing so, they have taken for granted that there are only two possible approaches to Donnellan's distinction: a semantic approach, according to which the literal meaning of the sentence and, therefore, what is said, is different on the referential and the attributive reading, and a pragmatic approach, according to which what is said on both readings is the same (*viz.* that there is a unique murderer of Smith and he is insane), the referential reading being only distinguished at the level of what is communicated. Using Modified Occam's Razor as an argument for the pragmatic approach, they concluded that Donnellan was wrong to locate the difference between the two readings at the level of what is said. This argument against Donnellan's view is clearly fallacious; it relies on the mistaken assumption that there are only two possible accounts, a semantic account and a pragmatic account in terms of conversational implicature. But this is not so: another type of pragmatic account is possible, which incorporates Donnellan's view, according to which the difference between the referential and the attributive reading is a difference in what is said. On this approach, which I have developed elsewhere (Recanati 1989), the sentence 'Smith's murderer is insane' is not ambiguous, yet it can be used to express either a general or a singular proposition, depending on the context of utterance. Modified Occam's Razor provides no reason to prefer to this account an account in terms of conversational implicature; on the contrary, as I try to show in the paper referred to above, considerations of theoretical economy tend to favour the pragmatic account that incorporates Donnellan's view.

Another example is provided by Carston's pragmatic analysis of conjoined utterances (Carston 1988). In some contexts, a conjunctive utterance 'P and Q' conveys the notion that the event described in the second conjunct occurred after the event described in the first conjunct; thus 'They got married and had many children' is not intuitively synonymous with 'They had many children and got married'. However, what is strictly and literally said is in both cases the same thing, according to Grice; the temporal ordering, which is responsible for the intuitive difference between the two examples, is conversationally implicated rather than part of what is said. Modified Occam's Razor dictates that this approach be preferred to a semantic approach ascribing to 'and' a temporal sense to account for this type of use and a non-temporal sense to account for other uses (such as 'Jane had three children and Mary two', in which no temporal

ordering is suggested). However, as Robyn Carston has shown, another pragmatic account is possible, according to which the temporal ordering is part of what is said by means of 'They got married and had many children', even though 'and' is ascribed a single, non-temporal sense at the semantic level.<sup>3</sup> Modified Occam's Razor provides no reason to prefer to this account the classical Gricean account in terms of conversational implicature.<sup>4</sup>

To sum up: Enriching the Gricean picture to take into account the

<sup>3</sup> Carston's pragmatic account is, roughly, the following. To determine what is said by means of the sentence 'They got married and had many children', the hearer must assign a reference to each of the referring expressions, including the past tense 'got married' and 'had'. Just as pragmatic principles are employed in ascertaining the referent of 'they', so, Carston says, they are used in assigning temporal reference. The hearer goes beyond the strict semantic content of the sentence uttered, and on the basis of contextual assumptions and pragmatic principles recovers from 'They got married and had many children' a representation such as 'John and Mary got married at  $t$  and had many children at  $t + n$ '. ' $t$  is some more or less specific time prior to the time of utterance and  $t + n$  is some more or less specific time, later than  $t$ . The temporal ordering of the events described in the conjuncts is thus treated as a by-product of the reference assignment process involved in determining "what is said"' (Carston 1988, p. 161). This suggested analysis raises some problems when the past tense is replaced by the present perfect, as in example (3) below, because the present perfect can hardly be considered as referring to a specific time. (In familiar terms, the present perfect is used to express general propositions of the type: 'There is a time  $t$ , prior to the time of utterance, such that blah blah', while it makes sense to say that the past tense is 'singular' and refers to a specific time  $t$  which must be contextually identified—with more or less precision—for the utterance to express a complete proposition.) I shall not discuss this issue in this paper; I am concerned only with the *type* of analysis Carston puts forward—a pragmatic analysis at the level of what is said. Whether or not the details of her analysis are correct is another matter.

<sup>4</sup> In the light of Carston's suggestion concerning 'and' we may reconsider Grice's use of Modified Occam's Razor against ordinary language philosophers, to whom he ascribed the semantic view, i.e. the notion that 'and', 'or', etc. are multiply ambiguous in English. The main reason why this view was ascribed to ordinary language philosophers like Strawson is the following: they held that what is said by uttering a sentence such as 'P or Q' or 'P and Q' varies according to the context of utterance; they considered that the truth conditions of an utterance of one of these sentences were not invariant under contextual change. Thus, 'P and Q' is sometimes true if the event described in the second conjunct occurred before (or simultaneously with) that described in the first conjunct, and sometimes not; 'P or Q' is sometimes true if 'P' and 'Q' are both true, and sometimes not. This way of putting the matter is certainly inconsistent with the classical Gricean approach, which assumes that what is said is the same on all readings, the difference being located at the level of implicatures. It was therefore natural to ascribe to ordinary philosophers the semantic approach, on the assumption that there are only two possible approaches, the semantic approach and the approach in terms of conversational implicature. However, this assumption must be abandoned, and the possibility of a pragmatic approach in terms of what is said acknowledged. Once this is done, Modified Occam's Razor no longer provides any reason to reject the claim that sentences such as 'P and Q' can be used to say different things in different contexts; for this claim no longer implies that sentences such as 'P and Q' are semantically ambiguous, and that 'and' has a range of different senses in English. (For a fuller defence of ordinary language philosophers along these lines, see Travis 1985.)

semantic underdetermination of what is said implies rejecting an assumption implicit in the Gricean picture, namely the assumption that there are two, and only two, possible approaches to *prima facie* ambiguities, the semantic approach and the pragmatic approach in terms of implicature. Once this assumption is abandoned, the classical Gricean treatment of *prima facie* ambiguities in terms of implicature is considerably weakened; instead of enjoying the privileges of monopoly, it has to compete with another pragmatic approach. This raises a central issue, which is the main topic of this paper: that of the criteria that can be used in adjudicating between the different pragmatic approaches. When should a pragmatically determined aspect of utterance meaning be considered as a conversational implicature, and when should it be considered as constitutive of what is said? In what follows, I shall consider four possible answers to this question, i.e. four criteria that could be used to decide whether a given aspect of meaning is a conversational implicature or a pragmatic constituent of what is said.

### 3. *The Minimalist Principle*

The first possible criterion, the Minimalist Principle, can be stated as follows:

*Minimalist Principle:* A pragmatically determined aspect of meaning is part of what is said if and only if its determination is necessary for the utterance to express a complete proposition.

The Minimalist Principle entails what Carston (1988) calls the 'linguistic direction principle'. To every pragmatically determined aspect of meaning that is part of what is said, there corresponds a slot in the meaning of the sentence which must be filled for the utterance to be truth-evaluable. Context-sensitive expressions, such as 'he' or the genitive, set up such slots, which in some cases at least can be represented as variables in need of contextual instantiation. It follows, by the Minimalist Principle, that the pragmatic determination of the referent of 'he' and of the relation between John and the book contributes to determining what is said by uttering the sentence 'He has bought John's book'. By contrast, conversational implicatures are not part of what is said, because the utterance expresses a complete proposition without them. (Since conversational implicatures follow from the speaker's saying what he says, the generation of a conversational implicature presupposes that something has been said.)

Most theorists assume that to get from the meaning of the sentence to the proposition expressed, one has only to disambiguate the sentence, i.e. to select one of its possible readings, and to instantiate a few indexical variables. That semantic underdetermination goes beyond mere indexical-



ity is often neglected, as is the fact that the contextual instantiation of many variables is 'free' rather than 'controlled'. In other words, the gap between sentence meaning and what is said is generally underestimated. But the Minimalist Principle itself might be considered as a manifestation of the general tendency to underestimate this gap. Once it is recognized that there are more variables than just indexical variables, and that the contextual instantiation of variables is not always linguistically controlled, why not go one step further and reject the Minimalist Principle itself? Why not question the claim that nothing more is needed to go from sentence meaning to what is said than just disambiguation and variable instantiation?

Following Sperber & Wilson, but more explicitly, Robyn Carston has taken this step (Carston 1988). She thinks that the Minimalist Principle must be rejected: what it presents as a necessary and sufficient condition is only sufficient, according to her. Consider sentences (1) and (2):

- (1) It will take us some time to get there.
- (2) I have had breakfast.

Once the identity of the speaker and hearer, the time of utterance and the reference of 'there' is determined, no further slot needs to be filled for an utterance of (1) to express a complete proposition. The proposition we get at this point is the truistic proposition that there is a lapse of time (of some length or other) between our departure, or some other point of reference, and our arrival at a certain place. But, according to Carston, who borrows this example from Sperber and Wilson 1986, pp. 186–90, this is not the proposition actually expressed; to get the latter, we need to go beyond the minimal proposition expressible by the sentence and enrich it by pragmatically specifying the relevant lapse of time as rather long (longer than expected, perhaps). This contextual specification is constitutive of what is said, yet it is not necessary for the sentence to express a definite proposition. It follows that the Minimalist Principle must be rejected. In the same way, according to Sperber and Wilson, once the identity of the speaker and the time of utterance has been fixed, (2) expresses a proposition, viz. the proposition that the speaker has had breakfast at least once before the time of utterance. This proposition, which would be true if the speaker had had breakfast twenty years earlier and never since, does not correspond to what the speaker means to say when he utters 'I have had breakfast'. What the speaker says goes beyond the minimal proposition expressible, contrary to what the Minimalist Principle predicts.

In Sperber and Wilson's framework, three processes are involved in getting from sentence meaning to what is said: disambiguation, fixation of reference and enrichment. The notion of enrichment, for them, covers things as different as the determination of the relation between John and the book in 'He has bought John's book' and the determination of the

length of the lapse of time mentioned in 'It will take us some time to get there'. In the first case, the meaning of the sentence sets up a slot (representable as a variable: 'He has bought the book that bears relation  $x$  to John') that must be contextually filled for the utterance to express a complete proposition. This type of enrichment I shall call 'saturation'; it is not essentially different from the fixation of reference, but rather includes it as a particular case, since referential expressions themselves set up slots to be contextually filled for the utterance to express a complete proposition. In the other case, the enrichment of 'some time' into something more specific is not needed for the utterance to express a complete proposition, but for the proposition expressed to correspond to what the speaker means by his utterance. The input to this second type of enrichment is a complete proposition, and the output is a richer proposition, i.e. one that entails the input proposition. I shall refer to this type of enrichment as 'strengthening'. Sperber and Wilson's claim that the proposition expressed is obtained from the disambiguated meaning of the sentence not only by saturation but also by strengthening is inconsistent with the Minimalist Principle, according to which the proposition expressed—what is said—just is the minimal proposition expressible by the utterance, i.e. what results from simply saturating the disambiguated meaning of the sentence.

I find Sperber and Wilson's proposal very interesting. The Minimalist Principle seems arbitrary, and there may be good reasons to get rid of it. (One such reason, perhaps, is that the Minimalist Principle leads to implausible semantic hypotheses when taken in conjunction with two principles I shall introduce later—the Availability Principle and the Scope Principle.) Still, the matter is controversial, and I think caution is called for; the Minimalist Principle should not be dropped too lightly.

The examples given by Sperber and Wilson do not, in my opinion, require giving up the traditional framework: it is easy to handle these examples without dropping the Minimalist Principle. One obvious way to do so is to adopt the analysis in terms of conversational implicature, according to which the person who utters (2) 'says' that he has had breakfast at least once, and 'implicates' that this happened on the very day of utterance. (On this analysis, the proposition expressed—what is said—is the 'minimal' proposition expressible.) Sperber and Wilson do not agree with this analysis; neither do I. The reason why it seems unacceptable will be spelled out in the next section. What matters for my present purposes is that the analysis in terms of conversational implicature is not the only way to handle the examples without dropping the Minimalist Principle. Sperber and Wilson reject it because they believe that a pragmatically determined aspect of the meaning of (1) and (2) is such that:

- (a) it is constitutive of what is said, and
- (b) its determination is not necessary for the utterance to express a complete proposition.

This conjunction of (a) and (b) is inconsistent with the Minimalist Prin-

ciple, which says that a pragmatically determined aspect of the meaning of an utterance is part of what is said if and only if its contextual determination is necessary for the utterance to express a complete proposition. However, the Minimalist Principle is not inconsistent with (a) or (b) taken separately. Defenders of the implicature analysis accept (b) but reject (a); they are thus able to maintain the Minimalist Principle. But there is another treatment, consistent with the Minimalist Principle: one may accept (a) but reject (b), i.e. consider that the relevant aspect of the meaning of (1) and (2) is constitutive of what is said (and therefore not a conversational implicature), while insisting that its contextual determination is necessary for the utterance to express a complete proposition. Let me briefly sketch this minimalist treatment of examples (1) and (2).

Both (1) and (2) can be analysed in terms of quantification. (1) quantifies over durations (it says that there is a duration  $t$  such that it will take us  $t$  to get there) and (2) quantifies over events (it says that there is a past event which is the speaker's having breakfast). Now, quantification involves a certain amount of context-dependence, because, in general, the domain of quantification has to be contextually specified. For example, it can be argued that the sentence 'Everybody went to Paris', by itself, does not express a complete proposition—not even the proposition that everybody in the world went to Paris: what it says is that everybody in some domain  $x$  went to Paris, and the context helps to instantiate the variable 'x'. (On this view, the variable 'x' may be contextually instantiated so as to make 'everybody in the world' the right interpretation, but this interpretation is no less contextual than any other interpretation.<sup>5</sup>) Suppose we accept this view. Then, in the case of (1), (2) and other utterances involving quantification, there is a slot to be filled, corresponding to the domain of quantification. It follows that the specific interpretations of (1) and (2), which Carston and Sperber and Wilson present as counterexamples to the Minimalist Principle, are perfectly consistent with the latter—one merely has to define the domain of quantification in an appropriate way. In the case of (1), we might say that the domain of quantification is a set of durations, contextually restricted to those that are long enough to be worth mentioning in connection with the process of our going there. (In this framework, the interpretation of (1) which corresponds to the so-called 'minimal proposition' expressible—the proposition that it will take us 'some time or other' to get there—is just the unlikely interpretation in which the domain of quantification is contextually identified with the set of all possible durations, including milliseconds.) In the case of (2), we might say that the domain of quantification is a time interval, or rather a set of happenings defined by a time interval. This allows us to account for the intuitive difference between 'I've had breakfast' and 'I've been to Tibet' (Sperber and Wilson 1986, pp. 189–90). In both cases, what is conveyed by virtue of linguistic meaning alone is that, in some temporal domain  $x$  prior

<sup>5</sup> For further discussion of this example, see below, section 4.

to the time of utterance, there is a certain event, viz. the speaker's having breakfast or his going to Tibet; but in the first case, the time interval is contextually restricted to the day of utterance, while in the second case the relevant interval is more extended and covers the speaker's life (up to the time of utterance).

According to the view I have just outlined, it is a mistake to believe that (1) and (2) express complete propositions once the obvious indexical variables (identity of the speaker and hearer, time of utterance, reference of 'there') have been instantiated; a slot remains to be filled, which corresponds to the domain of quantification. It follows that the Minimalist Principle can be retained even though one accepts thesis (a) above, *i.e.* even though one considers that what is said by means of (1) and (2) is that it will take us a *long* time to get there or that the speaker has had breakfast *on the day of utterance*. Far from being added to an already complete proposition, the pragmatic specifications I have just italicized result from filling a slot, a slot that must be filled in some way or other for the utterance to express a complete proposition.

Not only is it the case that (1), (2) and similar 'counterexamples' to the Minimalist Principle *can* be handled in terms of saturation, without giving up minimalism, but I also believe that, in many such cases, a saturation-based account is actually preferable to an alternative account in terms of strengthening. Consider, for example, the sentence 'One boy came'. It can be used to say something quite specific, namely that *one of the boys in the class* came. This seems to be a typical case of strengthening: 'One boy came' might be said to express the 'minimal' proposition that at least one boy came, which minimal proposition is entailed by the richer proposition 'At least one of the boys in the class came' (if one of the boys in the class came, then one boy came); the notion of strengthening therefore applies in a straightforward manner. But this account is not general enough, as can be seen by considering other cases, which look very similar but are far more difficult to handle in terms of strengthening. Thus, the sentence 'Every boy came' can be used to say that every boy in the class came; the problem here is that the output proposition, *i.e.* the proposition that every boy in the class came, does not entail the input proposition, viz. the 'minimal' proposition that every boy (*i.e.* every boy in the world!) came. Because of this problem, the account in terms of strengthening seems less attractive than the minimalist account in terms of a contextually variable domain of quantification.

The same type of problem arises in connection with examples such as (2). 'I have had breakfast' can be used to say that the speaker has had breakfast on the day of utterance, even though, according to Sperber and Wilson, the minimal proposition expressible by this sentence is the proposition that the speaker has had breakfast at least once (but not necessarily on the day of utterance). This can be accounted for in terms of strengthening, because the proposition that the speaker has had breakfast on the day of utterance entails the proposition that he has had breakfast

at least once in his life. But what about the similar utterance 'I have not had breakfast'? It can be used to say that the speaker has not had breakfast on the day of utterance, but this cannot be straightforwardly accounted for in terms of strengthening, because the proposition that the speaker has had no breakfast on the day of utterance does not entail the proposition that he has never eaten breakfast in his life. Here again, because of its greater generality, the minimalist account presented above looks more attractive than the alternative account in terms of strengthening.<sup>6</sup>

Shall we conclude from this discussion that the Minimalist Principle is to be retained after all? That would be excessive. With respect to examples other than those I have discussed, a strengthening-based account, inconsistent with the Minimalist Principle, may well seem more attractive or plausible than a saturation-based one. My discussion merely shows that the matter is not as simple as one might think after reading Carston and Sperber and Wilson. Whether or not one should ultimately stick to the Minimalist Principle thus remains an open question.

In any event, I will now attempt to show that, even if there *were* decisive arguments in favour of the Minimalist Principle, the latter could not be used as a working criterion for distinguishing implicatures from the pragmatic aspects of what is said. In the next section, I will introduce another criterion, the Availability Principle, which is implicitly appealed to by those who reject the implicature analysis of (1) and (2). I will argue that this is the right criterion to use.

The Minimalist Principle states a biconditional: A pragmatically determined aspect of meaning is part of what is said if and only if its determination is necessary for the utterance to express a complete proposition. It follows that the Minimalist Principle can be used to decide whether a pragmatically determined aspect of utterance meaning is part of what is said, *provided* one knows whether or not the pragmatic determination of this aspect of meaning is necessary for the utterance to express a complete proposition. The qualification is important: the Minimalist Principle *per se* cannot be used to tell whether a pragmatically determined aspect of meaning is part of what is said; it can only be used to that effect if a decision has already been made concerning the variables that have to be contextually instantiated for the utterance to express a complete proposition. In other words:

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<sup>6</sup> To save the account in terms of strengthening, the notion of *local strengthening* could be introduced. For example, in the case of 'Every boy came', we might say that it is the predicate 'boy' that is strengthened into 'boy in the class', rather than the proposition 'Every boy came' into 'Every boy in the class came'. This seems to work because the predicate 'boy in the class' does entail the predicate 'boy'. In the same way, we might say that the strengthening in 'I have not had breakfast' applies not to the global proposition but, within the latter, to the proposition that is negated: 'I have had breakfast' is strengthened into 'I have had breakfast this morning', and this is negated.

- (M) For any (pragmatically determined) aspect *a* of the meaning of an utterance, the Minimalist Principle can be used to decide whether *a* is a conversational implicature or an integral part of what is said only if one already knows whether or not the determination of *a* is necessary for the utterance to express a complete proposition, i.e. only if one already possesses a semantic analysis of the sentence uttered.

This immediately raises a problem. According to (M), the Minimalist Principle cannot be used to make a decision concerning what is said unless we already know precisely what the meaning of the sentence is. But this puts the cart before the horse: far from proceeding in that order, we generally start with some intuition concerning what is said (or, at least, what is communicated), and end up with a theory about what the sentence means. As I emphasize in the next section, sentence meaning is something more abstract and theoretical than what is said or what is communicated. For this reason, I believe that the Minimalist Principle does not actually provide a criterion for distinguishing implicatures from pragmatic aspects of what is said, because we do *not* possess a semantic analysis of the sentence ahead of any decision concerning what is said. The Minimalist Principle is more properly seen as providing a criterion for determining the semantic analysis of the sentence, on the basis of a prior, intuitive identification of what is said. For example, suppose that a theorist has decided in favour of (a) and believes, on an intuitive basis, that a certain pragmatically determined aspect of meaning is part of what is said. If he accepts the Minimalist Principle, he is led to posit a slot in the meaning of the sentence that must be filled for the utterance to express a complete proposition—a slot that corresponds to the pragmatically determined aspect of meaning which, by virtue of (a), he considers as part of what is said. Suppose, on the contrary, that he rejects (a). In this case, he must refrain from positing such a slot in the meaning of the sentence, for if there were one, the corresponding aspect of utterance meaning would be part of what is said, by virtue of the Minimalist Principle. Acceptance of the Minimalist Principle thus makes some semantic hypotheses look more attractive than others; it provides a criterion for choosing among alternative theories concerning the linguistic meaning of sentence. This is not the same thing as a criterion for determining what is said.

Considered as a criterion for selecting hypotheses about sentence meaning, the Minimalist Principle may well be retained, at least provisionally.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> I believe the Minimalist Principle has a methodological role to play, independent of its ultimate validity as a theoretical principle. In a recent paper (Recanati 1989, pp. 244–6), I called attention to a strategy that has dominated semantics to date and impedes the progress of pragmatics: the 'Anti-Contextualist Strategy', which consists in minimizing context-sensitivity. Whether true or false, the Minimalist Principle could certainly be used as part of an opposite, 'contextualist' strategy, intended to counterbalance the Anti-Contextualist Strategy in an effective way. [Footnote continues on next page.]

But it does not constitute an adequate criterion for determining what is said, and we must find something else to answer this purpose. I suggest that we take a closer look at a claim I have just made: that what is said is identified on an intuitive basis. This, I believe, leads us to the criterion we are looking for.

#### 4. The Availability Principle

In the last part of section 3 I made two related claims: first, that sentence meaning is something more abstract and theoretical than what is said; second, that we have 'intuitions' concerning what is said that serve as a starting point in the process of determining what the linguistic meaning of the sentence is. Although obviously related, these two claims are to be distinguished; the second is stronger than the first. I shall argue that the stronger claim provides us with a criterion for telling implicatures apart

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Since, for a defender of the Minimalist Principle, what is said departs from what the sentence means only insofar as there is in the meaning of the sentence a slot to be contextually filled, he is led to posit new slots, new dimensions of semantic indeterminacy, every time the following condition obtains: the traditional slots (identity of the speaker, time of utterance, etc.) have been filled, yet it seems that the meaning of the sentence still underdetermines what is said. Thus, a minimalist is led to postulate a hidden reference to a contextually variable domain of discourse in (1) and (2)—as well as in any quantificational utterance. It follows that there are more slots to be filled for a sentence to express a complete proposition, from the point of view of a minimalist, than there is from the point of view of someone who rejects the Minimalist Principle. Sperber and Wilson suggest that 'I've had breakfast' does express a complete proposition once the identity of the speaker and the time of utterance have been fixed, a proposition which is weaker than what the speaker means to say by his utterance. This move—distinguishing the minimal proposition expressed from what the speaker says—is not open to the minimalist; therefore he must deny that the sentence, once the traditional slots have been contextually filled, expresses a complete proposition: more slots need to be filled, according to him. I conclude that the Minimalist Principle is an incentive to maximize context-sensitivity; it leads its defenders to widen the gap between linguistic meaningfulness and full propositionality. From a contextualist point of view, this is a good reason for maintaining the Minimalist Principle as far as possible. *Even if Sperber and Wilson are right and the Minimalist Principle is ultimately to be dispensed with, it still has a methodological role to play within a contextualist strategy.* For example, a contextualist might observe the following maxim: Before supposing, in a particular case, that what is said is different from the minimal proposition expressible, always try to save the Minimalist Principle by exploring the various forms of semantic indeterminacy that may possibly affect the sentence.

What I have just said shows that it is controversial to claim, as Carston does, that the Minimalist Principle is partly responsible for the usual underrating of the gap between sentence meaning and what is said. Carston believes that partisans of the Minimalist Principle 'assume that the domain of grammar, sentences, and the domain of truth-conditional semantics, propositions, are essentially the same' (Carston 1988, p. 164). But this is not at all the case. Quite the contrary, defenders of the Minimalist Principle take the meaning of a sentence to be far less 'propositional', much more underdetermined as far as truth-conditions are concerned, than is ordinarily supposed.

from pragmatic aspects of what is said. This criterion, stated below, I shall refer to as the 'Availability Principle', because it presupposes that what is said by an utterance is available or accessible to the unsophisticated speaker-hearer. 'Available' must be understood here in a strong sense: what I mean is not that what is said by an utterance is tacitly identified at some sub-doxastic level, but that it is accessible to our ordinary, conscious intuitions. The Availability Principle just says that these intuitions are to be respected:

*Availability Principle:* In deciding whether a pragmatically determined aspect of utterance meaning is part of what is said, that is, in making a decision concerning what is said, we should always try to preserve our pre-theoretic intuitions on the matter.

In this section, I will try to make more explicit the claim concerning the availability of what is said—the 'availability hypothesis', as I shall call it; I will then show how the Availability Principle works. I will conclude that some very common assumptions of Gricean pragmatics are to be rejected if we take the Availability Principle seriously.

Let us start with the claim that sentence meaning is something more abstract and theoretical than what is said. Consider the diagram labelled 'Figure 1'. Starting at the top, it shows the various steps that lead, by analytical abstraction, from what is communicated to the meaning of the sentence. The analysis thus displayed is intended to mirror the actual process of understanding the utterance, this corresponding to a bottom-up reading of the diagram.

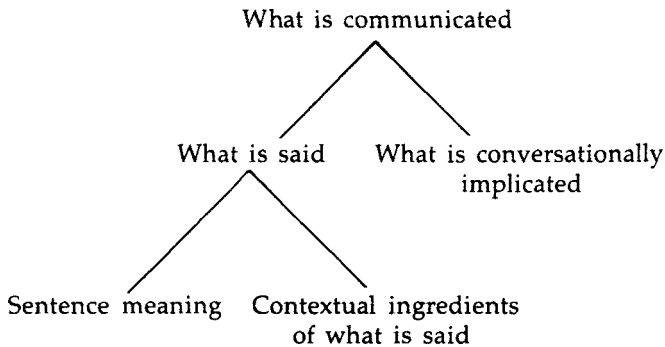


Figure 1

At the top (*i.e.* the root) of the inverted tree, 'what is communicated' is the intuitive datum we, as analysts, start from; it is also the consciously accessible output of the process of pragmatic understanding. Everything that occurs below the top level is more abstract, that is, farther from the



starting point of the analysis. At the bottom of the tree, we find sentence meaning, a theoretical construct representing both the output of the process of semantic decoding and the input to the process of pragmatic understanding. To say that sentence meaning is something more abstract than what is said is just a way of putting sentence meaning closer to the bottom of the tree, while putting what is said closer to the top. In processing terms, sentence meaning is cognitively deeper and what is said shallower—they are respectively farther from and closer to the output of the process of pragmatic understanding.

In the case of sentence meaning, abstractness and cognitive depth go hand in hand with a further property, that of conscious unavailability. Of sentence meaning we can assume only tacit (unconscious) knowledge on the part of the speaker who utters the sentence. To be sure, users of the language claim to have intuitions concerning what the sentences in their language mean; but these intuitions are not directly about their purported objects—linguistic meanings. They do not bear on the linguistic meanings of sentences, which are very abstract and inaccessible to consciousness, but on what would be said or communicated by the sentence were it uttered in a standard or easily accessible context.

Being located at an intermediate level in the diagram, what is said is cognitively shallower—less abstract—than sentence meaning. But we cannot conclude that it is more accessible to consciousness than the latter. We cannot infer, from the fact that what is said is shallower than sentence meaning, that there is between them a difference in nature such that the latter can only be cognized at the sub-doxastic level while the former is consciously accessible. The availability of what is said does not follow from its relative shallowness, *i.e.* from its proximity to the top level. As an intermediate output, resulting from an advanced but nonfinal stage of unconscious pragmatic processing, what is said could be no less sub-doxastic than sentence meaning. It is, therefore, a nontrivial hypothesis that I am making when I claim that what is said is consciously accessible. The availability hypothesis cannot be reduced to the claim that sentence meaning is more abstract and cognitively deeper than what is said.

To make sense of the availability hypothesis, I suggest a slight modification of the diagram in Figure 1. As it is, it implies that what is communicated—the object of our intuitions—is something over and above what is said and what is conversationally implicated: what is communicated is seen as the output of a specific cognitive process (the last step in the general process of pragmatic understanding) whose inputs are what is said and what is implicated. One way of understanding the claim concerning the availability of what is said is by rejecting this view altogether, considering that what is communicated *consists of* what is said and what is implicated, instead of being something *over and above* what is said and what is implicated. Instead of locating what is communicated at one level and what is said (as well as the implicatures) at another, I suggest that we consider 'what is communicated' as simply a *name* for the level at

which we find both what is said and what is implicated—the top level, characterized by conscious accessibility (Figure 2). On this view, the conscious availability of what is said no longer is a mystery: if what is communicated, which is consciously accessible, consists of what is said and what is implicated, then what is said cannot but be consciously accessible.

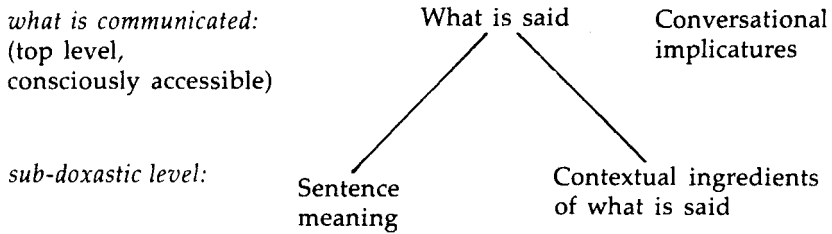


Figure 2

In the new diagram, it is no longer suggested that there is a specific process merging what is said and what is implicated. They constitute the final output of the general process of pragmatic understanding, not an intermediate output, as Figure 1 suggests. What is said and what is implicated thus remain distinct, and are consciously available as distinct.<sup>8</sup>

It is striking that the question of the availability of what is said has never been raised in the pragmatic literature.<sup>9</sup> I believe it is a very important issue. If we really have conscious access to what is said, then as theorists we have a very simple criterion for telling when a pragmatically determined aspect of meaning is part of what is said and when it is not: we merely have to check the proposal against our intuitions. This, I believe, is what most theorists have always done. Why, for example, do Sperber and Wilson claim that the proposition that the speaker has had breakfast at least once in his life is not the proposition actually expressed—what is said—by the speaker who utters (2)? Because *everybody knows* that this is not what the speaker says, under ordinary circumstances, when he utters (2). The appeal to common sense is perfectly justified once the availability

<sup>8</sup> For simplicity's sake, the fact that the derivation of implicatures presupposes the identification of what is said (and other things as well) has not been represented in the diagram. It could have been represented by distinguishing two sub-levels within 'what is communicated', what is said being input at the first sub-level and the implicatures output at the second one. (In fact, the matter is still more complicated than that, but there is no need to spell out the details here.)

<sup>9</sup> There is an exception, though. According to Bach and Harnish (1979, p. 29), a correct account of linguistic communication 'should accord with how "said that" is commonly ascribed'. This is not very far from the Availability Principle, as Mike Harnish pointed out to me.

hypothesis is made.

Perhaps we should consider the intuitions of the speaker instead of those of the theorist. According to the Availability Principle thus interpreted, a tentative identification of what is said has to be checked against the speaker's intuitions. In this framework, Sperber and Wilson's decision concerning example (2) can be justified as follows. We suppose that what is said by an utterance is known, at least, by the speaker (availability hypothesis). In the case of (2), if what the speaker says is that he has had breakfast at least once in his life, then the speaker does not know what he says, because he does not know that this is what he says (were he to be told, he would be very surprised); therefore, this is *not* what he says. Using the Availability Principle, we are thus able to reject the 'implicature analysis' of examples (1) and (2), because it assumes an identification of what is said which is inconsistent with the speaker's intuitions. The speaker believes that what he says is that he has had breakfast *on the day of utterance*; the Availability Principle dictates that we reject all pragmatic theories inconsistent with this belief, and, in particular, the implicature analysis, which identifies what the speaker says with the proposition that he has had breakfast at least once in his life.

Before proceeding, a caveat is in order. When I claim that we have intuitions concerning what is said, I do not wish to deny that these intuitions may be fuzzy, or that we may sometimes have conflicting intuitions. (The existence of a quotational concept of 'saying', to be mentioned in the next section, is but one factor among many that tend to make our intuitions fuzzy and conflicting.) What I am saying is that our intuitions are clear enough to rule out a number of analyses that are grossly inconsistent with them.

The Availability Principle can be appealed to in a number of cases to show that a tentative analysis is misguided. Consider an example mentioned earlier in this paper, the utterance 'Everybody went to Paris'. Under ordinary circumstances, what a speaker would mean by this is not that everybody in the absolute sense, *i.e.* every person in the world, went to Paris, but that everybody in some (contextually identifiable) group went to Paris. Suppose, for example, it is established that what the speaker means is that every member of the Johnson and Johnson staff went to Paris. Still, the utterance can be analyzed in two ways. The first analysis is quite straightforward: it identifies what the speaker says with what he means, *i.e.* with the proposition that every member of the Johnson and Johnson staff went to Paris. But there is another possible analysis. We may consider that what is literally said is that everybody in the world went to Paris, even though this is clearly not what the speaker means. A proponent of this analysis has only to assume that what the speaker says is different from what he means, *i.e.* that he speaks nonliterally, as in metaphor. Such an analysis has been put forward in Bach 1987 and extended to many examples, including the whole class of utterances in which an incomplete definite description occurs. Thus, Bach identifies the proposition literally

expressed by the utterance 'The door is closed' with the Russellian proposition 'There is one and only one door in the world, and it is closed', this proposition not being what the speaker means to communicate when he utters the sentence. The Availability Principle militates against this type of analysis, which assumes a counter-intuitive identification of what is said. The difference with genuine cases of nonliterality should be apparent. When the speaker says to the hearer, 'You are the cream in my coffee', everybody would agree that what the speaker says is that the hearer is the cream in his coffee: this is clearly what he says, and it is no less clear that he is speaking nonliterally. But when the speaker says 'Everybody went to Paris', or 'The door is closed', it is counter-intuitive to identify what he says with the propositions that every person in the world went to Paris, or that the only door in the universe is closed. The speaker himself would not recognize those propositions as being what he said. The 'nonliteral' analysis must therefore be rejected, by virtue of the Availability Principle.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Bach, 1987, chapter 4 points out that the nonliteral use of sentences such as 'The door is closed' is their *standard* use; he speaks of 'standardized nonliterality'. He might therefore try to avoid the objection I have just raised by arguing as follows: The speaker is not conscious of having said something different from what he communicates because the sentence he uses is *standardly* used to communicate something different from the proposition literally expressed. After all, the same phenomenon occurs in cases of 'standardized indirection' (Bach and Harnish 1979, pp. 192ff): when an indirect speech act is standardly performed by means of a certain type of sentence, the participants in the talk-exchange may not be conscious of the speech act directly performed (e.g. of the question in 'Can you pass me the salt?').

Another defence of Bach's account would run as follows. Bach does not speak of 'what is said'; he speaks of the proposition expressed by the sentence, as distinct from the proposition communicated. Despite Bach's use of the concept of 'nonliterality', this distinction might be equated with Sperber and Wilson's distinction between the minimal proposition expressible by the sentence and the proposition actually expressed (what is said), rather than with the distinction which applies to genuine cases of nonliterality, *viz.* that between what is said and what is communicated. Thus interpreted, Bach's view would be consistent with the Availability Principle, because it would no longer involve a counter-intuitive identification of what is said. The difference between Bach's position and that of Sperber and Wilson, on that interpretation, would be this: Sperber and Wilson require that the proposition actually expressed entail the minimal proposition expressible, while Bach believes that the minimal proposition literally expressed may be enriched ('expanded', he says) in a way that does not preserve its entailments. Thus, Bach's analysis applies not only to examples such as 'I've had breakfast' or 'John has three children'—which he calls 'nonliteral' because the proposition literally expressed by the sentence (that the speaker has had breakfast at least once, or that John has at least three children) is not identical with the proposition communicated (that the speaker has had breakfast this morning, or that John has exactly three children)—but also to examples such as 'Everybody came to Paris' or 'The door is closed', which Sperber and Wilson could not handle in terms of strengthening. 'Everybody from Johnson and Johnson came to Paris' is an 'expansion' of 'Everybody came to Paris' in Bach's framework, but it is not an 'enrichment' of the latter in Sperber and Wilson's framework. (Note that, when Sperber and Wilson first introduced their notion of enrichment, what they had in mind was probably something like Bach's expansion, rather than the more constrained concept

One important consequence of the Availability Principle is that some of the most often cited examples of conversational implicatures turn out not to be conversational implicatures after all. So-called 'scalar implicatures' are a case in point. Suppose the speaker utters 'John has three children', thereby communicating that John has exactly three children. It is customary to say that the proposition literally expressed by 'John has three children' is the proposition that John has at least three children, even if what the speaker means to communicate by this utterance is that John has exactly three children. What is communicated (*viz.* that John has exactly three children) is classically accounted for by positing a conversational implicature that combines with the proposition allegedly expressed (*viz.* that John has at least three children). This proposal, however, does not pass the availability test, for the speaker himself would not recognize the latter proposition as being what he has said. Not being consciously available, the proposition which the classical account takes to be literally expressed cannot be identified with what is said, if we accept the Availability Principle. The latter dictates that we consider the aspect of meaning that is pragmatically determined (*viz.* the implicit restriction: no more than three children) as part of what is said rather than as a conversational implicature associated with what is said. The same remarks could be made with respect to other well-known examples, such as the exclusive reading of 'P or Q', which are often presented as prototypical cases of conversational implicature.

### 5. The Independence Principle

In her aforementioned paper, Robyn Carston attempts to show that many cases that have been treated as typical examples of conversational implicature are better conceived of as pragmatic aspects of what is said. Not only is she right to hold this as a general thesis; I also believe she is right with respect to particular examples, in most cases at least. This should come as no surprise: Carston certainly relies on her intuitions when she decides that a particular aspect of meaning is to be considered as an integral part of what is said, and I have argued that we do have reliable intuitions concerning what is said. Carston, however, does not hold anything like the availability hypothesis, and thus she cannot be content to rely on her intuitions. What she wants—and what she offers—is an explicit criterion for telling implicatures apart from the pragmatic aspects of what is said. In this section, I shall consider the criterion she puts forward, and show that it does not work.

Those who, like Carston, reject the Minimalist Principle believe that the proposition expressed by an utterance—what is said—may be richer than

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of strengthening.) I would certainly object to Bach's position so interpreted, but I cannot discuss these problems here.

what I called the 'minimal proposition' expressible by the utterance. Whether or not they are right is, as I said, an open question. But Carston goes further than merely rejecting the Minimalist Principle: she puts forward an alternative principle, which entails that every communicated assumption that is richer than the minimal proposition expressible by the utterance *must* be understood as part of what is said. This principle can be stated as follows:

*Independence Principle:* Conversational implicatures are functionally independent of what is said; this means in particular that they do not entail, and are not entailed by, what is said. When an alleged implicature does not meet this condition, it must be considered as part of what is said.

It is not perfectly clear what Carston means by 'functional independence', but it is clear that, for her, functional independence entails logical independence: as she emphasizes in her paper, an implicature will not be functionally independent of the proposition expressed if it entails, or is entailed by, the latter. It is this feature of the Independence Principle that she uses as a criterion to distinguish genuine implicatures from pragmatic aspects of what is said. Owing to this criterion, it is not possible to consider that what is said by means of (2) is that the speaker has had breakfast at least once, the fact that he has had breakfast *on the day of utterance* being only implicated. For then the implicature would entail the proposition literally expressed, contrary to what the Independence Principle requires. (If the speaker has had breakfast on the day of utterance, then he has had breakfast at least once in his life.) In the same way, it is not possible to consider that the proposition expressed by (1) is the minimal proposition that it will take us some time or other to get there, the more specific proposition that it will take us a rather *long* time to get there being only implicated; for this alleged implicature would entail the proposition expressed, and thus would not be a genuine implicature. In general, when an alleged implicature entails the proposition allegedly expressed, it must be considered as part of what is said rather than as a genuine implicature.

Using this criterion, Carston is able to show that many pragmatically determined aspects of utterance meaning that have been classified as conversational implicatures in the Gricean tradition are better viewed as pragmatic aspects of the proposition expressed. For example, the utterance 'John has three children', used to communicate that John has exactly three children, cannot be said to express the proposition that John has at least three children, for if this were the proposition expressed, then the richer proposition—that John has exactly three children—would be an implicature, and we would have an implicature that entails the proposition expre-

ssed, in violation of the Independence Principle.<sup>11</sup> In this and related cases, I believe that Carston is right to say that the alleged implicature is not a genuine implicature but, rather, an aspect of the proposition expressed. However, I think the Independence Principle is to be rejected.

A first and obvious objection to the Independence Principle must be set aside. It might be argued that, in litotes, we have implicatures that entail what is said. (By saying that it is not bad, one implicates that it is

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<sup>11</sup> There is a difficulty here. Carston considers a series of cases in which an alleged implicature entails the proposition allegedly expressed and therefore cannot be a genuine implicature, by virtue of the Independence Principle. However, in many of those cases, the alleged implicature in question is not an implicature at all in the Gricean framework but rather the utterance's overall meaning, which includes what is said together with what is implicated. Thus, for a classical Gricean, 'John has three children' expresses the proposition that John has (at least) three children, and in many contexts implicates that he has at most three children. When this implicature is present, the utterance communicates that John has exactly three children. It is this overall communicated meaning that implies what is said, not the implicature. The same problem arises in connection with many other examples. For a Gricean, a conjunctive utterance 'P and Q' says that 'P' and 'Q' are both true and, in many contexts, implicates that the event described in the second conjunct occurred later than the event described in the first conjunct. Does this alleged implicature entail the proposition allegedly expressed, as Carston suggests? It depends on how we formulate the implicature. Carston chooses the following formulation of what is said and implicated by means of 'P and Q' in the classical Gricean framework:

what is said: P & Q.  
 implicature: P & then Q.

Thus formulated, the implicature does entail the proposition expressed. But the implicature need not be formulated that way. We may consider that what is implicated is that, *if* the event P (*i.e.* the event described in the first conjunct) occurred at a time *t* and the event Q (*i.e.* the event described in the second conjunct) occurred at a time *t'*, *then t'* is later than *t*. In this formulation the implicature does not entail what is said, namely, that these events did occur—or, more explicitly: that there is a past time *t* and a past time *t'* such that P occurs at *t* and Q occurs at *t'*. In general, it seems that the classical Gricean approach can be saved from Carston's criticism in terms of the Independence Principle simply by changing the way the implicature is formulated. As Dan Sperber pointed out to me, Carston might reply to this objection as follows. We suppose that the proposition that John has exactly three children is being communicated (this much seems to be conceded by the classical Gricean.) Now, if it is communicated, either it is an implicature or it is part of what is said. The classical Gricean considers that it is not part of what is said; therefore, if it is communicated, it must be an implicature. In Sperber and Wilson's framework, it is an 'implicated conclusion', *i.e.* something that follows from an 'implicated premiss' (*viz.* the proposition that John has at most three children) together with the proposition expressed (*viz.* the proposition that John has at least three children). But this alleged implicature (that John has exactly three children) entails the proposition allegedly expressed (that John has at least three children). Therefore, by virtue of the Independence Principle, it is part of what is said. Now, if this proposition is part of what the speaker says, what a classical Gricean would consider as the implicature *stricto sensu*, namely the proposition that John has at most three children, cannot be an implicature either, for then it would be entailed by what is said. (The same argument would apply to the other examples.)

excellent, and if it is excellent it cannot be bad.) This, however, is not a counterexample to Carston's Independence Principle, which is only intended to apply to literal assertions. But there are counterexamples even if we consider only literal assertions. Suppose that John says to Jim: 'Someone will come and see you today—someone you have been expecting for a long time. I am not permitted to reveal the identity of visitors in advance, but I take it that you see who I mean'. Suppose it is clear that John means that Mrs Robertson is going to come and see Jim. Has John said that Mrs Robertson was going to come? No: he has said that *someone* was going to come, and has implied that it was Mrs Robertson. The implication is very clear, but the fact that it is an implication, and not something that is explicitly said, is no less clear: as John emphasizes, he is not entitled to *say* who is going to come. Carston's principle, however, predicts that John has said, rather than simply implicated, that Mrs Robertson was to come. For if this were an implicature, it would entail the proposition allegedly expressed (*viz.* that someone will come and see Jim), contrary to what the Independence Principle requires.

According to Ruth Kempson (personal communication), this is not really a counterexample to Carston's Independence Principle, because the concept of 'saying' which is involved when I deny that the speaker has 'said' that Mrs Robertson was to come is not the relevant one. Certainly, there is a concept of saying such that, when I utter 'I've had breakfast', I do not literally 'say' that I've had breakfast *today*, because I do not utter the word 'today'; what I 'say' is that I have had breakfast, but I do not 'say' when. In this sense of 'say', it is always possible to deny that something has been said, unless the word for that thing has been explicitly pronounced. This we may refer to as the 'quotational' sense of 'say'. The quotational sense of 'say', Kempson argues, is irrelevant to the issue we are discussing, but it is critical to the Robertson example; therefore, the latter is not a real counterexample.

I am not wholly convinced by Kempson's argument, although I agree with her that the existence of a quotational sense of 'say' has to be taken into account. In any event, I am willing to concede that the example is controversial. My case against the Independence Principle does not rest upon this particular example, but on general considerations to which I now turn. I shall first say what is wrong with Carston's proposal, and then use these general considerations to build up a better, and to my mind decisive, counterexample to the Independence Principle.

The problem with Carston's proposal is that, even though she constantly talks of 'functional' independence, the criterion she actually uses to distinguish conversational implicatures from pragmatic aspects of what is said is the relation of *logical* independence that must hold, she believes, between a genuine implicature and what is said: basically, an implicature must not entail what is said. Now, I believe that *any* formal principle of this sort is mistaken, and cannot but make wrong predictions. This point is very general, and before giving examples connected with the Independence



Principle, I should like to mention two other instances of what we might call the 'formal fallacy' in pragmatics.

The first instance of the formal fallacy is a very common definition of direct and indirect speech acts. In speech-act theory sentences are taken to have a semantically determined 'illocutionary act potential'; that is, they are taken to be semantically associated with an illocutionary act type. An illocutionary act performed by uttering a sentence is commonly said to be direct if and only if it falls under the illocutionary act potential of the sentence, that is, if and only if it is an instance of the illocutionary act type semantically associated with the sentence. So, given that the sentence 'Can you pass the salt?' is semantically associated with the illocutionary act of asking the hearer whether he can pass the salt, an act of requesting the hearer to pass the salt, performed by uttering this sentence, can only be indirect. This same act will be direct when performed by means of the alternative sentence 'Please pass the salt', which is semantically associated with the act of requesting the hearer to pass the salt.

This 'formal' definition of direct and indirect illocutionary acts is seriously misguided, as the following counterexample shows. The sentence 'He has come' is semantically associated with the act of conveying the information, concerning someone, that he has come; any token of this act performed by means of this sentence must therefore be direct, in virtue of the formal definition. Now, suppose that by uttering 'He has come' the speaker says that John has come; and suppose a context in which, by saying that John has come, the speaker is able to communicate another piece of information, namely that Bill has come. (For example, it is mutually known that, whenever John comes, Bill comes too, and that the point of saying that John has come is, for the speaker, to convey indirectly that Bill has come.) This is a typical case of indirect speech act: by saying something, namely that John has come, the speaker conveys something else, namely that Bill has come. Nevertheless, this indirect speech act is to be treated as direct, according to the formal definition above, just because it happens to fall under the illocutionary act potential of the sentence uttered. The formal definition obliges us to consider that the speaker has directly asserted that Bill has come, just because he has conveyed this information by uttering a sentence that could have been (but was not!) used to say that. The formal definition must therefore be rejected: what defines a speech act as direct is the way it is performed, not a formal relation of 'congruence' (Gardiner 1932, p. 142) between the speech act and the sentence uttered. To be sure, the fact that a speech act is directly performed implies that this relation holds, but it can hold also 'accidentally', even though the speech act performed is indirect.

The same type of counterexample can be brought against Sperber and Wilson's definition of explicitness, understood in a certain way. Clearly, what characterizes implicatures (implicitly communicated assumptions) and explicatures (explicitly communicated assumptions) is, for Sperber and Wilson, the way they are recovered in the interpretation process:

explicatures are recovered by enriching and developing a logical form encoded in the sentence uttered, while implicatures are premisses and conclusions in an inference process whose starting point is the explicature. It follows that an explicature necessarily bears a certain formal relation to the logical form of the sentence uttered: that of being a 'development' of that logical form, *i.e.* a generally richer and more complex form that incorporates it. But it is a mistake to use that formal property to define the explicature as opposed to the implicature, as Sperber and Wilson seem to do (Sperber and Wilson 1986, p. 182), for it is quite possible for an implicature to have this property accidentally. Suppose that by saying 'It will rain tomorrow' the speaker communicates the following explicature: that Mary believes that it will rain tomorrow. Suppose further that this explicature contextually implies that it is not the case that it will rain tomorrow, and that much of the relevance of the utterance predictably depends on this contextual implication. Then 'It is not the case that it will rain tomorrow' is an implicature, according to Sperber and Wilson's ordinary characterization. But it should be treated as an explicature according to the formal definition, because 'It is not the case that it will rain tomorrow' is formally a development of 'It will rain tomorrow'.<sup>12</sup>

Similar counterexamples can easily be found in connection with Carston's Independence Principle. Consider the following dialogue:

- A: Was there anybody rich at the party, who might be asked to pay for the damages?  
 B: Jim is rich.  
 A: Yes, but did he go to the party?  
 B: I don't know, but I can tell you that if *anybody* was there, Jim was there.  
 A: *Somebody* was there—this I know for sure (I saw John going there). So it looks as if the damages will be paid for, after all.

The beginning of A's last reply, 'Somebody was there', clearly implicates (in virtue of the premiss provided by B's last reply: 'If anybody was there, Jim was there') that Jim was there and therefore (in virtue of the premiss provided by B's first reply: 'Jim is rich') that a rich man was there. This implicature is what links together the beginning ('Somebody was there') and the end ('The damages will be paid for') of A's last reply. Now, the

<sup>12</sup> Sperber and Wilson could argue that, in their definition, 'development' must be understood as referring not to the formal property of incorporating as a sub-part a logical form, but to the process of developing a logical form into a more complex form that has the formal property. But then they should have defined the explicature as an assumption that *results from* a development of an encoded logical form, instead of saying that an assumption communicated by an utterance is an explicature if and only if it *is* a development of a logical form encoded by the utterance. In any case, what Sperber and Wilson *mean* by 'explicature' and 'implicature' is quite clear, despite the ambiguity of their definition.

implicature that Jim was there entails what is said, namely that somebody was there. So it should be considered as part of what is said rather than as a genuine implicature, according to the Independence Principle. But, clearly, by saying that somebody was there, A is not referring to Jim in any sense; if there is any reference here (which I doubt), it would be to the person of whom the speaker knows for sure that he went to the party, namely John. So there are three candidates for the status of what is said. The most plausible is the general proposition that there was at least one person at the party. Some people believe that there is a referential use of indefinites, and are therefore prepared to argue that A was referring to John when he said 'Somebody was there'; those people would perhaps conclude that A said of John that he was there. But who would accept the extraordinary conclusion, imposed by Carston's Independence Principle, that A, having John in mind and uttering 'Somebody was there', has actually said that Jim was there?

On this general pattern, we might construct as many counterexamples to the Independence Principle as we may wish. This type of counterexample shows that what defines a communicated assumption as an implicature is not a formal property, and in particular not the formal property of (logical) independence with respect to the proposition expressed, but the way it is recovered in the interpretation process—*i.e.* not by enriching and developing a logical form encoded in the sentence, but by an inference process the starting point of which is a proposition obtained by enriching and developing an encoded logical form. To be sure, when an assumption is reached through simply enriching an encoded logical form, it cannot but entail the minimal proposition expressible by the sentence; but it could easily occur that an implicature, *i.e.* an assumption obtained through a totally different process, turns out to entail this minimal proposition, by accident as it were; this is not a sufficient reason to consider it as part of what is said. I conclude that the Independence Principle must be rejected.<sup>13</sup>

## 6. The Scope Principle

I shall now consider a criterion which, I think, can be used in conjunction with the Availability Principle. I shall refer to this criterion as the Scope Principle. It is based on observations that various people have made on

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<sup>13</sup> Of course, Carston might try to reformulate the Independence Principle in purely 'functional' terms, with no reference whatsoever to *logical* independence. But it is not obvious that the Independence Principle, reformulated only in terms of the vague notion of functional independence, would still provide a working criterion enabling one to distinguish conversational implicatures from pragmatic aspects of what is said. In any case, when I say that the Independence Principle is to be rejected, I have in mind the criterion Carston actually uses in her paper, not an ideal reformulation of it.

the behaviour of conversational implicatures in connection with logical operators. These observations tend to provide evidence for a distinction between two types of alleged implicatures: those that do and those that do not fall within the scope of logical operators. Carston devotes a section of her paper to some of these observations, showing that they can be accounted for in terms of the distinction between genuine implicatures and pragmatic aspects of what is said. Yet, when it comes to finding a criterion for deciding between the two alternative pragmatic approaches, she does not consider the Scope Principle, because of her misplaced confidence in the Independence Principle.

Consider the following pair of examples:

- (3) The old king has died of a heart attack and a republic has been declared.
- (4) A republic has been declared and the old king has died of a heart attack.

In (3), it is implied that the first event described (the death of the old king) occurred before the second one (the declaration of a republic). In (4) the same events are reported in a different order, and the implication is reversed; it is suggested that the death of the old king occurred after—and, perhaps, because of—the declaration of a republic. In both cases, the temporal suggestion is, for Grice, a conversational implicature, stemming from the presumption that the speaker is observing the maxim of manner: 'Be perspicuous'. In general, a narrative is more perspicuous if the events are reported in the order in which they occurred. The speaker's reporting a series of events in a certain order therefore implies that they occurred in that order, by virtue of the presumption that he is observing the maxim of manner. *Qua* conversational implicature, the temporal suggestion is not part of what is said and makes no contribution to the truth-condition of the utterance. Thus, according to Grice, what is strictly and literally said by means of (3) and (4) is the same thing, even though there is an important difference in (conveyed) meaning between these two utterances. The truth-functionality of 'and' can therefore be maintained.

Jonathan Cohen 1971 raised a serious objection to that view. He pointed out the following consequence of Grice's analysis: If (3) and (4) really have the same truth-conditions and differ only at the level of conversational implicatures, then, in Grice's framework, (5) and (6) also should have the same truth-conditions:

- (5) If the old king has died of a heart attack and a republic has been declared, then Tom will be quite content.
- (6) If a republic has been declared and the old king has died of a heart attack, then Tom will be quite content.

But, if (5) and (6) are ascribed the same truth-conditions, how are we to

account for the intuitive difference in meaning between them? This difference is such that it is possible to assert (5) and to deny (6) in the same breath without contradiction. Again, we shall have to use the Gricean apparatus and say that (5) and (6) differ only at the level of conversational implicatures. This consequence is problematic, for it is unclear how the suggested Gricean analysis can be applied in the case of (5)–(6). While it may seem a good idea to say that (3) and (4) express the same proposition and differ only at the level of conversational implicatures, extending this type of analysis to (5) and (6) is hardly a credible move. It seems better to reject Grice's analysis, by admitting that (3) and (4) do not express the same proposition. This does not mean that one must follow Cohen in considering a semantic account of the temporal suggestion conveyed by 'P and Q' as preferable to a pragmatic account. As Carston rightly emphasizes in her paper, Cohen's counterexample can be handled within the type of pragmatic account she advocates, according to which the temporal suggestion conveyed by 'P and Q' is part of what is said even though it is not part of the linguistic meaning of 'and'. To dispose of Cohen's objection, one need only admit, as Carston does, that (3) and (4) do not express the same proposition.

Being counterexamples to the classical Gricean account but not to the other type of pragmatic account, examples such as (3)–(6) may be considered as providing a criterion for deciding between the two alternative pragmatic approaches, that is, for deciding whether a pragmatically determined aspect of utterance meaning must be considered as a conversational implicature or as an integral part of what is said. This criterion—the Scope Principle, stated below—is based on the behaviour of an alleged implicature when the utterance which gives rise to it is embedded in a larger utterance and dominated by a logical operator.

It has often been noticed that some *prima facie* implicatures fall within the scope of logical operators, while others do not. For example, when a seemingly implicature-bearing utterance is negated, sometimes the alleged implicature can be interpreted as (part of) what is negated and sometimes it cannot; when a seemingly implicature-bearing utterance is embedded as the antecedent of a conditional, sometimes the alleged implicature is an integral part of the antecedent, and sometimes it is not. (5) and (6) are evidence that the alleged implicatures conveyed by (3) and (4) belong to the first category. What (5) and (6) say is that Tom will be content if the following conditions obtain: the old king has died, a republic has been declared, and there is a certain temporal relation between these two events. The temporal relation allegedly implicated by (3) and (4) is an integral part of the antecedent of the conditional in (5) and (6); it falls within the scope of the conditional. In the same way, when (3) is negated, the alleged implicature falls within the scope of the negation. The negation of (3) is made true if one of the following conditions fails to be satisfied: the old king has died, a republic has been declared, and the first event occurred before the second. Thus, one can deny (3) and thereby mean, as in (7), that

the suggested order of events does not correspond to the facts:

- (7) It is not the case that the old king has died and a republic has been declared; what is true is that a republic has been declared first and then the old king died of a heart attack.

The fact that some implicatures fall within the scope of logical operators has always been considered as raising a serious problem for pragmatics. From this fact, different theorists have drawn different conclusions. Some theorists (*e.g.* Anscombe and Ducrot 1978) have concluded that these 'implicatures' cannot be implicatures in the ordinary sense of the term. Their argument can be reconstructed as follows:

- (a) Conversational implicatures are pragmatic consequences of an act of saying something.
- (b) An act of saying something can be performed only by means of a complete utterance, not by means of an unasserted clause such as the antecedent of a conditional.
- (c) Hence, no implicature can be generated at the sub-locutionary level, *i.e.* at the level of an unasserted clause such as the antecedent of a conditional.
- (d) To say that an implicature falls within the scope of a logical operator is to say that it is generated at the sub-locutionary level, *viz.* at the level of the clause on which the logical operator operates.
- (e) Hence, no implicature can fall within the scope of a logical operator.

This argument is, I think, both sound and compelling. It shows that, when an alleged implicature seems to fall within the scope of a logical operator, either it is not really an implicature, or it does not really fall within the scope of the logical operator.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> This last remark may sound puzzling. What I have in mind is this. Suppose a sentence *S* and a context *C* such that, when *S* is uttered in *C*, the utterance conversationally implicates that grass is green. (I shall call this the 'implicature of *S*', meaning: the implicature of an utterance of *S* in *C*.) Now, suppose that, without changing the context, *S* is embedded within a larger sentence *S'*, where it is dominated by a logical operator *D*. For simplicity's sake, let us assume *D* is negation. Then, it may *seem* that the implicature of *S* falls within the scope of the negation: this will be so if part of what is communicated by uttering *S'* is that grass is *not* green. But this appearance may be accounted for without supposing that the implicature of *S* actually falls within the scope of *D*. It is logically possible that, just as the utterance of *S* implicates that grass is green, the utterance of *S'* (*i.e.* of the negation of *S*) *implicates* that grass is not green. In this case, despite appearances, the implicature that grass is green does not fall within the scope of the negation, because what is literally negated by *S'* is the proposition expressed by *S*, to the exclusion of the implicature. The latter is not literally negated—and therefore does not fall within the scope of *D*—but its negation happens to be conversationally implicated by uttering *S'*. Of course, the generation of this new implicature will have to be accounted for (it will have to be 'calculable', as Grice says), and the theoretical possibility I have just mentioned will not be considered seriously unless there is an easy way to do so.

From the fact that some implicatures apparently fall within the scope of logical operators, other theorists (e.g. Cornulier 1984, pp. 663–4) have concluded that it is a mistake to think that implicatures cannot fall within the scope of logical operators. As Carston points out in her paper, this position is based on the assumption that all pragmatically determined aspects of meaning are conversational implicatures. If this assumption is made, and one encounters a constituent of meaning that can fall within the scope of logical operators, one has no other choice but to conclude either that this aspect of meaning is not pragmatically determined (a conclusion which Anscombe and Ducrot, contrary to Cornulier, are willing to accept), or that implicatures can fall within the scope of logical operators. If one further assumes that the relevant aspect of meaning is pragmatically determined, one is led to deny the conclusion (e) of the argument above. This is what Cornulier does. But, as we know, the assumption that all pragmatically determined aspects of meaning are implicatures is unwarranted. Conclusion (e) can therefore be maintained, even though one admits that the relevant aspect of meaning (*i.e.* the alleged implicature) is pragmatically rather than semantically determined.

Once the assumption that all pragmatically determined aspects of meaning are implicatures is abandoned, it turns out that far from raising a problem, operator scope provides us with a criterion for distinguishing between conversational implicatures and pragmatically determined aspects of what is said. According to this criterion, genuine implicatures are external to the proposition expressed, and it is the latter that falls within the scope of logical operators. Thus, if the utterance which gives rise to an implicature is negated or made the antecedent of a conditional, the implicature itself cannot be considered as an integral part of what is negated or of the antecedent of the conditional. If it can—if the alleged implicature turns out to fall within the scope of logical operators such as negation (as in (7)) or conditionals (as in (5) and (6))—then it is not a genuine implicature but a pragmatic constituent of what is said. Here is a tentative formulation of the criterion:

*Scope Principle:* A pragmatically determined aspect of meaning is part of what is said (and, therefore, not a conversational implicature) if—and, perhaps, only if—it falls within the scope of logical operators such as negation and conditionals.

This could be tested, and weakened in various ways. I am sure that the matter is not as simple as the Scope Principle suggests, but at least it provides a starting point. Especially encouraging is the fact that the decisions it leads to concerning what is said seem to be consistent with those made by appealing to the Availability Principle. Thus the examples I mentioned earlier—‘I’ve had breakfast’, ‘Everybody went to Paris’, ‘John has three children’, and so forth—are all treated in the same way whether one uses the Availability Principle or the Scope Principle.

## 7. Conclusion

Everybody would agree that the saying/implicating distinction is part of the ordinary, everyday picture of linguistic communication. We commonly talk of what is 'said' as opposed to what is only 'implied' by means of a certain utterance, and it is that distinction which Grice undertook to elaborate (Grice 1975, pp. 43–4). Being so closely related to the everyday picture of communication, Grice's theory of conversational implicatures has strong intuitive appeal. But on a certain view of the relation between theory and common sense, the intuitive appeal of Grice's theory does not constitute very strong evidence in its favour, because it can hardly be considered as a requirement of a theory that it match our ordinary intuitions. On this view, henceforth to be called the 'anti-prejudice view', there is nothing sacrosanct about our ordinary, folk concepts. If a theoretical account is consistent with our commonsensical intuitions, so much the better; if they conflict, so much the worse for common sense.

Because of this view, when the domain of Grice's theory of implicatures was extended far beyond our intuitive reach, this was hardly noticed, let alone considered to raise a problem. Not many people have observed that Grice's theory departs from our intuitions when it is applied to examples such as 'John has three children', which Griceans take to express the proposition that John has at least three children and to implicate that he has no more than three children. However, there is an important difference between this example and *e.g.* 'I've had no breakfast today', which implicates that the speaker is hungry and wishes to be fed. In the latter example, the implicature is intuitively felt to be external to what is said; it corresponds to something that we would ordinarily take to be 'implied'. In the former case, we are not pre-theoretically able to distinguish between the alleged two components of the meaning of the utterance—the proposition expressed (that John has at least three children) and the implicature that he has at most three children). We are conscious only of the result of their combination, *i.e.* of the proposition that John has exactly three children. In this case as opposed to the other one, the theoretical distinction between the proposition expressed and the implicature does not correspond to the intuitive distinction between what is said and what is implied.

This difference between the two types of examples should have prompted the following questions: when, instead of considering intuitive examples of implied meaning, we extend the theory of implicatures to examples such as 'John has three children', are we not talking of something else? If really the same thing is involved in both cases, how are we to account for the difference?<sup>15</sup> These were interesting questions to raise,

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My account of the difference between conscious and unconscious implicatures relies on the claim that the latter are not really implicatures, but something else (pragmatic aspects of what is said). However, there are other possible accounts. For example, one



but, because of the anti-prejudice view, they were not raised. According to this view, it is a very good thing—not something to worry about—when a theory's domain of application is extended beyond its intuitive basis. As far as Grice's theory is concerned, the intuitive basis was the everyday distinction between what is said and what is implied. Starting with this distinction, Grice did two things. First, he outlined a mechanism accounting for the generation of implied meaning; second, he tried to show that the same mechanism was at work in examples which we would not ordinarily classify as cases of implied meaning. There seems to be nothing wrong with this. That some examples of implicatures do not fall under the folk concept of implied meaning merely shows that Grice's theory has augmented our knowledge not only of the *mechanism* responsible for the phenomenon he undertook to explore, but also of the *scope* of this phenomenon.

I agree that scientific theorizing is to be freed from, rather than impeded by, intuitions and common sense, which provide only a starting point. In particular, I agree that it was a good thing to go beyond our intuitions and to show, as Grice did, that in many cases the meaning of an utterance results from an unconscious process of 'meaning construction' (to use Fauconnier's suggestive phrase), an inferential process whose input is the linguistic meaning of the sentence uttered. In the case of 'John has three children', there is no doubt that what this utterance communicates (that John has exactly three children) is not to be identified with the meaning of the sentence, but results from inferentially combining the latter with the presumption that the speaker has given the strongest relevant information available to him. Still, I believe there was something to worry about when the theory of implicatures was extended to examples such as this, which we would not ordinarily consider as cases of implied meaning. This does not mean that I reject the anti-prejudice view. We may at the same time accept this view and recognize that human cognition is a very special field: in this field, our intuitions are not just a first shot at a theory—something like Wittgenstein's ladder, which may be thrown away after it has been climbed up—but also *part of what the theory is about*, and as such they cannot be neglected. In the case at hand, it was a mistake to ignore our intuitions, which tell us that there is a difference between standard cases of implied meaning and the other type of alleged implicatures. This difference pointed to an important theoretical distinction, between genuine implicatures and pragmatic constituents of the proposition expressed.

The theoretical distinction itself was attainable by another route. One only has to realize that sentence meaning largely underdetermines what

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can use Grice's notion of 'generalized' implicatures, and argue that when an implicature is generalized (*i.e.* standardized, as Bach and Harnish would say), one is no longer conscious of its being external to what is said. This is a variant of the argument presented in footnote 10, p. 314.

is said, to be forced to the conclusion that a distinction must be made between genuine implicatures and pragmatic aspects of what is said. Note that, when this route is taken, one knows *that* there is a principled distinction to be made between implicatures and pragmatic aspects of what is said, but one does not know which pragmatic aspect of the meaning of an utterance is to be treated as an implicature, and which as a constituent of what is said. Grice's 'tests' for conversational implicature (cancellability, nondetachability, calculability, and so forth) test the presence of a pragmatically determined aspect of utterance meaning, but they do not tell us whether it is a genuine implicature or a constituent of what is said. New criteria have to be devised to make this decision possible.

In this paper, I have taken this route and considered various possible criteria for distinguishing implicatures from pragmatic constituents of what is said. I have considered four criteria in turn: the Minimalist Principle, the Availability Principle, the Independence Principle and the Scope Principle. I have shown that Carston's Independence Principle must be rejected, because it is an instance of a fallacy quite common in pragmatics (the 'formal fallacy'). As for the Minimalist Principle, Carston and Sperber and Wilson believe that it must be rejected; I have shown that the matter is not as simple as they seem to think, but I also pointed out that the Minimalist Principle could hardly be used as a working criterion. So we have to find something else. The solution I have suggested is very simple; it consists in going back to our intuitions, and using *them* as a criterion. This is the substance of the Availability Principle, which says that any decision concerning what is said and what is implicated must be consistent with our pre-theoretic intuitions on the matter. (Again, the Availability Principle is not based on a rejection of the anti-prejudice view, but on a specific cognitive hypothesis, according to which what is said is consciously accessible.) Finally, I put forward another criterion, to be used in conjunction with the Availability Principle: the Scope Principle, which says that genuine conversational implicatures cannot fall within the scope of logical operators. I am confident that, using these two criteria, it will in most cases be possible to decide whether a given aspect of meaning is a conversational implicature or a pragmatic constituent of what is said.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> I am indebted to Bob French, Mike Harnish, Larry Hirschfeld, Pierre Jacob, Sam Kerstein, and especially Ruth Kempson and Dan Sperber for their comments on an earlier version of this paper. Thanks are also due to members of the ESPRIT working group 3351 (Dialogue and Discourse).

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