GRICE'S THEORY OF ORDINARY CONDITIONALS

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Introduction

The English connective 'if-then' is known to behave somewhat differently from the '⊃' of formal logic. For instance, according to the two-valued truth-functional account, a '⊃' conditional statement 'A ⊃ B' is true if either its antecedent is false or its consequent is true (regardless of what truth-value the other component might have). We do not, however, ordinarily consider the following English conditionals (1) and (2) as true,

(1)   If 2+2 is 5, then 2+2 is not equal to 5

(2)   If 2+2 is 5, then 2+2 is also 4

just because (1) is known to have a false antecedent and (2) a true consequent.

This leads to the following problem. The application of the logic of '⊃' to English 'if-then' is most easily rationalized by the assumption that the English 'if-then' shares all the relevant logical features with the truth-functional '⊃'. However, if 'divergences' (like the above mentioned ones) between the 'if- then' and the '⊃' actually indicate some deeper differences between the truth-conditions and logical properties of these two connectives, then the rationale behind the application of the logic of '⊃' to the English 'if-then' breaks down. For ordinary reasoning, however, the retraction of the application of formal logic to the English conditionals is supposed to be detrimental. For, this sort of application validates, among other things, the transportation of powerful and convenient fromal tools, such as the proof-procedures for evaluating an inference, into ordinary reasoning. Without the formal apparatus, the evaluation of myriads of different types of ordinary inferences arguably would be extremely difficult.

As a solution, Paul Grice pointed to an interesting possibility. He claimed that the truth-conditions of the English connective only **appear** to "diverge" from those of the '⊃', but actually they do not. Using the framework of his own theory of conversational implicatures, he argued that the **apparent** "divergent" behavior of the natural language "particle" 'if', relative to the truth-functional character (defined by the two- valued truth-tables) of its formal counterpart '⊃', may very well be the effect of certain conversational presumptions which come with the use of the natural language particles. When we use a natural language conditional of the form 'if A then B' as a part of our ordinary conversation, Grice admits, our choice of the 'if-then' connective gives the impression that there is some sort of a 'link' or 'connection' between A and B. In contrast, he concedes, a '⊃' conditional 'A ⊃ B' conveys no such thing. However, he argues that, from this, one need not jump to any unfavorable conclusion about the truth-functional analysis of the 'if-then'. For, he contends, in his theory he has shown that this 'divergent' feature is only a **conversational implicature** of a **'generalized'** sort which the expression 'if-then' typically projects when used in a conversational context in accordance to certain **conversational rules.**[1] Thereby, Grice believes, he has also shown that the differences displayed by the ordinary conditionals are caused, not by the truth-functional analysis of the conditionals, but by our ordinary way of using them in our communications.

If correct, Grice's theory would be a nice solution to the aforementioned problem of application. It carves a middle path acknowledging the distinctiveness of the ordinary conditional, but without jettisoning its truth-conditional tie to its formal counterpart; hence, without risking the application of formal logic to it. Grice's theory of conditionals is widely accepted among philosophers as a viable option on this issue perhaps because of this conservative approach. In fact, some standard introductory texts on logic[2] recommend Grice's theory as **the** solution to the 'divergence' problem on the ground that,

> it provides a way of keeping the logic simple and within the range of a
> beginning student. (Fogelin, 169)

The general objective of this paper, however, is to show that actually Grice's theory of the ordinary conditionals, far from being **the** solution, is no real solution at all. Specifically, I shall show that Grice does *not* adequately

establish (i) that there is such a thing as a 'generalized conversational implicature' in natural language, (ii) that the distinctive feature of the ordinary conditionals is indeed a 'generalized conversational implicature', and (iii) that the so-called 'divergent' feature cannot be a part of the truth-conditions of the 'if-then'. These are all debilitating defects for his theory; for, each of these claims is crucial for the development of Grice's central thesis regarding the ordinary conditionals.

The structure of the paper is as follows: First, I provide a brief but over-all acquaintance with the technicalities of Grice's theory of implicatures. This, I believe, is necessary for a better comprehension of his theory of ordinary conditionals. Then, I shall give an exposition of Grice's theory of ordinary conditionals, and lastly, I give my criticisms of Grice's account of conditionals.

Grice's Theory of Implicatures :

Grice claims (Grice 1989, 25)[3] that in the way of conversation when X utters statements such as the following :

(3) He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave. (SWW, 25)

what X conveys is a totality composed of more than merely what X literally said. According to Grice, by (3), X *literally says* that the referred-to person is an Englishman, and that he is therefore brave. But, he claims, our utterances also convey *unsaid implied* things. For instane, by (3), he believes, X also conveys the ''implicature'' or suggestion that the person's being brave **follows** (at least partly) from his being an Englishman. Thus, in Grice's view, the ''total signification'' (SWW, 41), or the total meaning, of an ordinary utterance is composed of several different components. What we literally say in an expression, he believes, is important as it **alone** constitutes the **truth-conditions** of the expression. What we ''implicate'' without actually saying, in his view, although not any part of the truth-conditions of the expression, is nevertheless an equally important component of the ''total signification'' of the expression.

Grice subdivides the ''implicated'' component into **conventional** and **non-conventional** parts, so we get two types of implicatures. This distinction is explained below :

Conventional Implicature :

This is the type of unsaid implicature for which, Grice believes, only the **conventional meaning of some component expression is responsible.** For instance, he believes that in (3) the conventional meaning of the word 'therefore' is the source for the conventional implicature that the person's being an English man suffices to be the proof of his being brave.

Non-conventional Implicature :

According to Grice, this type of implicature, on the other hand, is generated by the many non-conventional maxims that we normally observe in our conversations, e.g. the aesthetic, social, or moral maxims[4]. Conversational implicatures, as discussed in the next paragraph, are supposed to be a sub-group in this category.

Conversational Implicature:

These implicatures, In Grice's view, are primarily the effect of the workings of **certain rules of conversation,** as discussed below, on our ordinary statements.

Grice's Rules Of Conversation :

He sees our informal conversations or talk-exchanges as "cooperative transactions" (SWW, 29), i.e., as communication exchanges which are conscious, joint efforts by all the parties involved towards a goal of common interest. Their central purpose, he maintains, is effective exchange of required information. With that general feature of conversation in mind, Grice has formulated the following general rule of conversation, which he calls the *Cooperative Principle*:

> Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage
> at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk
> exchange in which you are engaged. (SWW, 26)

To suit more specific goals of ordinary conversation, Grice further classifies in Kantian style this rule into the following 4 broad categories, to each of which

he then assigns individual *maxims* or rules:

Category	Corresponding Maxims
Quantity:	Provide as much information as is required for the present purpose; and do not be over-informative.
Quality:	The main rule is: Provide only true information. The other maxims are: Do not supply information that is known to be false, and do not supply information for which there is not adequate evidence.
Relation:	The single maxim under this category is: Be relevant.
Manner:	Perspicacity is the guiding principle here. The specific rules are (a) avoid obscurity of expression, (b) avoid ambiguity, (c) be brief, and (d) be orderly.

Conversational Implicature Revisited:

Suppose I ask someone where I can find a gas station, and she says:

(4) Uh-oh! Today is Sunday.

Now, if there seems to be no reason to suppose that she is opting out of the use of the "Cooperative principle" and its maxims, then, *a la* Grice, the presence of conversational implicature in her utterance may be worked out as follows:

> Her comment clearly violates the maxim of relevance. For the information she gave about which day of the week it is does not seem directly pertinent to my inquiry about the location of a gas station. Yet there is no reason to believe that she is opting out of the Cooperative principle. The situation can be resolved if I suppose her saying what she has said instead of what she could have said (e.g. "There is a gas station right after the next intersection.") to convey that on Sundays all the nearby gas stations are closed. She knows that I can work this implication out, and she is not doing anything to stop me from thinking that she has implied this, so she is **conversationally implicating** that the nearby gas stations on Sundays are closed.[5]

In his scheme, the 'calculation' of the presence of a conversational

implicature depends not only on the actual utterance, but also on **what other utterances the speaker could have produced.** What is said (as contrasted to what could have been said instead) is judged in relation to certain standing presumptions evoked by the Cooperative Principle and its maxims.

Other than the above-mentioned kind of 'calculation', Grice claims, the following two features also are the ***prima facie*** indicators of the presence of a conversational implicature in an utterance (SWW, 43):

(i) the **nondetachability** of the implicature from the carrier expression. Grice thinks that the implicature of the following statement is that there was a failure, or that someone thinks that there was a chance of failure.:

    (5)   A tried to do x. (SWW, 43)

This implicature, he says, would still be carried if one says:

    A attempted to do x.

    A endeavored to do x.

    A set himself to do x. (SWW, 43)

This suggests, according to him, that the implicture present in this case may be a conversational one. His reasoning for this claim is as follows: substitution of the original expression by equivalent expressions does not change the basic content, so the effect of the conversational standards on it remains the same; therefore the implicature which is the product of this effect remains 'nondetachable' from the expression.

(ii) the **cancelability of the implicature.** He contends that since it is possible to opt out of the observation of the Cooperative Principle, a conversational implicature can always be canceled without being inconsistent in a particular case, or without withdrawing or retracting the original comment which carried the implicature. It can be cancelled in two ways: (a) either by **an additional clause,** (b) or by **the context** that clearly shows that the person is opting out.

Grice subdivides the conversational implicatures into two types:
(i) **Particularized** Conversational implicatures, which in his own words, are:

> ... cases in which an implicature is carried by saying that **p** on a particular occasion in virtue of special features of the context,...(SWW, 37)

For instance, in (4) the implicature rises by virtue of the specific circumstance; namely, the fact that it happened to be a Sunday.

(ii) **Generalized** Conversational implicatures. This is the most pertinent type of conversational implicature for our present purpose. Certain words or expressions, Grice claims, "normally" carry **generalized** conversational implicatures *which are not tied up with any particular occasion by virtue of any particular feature of the context and yet is not conventional by nature.* He cites the example of expressions containing 'a' and '.n', as in 'a man' 'a woman', 'a house' etc. The word 'a' or 'an' conventionally means a single item. But in expressions containing 'a' or 'an', Grice thinks *generally* the non-specific use of the article, irrespective of the situation, *conversationally implicates* that the object or person identified is not closely connected to the user of the expression. He writes,

> When someone, by using the form of expression **an** X, implicates that the X does not belong to or is not otherwise connected with some identifiable person, the implicature is present because the speaker has failed to be specific in a way in which he might have been expected to be specific, *with the consequence that it is likely to be assumed that he is not in a position to be specific.* This is a familiar implicature situation and is classifiable as a failure, for one reason or another, to fulfill the first maxim of Quantity. (SWW, 38, italics mine)

So, in statements such as

(6) X is meeting a woman this evening (SWW, 37)

The use of the expression 'a woman' supposedly would "normally" give rise to the presumption that the person to be met is "someone other than X's wife, mother, sister, or perhaps even close platonic friend" (SWW. 37). In other words, the woman referred to, Grice believes, is conversationally implicated in a 'general' sort of way to be not closely connected to X. The implicature arises, according to him, because with the use of the indefinite article the speaker has failed to be specific in the expected manner. Assuming that the speaker does not want to opt out of observing Co-operative Principle, he asserts, consequently

it has to be *further assumed that the speaker is not in a position to be specific.* That is, on the supposition that the speaker is not being deliberately evasive, he believes, it must be presumed that the speaker, under the circumstances, cannot say more than he has.

Grice's Theory of Indicative Conditionals:

His main thesis is that the 'divergent' uniqueness of the English conditional, as in contrast with the material conditional, can be explained away as a **generalized conversational implicature** ingrained in the connective 'if-then'. He develops his thesis in the following way.

As Grice sees it, those who argue for the non-equivalence between the two types of conditionals often insist that an essential condition for the proper acceptance of the 'If...then...' statements is that there must be some sort of a 'connection' between the antecedent and the consequent (above and beyond their respective truth-values), whereas there is no such requirement for the acceptability of a '⊃' conditional.[6] The existence of this condition is supposed to establish the difference between the two connectives decisively.

Grice names this special condition proposed by the opponents the *Indirectness Condition* (presumably because it indicates the existence of indirect evidence of a non-truth-functional nature for accepting an ordinary conditional). He then tries to show in the following way that this prized condition of the opponents is nothing but a generalized conversational implicature of the expression 'if-then'.

He argues that this Indirectness Condition is (a) nondetachable, and (b) cancelable, in his technical sense, from any expression of the form 'if-then'. For instance, he offers the statement,

(7) If Smith is in London, he is attending the meeting.

Then, in the following expressions, which he presumes to be ''otherwise identical in meaning'' with (7), he looks for and finds the **nondetachable** presence of the Indirectness Condition:

(a)   Either Smith is not in London, or he is attending the meeting.

(b)   It is not the case that Smith is both in London and not attending the meeting.

(c)   Not both of the following are true: (i) Smith is in London, and (ii) Smith is not attending the meeting.

(d)   I deny the conjunction of the statements that Smith is in London and that Smith is not attending the meeting.

(e)   One of the combinations of truth-possibilities for the statements (i) that Smith is in London and (ii) that Smith is attending the meeting is realized, other than the one which consists in the first statement's being true and the second false. (SWW, 59)

Similarly, Grice selects the following statement to argue for the **cancelability** of the Indirectness Condition,

(8) If Smith is in the library, he is working. (SWW,59)

(8), he maintains, would normally carry the Indirectness Condition that there are some grounds other than the knowledge of the truth-values of each of the component statements for accepting the statement. But that condition, he claims, is *explicitly cancelable* by the following additional statement:

(9) I know just where Smith is and what he is doing, but all I will tell you is that if he is in the library, he is working (SWW, 59)

And, it is also *contextually cancelable*, he argues, as for instance in the specified context of a game of bridge in which an artificial convention is declared that a call of 'five no trumps' would mean 'If I have a red king, I also have a black king'. This context, he believes, would cancel any possible suggestion of Indirectness Condition that might otherwise be present in the conditional 'If I have a red king, I also have a black king'.

The results of these tests, Grice contends, satisfactorily show that,

The *generalized implicature* of the Indirectness Condition has a high degree of nondetachability and is also explicitly cancelable and sometimes contextually cancelable (SWW, 60, **italics mine**).

Evaluation of Grice's Theory of Conditionals :

It is to be noted that in Grice's scheme the conversational implicature in its different forms is *not* admitted as a part of the conventional meaning. So, the identification of something as a type of conversational implicature of some expression would, in Grice theory, recognize it as part of the total meaning of that expression without admitting it as any part of the conventional meaning. This is why, I think, Grice attempts to show that the 'divergent' condition of the natural language conditionals is only a generalized conversational implicature that the 'If...then...' expressions "normally" carry. In this paper, my arguments are aimed to counter Grice's treatment of the ordinary conditionals at three different levels. The first is the most general. I contend that Grice has not been able to establish that there is this linguistic phenomenon which he calls the **generalized** conversational implicature. Secondly, I show that, in particular, in the cse of the indicative conditionals Grice's methods to show that their distinctive feature is merely a generalized conversational implicature are question-begging in nature. And thirdly, I show that the flexibility of Grice's distinctions between different kinds of implicatures does not let Grice reach his intended conclusion about the Indicative conditional; namely, that the "divergent" feature cannot be any part of the truth- conditions of the 'if-then'.

Here is the first argument. Grice tells us that *irrespective of the particularities present in the context* of the conversation, certain words or expressions normally carry the generalized conversational implicature. We need to remember that the distinction between the particularized and the generalized conversational implicatures is not the distinction between what a remark implies *only* with special knowledge of the context and what it would be taken to mean to imply in the *absence* of any special knowledge of the context.[7] By the introduction of **generalized** type of **conversational** implicature, Grice wants us to believe that certain expressions possess systematically present implicaturtes which are not related to the conventional meaning of the expressions in anyway, yet are there when these expressions are used in a conversational context. Now, I can understand this sort of regular presence, *independent of the particularities of the context*, in the case of what Grice calls a **conventional** implicature. For, one can at least see the connection between conventional implicature's root in the conventional meaning of the words or expressions, and its systematic and

"generalized" presence regardless of the situations whenever the same words or expressions are used. But, in the case of an implicature which, after all, is conversational in nature, so is more than likely to depend upon the context of the conversation, the claim of such persistent but generalized presence seems rather dubious. It only makes matters worse for Grice that in support of his claim, that there actually are certain words or expressions in natural language which supposedly carry this generalized type of implicature, he can produce only **one** example. Unfortunately, even that solitary example cannot hold water under scrutiny. He cites 'a' or 'an' as in 'X is meeting a woman this evening'. There is a generalized conversational implicature of remoteness, we are told, which 'a' or 'an' carries. For instance, in his view, the use of 'a woman', instead of, say, 'the woman', in (6) implicates that the woman is not any one of the close relatives, friends, or even "platonic" acquaintances of X (SWW, 37). What Grice fails to explain, though, is what exactly is so 'generalized' about this implicature. He himself admits that there may be legitimate uses of the 'a' or 'an' which lacks the implicature of remoteness. One can say without being incoherent, for instance, that

(11) I can't write very much as I broke *a* finger today.

indicating that the intended finger is the speaker's own. So, by generalized, he obviously does not mean the implicature to be unexceptional. What he means, perhaps, is that the implicature does not depend on **any** particular detail about the situation. If this is what Grice intends by generalized, then I contend that it is certainly not the case with his given example of 'a'. The reason is as follows.

Grice says that in the example "X is seeing a woman this evening," the implicature of remoteness rises not only from the fact that the speaker is being non-specific, but also from the *additional* assumption that under the circumstances the speaker *cannot* be more specific than that. This additional assumption is quite important for his theory. Without it, the simple failure of specificity on the part of the speaker becomes explicable by other standard explanations. For example, perhaps for reasons of his own the speaker does not want to identify the woman, or may be he simply does not know, which does not preclude the possibility of her being any of the members of the close family or of the circle of platonic acquaintances. But this additional assumption, I contend, itself is basically a bundle of assumptions about the particularities of

the situation. To establish that in *this* circumstance the speaker cannot help being non-specific and that the use of 'a' is intended to give rise to an implicature of remoteness, it has to be considered, for instance, that in *this* situation the speaker is not lying, that in *this* particular context he truly does not have more information than he is ready to impart, maybe even the stronger claim that he actually knows that the person X is seeing *this* evening is someone other than women in X's close family or intimate circle of acquaintances.[8] But then, contrary to Grice's claim, the implicature of remoteness does not remain unattached and unaffected by the particularities of the context or the situation. In other words, it no longer remains generalized in the above-mentioned sense of the term as it rises on the basis of the knowledge of the particular facts and features of the situation.

Secondly, I claim that, even if we grant for argument's sake that there is actually such a thing as *generalized conversational implicature*, the so-called non-detachability and cancelability tests performed by Grice do not show that the so-called Indirectness Condition is one. Consider the conclusion Grice believes he has arrived at after the tests for nondetachability and cancelability. With no further explanation, he sums up the outcome of the tests in a single sentence as follows:

> The **generalized** conversational impliciture of the Indirectness Condition
> has a high degree of nondetachability and is also explicitly cancelable
> and sometimes contextually cancelable. (SWW, p.60, italics mine)

This I find to be a totally unwarranted claim on Grice's part. If we recall Grice's discussion on the distinctive features of conversational implicature, we find that the features of nondetachability and cancelability allegedly identify the presence of conversational implicature in particular situations. His account does not tell us that the same tests by themselves can establish the presence of what he calls a *generalized* conversational implicature as well. So, the sudden use of these tests to proclaim the Indirectness condition as a *generalized* conversational implicature comes, to say the least, as a bit of a surprise.

There is reason to be wary here. For, this is an important development for Grice's over-all argument for the Indicative conditionals. By proclaiming the Indirectness condition as a *generalized* conversational implicature, Grice wants to acknowledge, in agreement with his opponents, that the Indirectness Condition

is a regular concomitant feature of the Indicative conditional. He wants to recognize it as a feature which, if we remember what he said about *generalized* conversational implicature, would "normally" be present regardless of special circumstances. This admission helps him to accomplish an early agreement with his opponents that he too sees that alleged Indirectness Condition as a persistent presence in the 'standard' uses of the Indicative. The identification of the condition merely as a conversational implicature alone cannot ever explain why it invariably accompanies the 'standard' uses of the Indicative conditional; since the "particularized" (**SWW**, 37) conversational implicatures, being entirely context-dependent, are fickle in their presence.

Moreover, the question-begging nature of the tests, I contend, prevents them from supporting any conclusion that follows from them one way or the other. Consider first his test for nondetachability. The general outline of his method for this is to take samples of expressions which are equivalent in meaning to the original expression, and find out whether the rephrasing of the words in the alternative expressions can 'detach' the implicature under consideration. So, the test depends upon not only what samples are chosen but also on how they are interpreted. Now, in the case of the Indicative conditionals, Grice's sample expressions are suspect on both counts. Even a cursory glance tell us that the expressions selected by Grice; as "otherwise identical in meaning" to his chosen 'If...then...' statement are the natural language replicas of certain equivalent forms of '⊃' in terms of '~', '&' and 'v'. Specifically, they are of the forms:

(a)   Either not-p or q

(b)   Not (p and not-q)

(c)   Not both p and not-q

(d)   It is the case that p and q

When the central issue is whether or not the truthfunctional interpretation of the '⊃' is legitimately extendable to the natural language conditionals, the casual selection of these particular expressions as the equivalent forms of an 'If...then...' statement is, I believe, a blatant case of **petitio principii** on Grice's part. As for his "detection" of the nondetachable presence of the condition in each of these expressions, I believe that depends largely on how we interpret these samples. If we set aside his assumption that these expressions are equivalent to the

Indicative conditional, I suspect, the presence of the Indirectness Condition in them can no longer be read so persistently. For instance, if we disregard the possibility that the statement ''Either Smith is not in London, or he is attending the meeting'' is an alternative expression for ''If Smith is in London, he is attending the meeting'', a fair reading of the former would be precisely what it literally says.

In his test for cancellability, I find it a hasty assumption on Grice's part that the Indirectness Condition **normally** implicated by the statement

(8) If Smith is in the library, he is working

is **explicitly** canceled by the additional statement

(9) I know exactly where Smith is and what he is doing, but all I will tell you is that if he is in the library, he is working.

For, (9), I argue, actually does not cancel the implicature that there are non-truth-functional grounds behind the assertion. It does not cancel the implicature that somehow the speaker has reasons to believe that Smith's being in the library provides the ground for inferring that he is working. What (9) does, however, is to add the further information that the speaker has, **in addition**, the information about the truth-value of the component statements as well.

A similar error can also be found in his test of **contextual cancellation** of the Indirectness Condition. Grice claims in his example that in the specified context of a bridge game in which the bidding convention of five no trumps is decided to be 'If I have a red king, I have a black king too', the implicature of Indirectness Condition usually carried by the conditional statement would be terminated by the context itself. He says that the bidder's having any of

(a)   No red king and no black king
(b)   No red king but a black king
(c)   A red king and a black king

would 'confirm' such a bid on the hand in which it was made. Since the 'confirming' facts in this case, i.e., (a)-(c), are purely truth-functional, he claims, the context would eliminate the supposition that there are non-truth-functional

grounds for asserting the conditional. I have a few points to make against this claim.

First, a general point. It is hard for me to see how an implicature, which supposedly rises independent of all conexts, can be canceled contextually. The fact that certain contexts can cancel it, to me, suggests that the implicature cannot be as context-independent as Grice portrays it. Second, (a)-(c) clearly represent the conditions under which '⊃' is true by the truth-table, and once more Grice assumes that the natural language conditional "If I have a red king, I have a black king too" would also be true in each of these cases; when that precisely is the issue in front of him. Finally, as Cohen (1971, 60) pointed out, even the strictly specified context does not rule out the suggestion, that there is some reason for believing it other than knowledge of truth-values of its components, when the call "Five no trumps" is made by a player to other players. The speaker, Cohen argued, just by *uttering the call* gives the other players an indirect reason to believe in its truth. That is, the very fact that the speaker is making this call constitutes for his hearers the ground to believe in its truth whether or not they have the information listed in (a)-(c). As he puts it,

> So even if we grant to Grice that his indirect-evidence implicature is normally canceled when sentences like (10) are at issue, that is not because the utterer of such a sentence does not convey clearly enough to his hearers the existence of indirect evidence for the truth of his assertion, but rather because he conveys this altogether too clearly : his very utterance constitutes the evidence. (*Ibid.*)

Thus, neither of Grice's tests, I contend, can successfully establish that the Indirectness Condition is a generalized conversational implicature.

My final argument is as follows. I believe that by his attempt to establish the so-called Indirectness Condition as a conversational implicature, Grice does not accomplish much in the way of keeping it undisputably segregated from that part of the meaning which in his view constitutes the truth-conditions. As a category, I agree, conversational implicatures of an expression is distinct from that of its conventional meaning, or for that matter from that of the conventional implicatures which rise solely from that meaning. For instance, the statement

(10) He is poor but honest.

conventionally means that the person mentioned is both poor and honest. But, it *conventionally implies* that poor people usually are not honest. The *conversational implicature* of the same statement, however, in a particular context will turn out to be entirely different. For instance, in response to an inquiry about how eligible a certain individual is as a candidate for a powerful position which is particularly vulnerable to the pressures of corruption, bribe etc., the use of the same statement may *conversationally imply* that the individual has unusual integrity to withstand the corruptible pressures of his work environment.

However, we need to remember that the boundaries among the different types of the proposed implicatures, as Grice himself admits, are not really inflexible. There is fluidity, perhaps more extensive than Grice himself recognizes, present among his proposed distinctions. What began its life as a *conversational implicature,* Grice himself admits, may end as a *conventionalized implicature* (SWW, 43). And most importantly, it has been argued that given time and acceptable, extensive use, a slow transmutation all the way from a *conversational implicature* to part of the actually accepted *conventional meaning* is not only possible but *actually often happens in language* (Lakoff 1973, Cole 1975, Morgan 1978).   These studies have shown that in many cases conversational implicatures conveyed by expressions have become conventionalized by stages, and have come to be accepted as an idiomatic sense of the expression. As for instance, over time and extensive use, the expression ''spilling the beans'' *has come to mean,* in addition to its original literal meaning, 'to divulge the secret'. Our everyday language is replete with other similar instances (such as, ''to croak'', ''to kick the bucket''...etc). If it is a real possibility that an expression can *acquire* a conventional meaning with time and use, then, my point is, Grice's argument that the controversial condition is a type of conversational implicature cannot dismiss the possibility of its gradual introduction to the truth-conditions.

NOTES

1.   All these technical terms are explained in the main body of the paper.

2..   For instance, Robert J. Fogelin and Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, *Understanding*

Arguments: An Introduction To Informal Logic, 4th ed., Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc: 1991.

3.   Henceforth Grice 1989 will be referred to as SWW.

4.   His own example is the social maxim ''Be polite''. (SWW, 28)

5.   I modeled this 'derivation' of the conversational implicature after Grice. His original one is to be found in SWW, 31. In Grice's view, situations like this, where one conversational maxim seems to be preferred over a more appropriate one are the typical ones to give rise to a conversational implicature.

6.   See for instance, Strawson 1974, 83.

7.   As are the cases with conventional implicatures. e.g. 'He is poor but honest' (Grice's own example). One does not need to possess any special knowledge about the context of utterance of this sentence to figure out what the implicature is.

8.   In particular, Grice's own example containing the expression 'a woman' seems to conventionally assume a lot about the nature of interaction between men and women in a society.

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