MORE ON IMPLICATURES

We look in more detail at different kinds of implicatures and find
that some are less dependent on background knowledge of the
context than others.

These implicatures are based on the quantity of information offered by the speaker. In (a)
and (c) we notice that the first speaker's utterance contains *and*. In (a) Carmen is really
asking two questions: Did you buy the milk? and Did you buy the eggs? Similarly, in (c)
Faye mentions two propositions: You invited Mat and You invited Chris. When only one of
the questions or propositions has been mentioned in the response, we normally assume
that the speaker is still adhering to the co-operative principle and therefore is implying a
response for the second one as well. And, we normally take it to be the opposite of the
one mentioned.

In a more general sense, when the speaker uses the expression a/an X we draw the
implicature 'not the speaker's X'.
Our expectations about the quantity of information that speakers will provide in an
utterance also lead to other common implicatures.

SCALAR IMPLICATURES:
  Scale of quantity: some most all
  Scale of frequency: sometimes often always
  Scale of coldness: cool cold freezing
  Scale of likelihood: possibly probably certainly
 We normally assume (following the co-operative principle) that, where speakers have a
scale of values at their disposal, they will choose the one that is truthful (maxim of quality)
and optimally informative (maxim of quantity). So, we normally draw the implicature `not
any of the higher values on the scale'. In other words, if X has chosen the word
sometimes, it creates the implicatures 'not always' and 'not often'.

Have you noticed that while the implicatures we have been looking at require a previous
utterance, they are so 'strong' that they do not seem to require any extra knowledge to
extract the meaning? These types of implicatures are sometimes called GENERALIZED
CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES.

Inferences which require shared knowledge between the speaker and hearer are
sometimes called PARTICULARIZED CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURES.

At this point, you may be wondering about generalized implicatures. They seem so conventional and require so little contextual knowledge that perhaps they are really the same as presuppositions. There is a test that is sometimes used to distinguish presuppositions from implicatures.

When a speaker cancels a presupposition, the results usually sound rather contradictory or incoherent. However, when both generalized and particularized implicatures are cancelled, the results usually sound much more 'normal'.

SUMMARY:
- We have distinguished two types of conversational implicatures: generalized and particularized.
- Generalized implicatures can be drawn with very little `inside' knowledge. If you heard a tape recording of the conversation but knew nothing about the participants or the physical characteristics of the context, you could still draw those implicatures. They are closely connected to the degree of informativeness that we normally expect a speaker's utterance to provide.
- Scalar implicatures are a special type of generalized implicature where the inference is made by reference to a scale of values, one of which has been chosen by the speaker. The speaker's choice implicates 'not the higher values'.
-   Particularized implicatures require not only general knowledge but also knowledge which is particular or `local' to the speaker and the hearer, and often to the physical context of the utterance as well.
-   Both generalized and particularized implicatures differ from presuppositions in that they sound much less contradictory when they are cancelled by the speaker.