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A Relevance-Theoretic Analysis of Explicature and Implicature in Juan Cole's Interview on Florida International University Interfaith Podcast

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Abstract: This study offers a relevance-theoretic analysis of explicature and implicature in Juan Cole's a scholar specializing in Middle Eastern studies, interview on the FIU Interfaith Podcast, drawing on the framework developed by Wilson and Sperber. The study aims at Investigating how explicature and implicature interact in Juan Cole's discourse to shape the overall meaning. Showing the pragmatic strategies that the speaker employs to convey implicature. Examining how the interaction between explicature and implicature in the selected extracts guides the hearer's inferential process. It hypothesized that the interaction between explicature and implicature in Juan Cole's discourse is not incidental but systematically structured. The pragmatic strategies employed by the speaker to construct his implied meaning. Explicature provides the necessary interpretive foundation for implicature to be understood by the hearer without which implicated meaning cannot be derived. Overall the analysis of the extracts explicature and implicature did not occur in isolation or randomly occurring phenomena rather explicature constantly functioned as the propositional trigger for implicature, and implicature constantly qualified, elaborated, or reversed the assumptions generated by that explicature. Henceforth, Cole organizes his discourse according to a predictable explicature→implicature trajectory. Implicature did not arise independently, the hearer's ability to understand the implicated premises depend on first resolving reference, explicating and disambiguating expressions of the utterance. Henceforth, implicature depends on explicature, the two levels are figured in parallel as part of a single relevance stages rather than as successive stages.

Keywords: Relevance-Theory, Explicature, Implicature, Juan Cole.

1. Introduction

One of the branches of linguistics is pragmatics, it deals with the study of meaning. Understanding an utterance is never limited to what is explicitly said; rather to what is implicitly conveyed through context and the shared knowledge between the hearer and the speaker. Relevance Theory is the most proper theory proposed by Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson, to explain how hearers infer intended meaning for the least possible processing effort, through a division between two levels of meaning: explicature, deriving it from the logical form of an utterance, and implicature, inferred beyond that logical form through implicated premises and conclusions that independently constructed by the hearer [1].

Therefore, the study tries to answer the following questions

1. How do explicature and implicature interact in Juan Cole's discourse to shape the overall meaning?
2. What pragmatic strategies does the speaker employ to convey implicature?
3. How does the balance between explicature and implicature serve to lead the hearer's inferential path toward the speaker's intended interpretation

The study aims at

1. Investigating how explicature and implicature interact in Juan Cole's discourse to shape the overall meaning.
2. Showing the pragmatic strategies that the speaker employs to convey implicature.
3. Examining how the interaction between explicature and implicature in the selected extracts guides the hearer's inferential process.

The hypothesis

It hypothesized that

1. The interaction between explicature and implicature in Juan Cole's discourse is not incidental but systematically structured.
2. The pragmatic strategies employed by the speaker to construct his implied meaning.
3. Explicature provides the necessary interpretive foundation for implicature to be understood by the hearer without which implicated meaning cannot be derived.

The Procedures

The following steps are followed:

Presenting a theoretical background about explicature, implicature and Relevance-Theory. Analyzing selected extracts from an interview with Juan Cole, a scholar specializing in Middle Eastern studies, on the FIU Interfaiths Podcast. According to Sperber and Wilson framework which is developed and elaborated by them in [2]. Then conclusions

The study is limited to analyzing explicature and implicature items in Relevance-Theory in one episode of the interview with Juan Cole, a scholar specializing in Middle Eastern studies, on the FIU Interfaiths Podcast.

It is hoped that the study be of value for the researchers who are interested in pragmatics in general and those who are interested in Middle Eastern studies.

2. Relevance Theory

It was established by Sperber and Wilson, first outlined in *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* and noticeably revised in its second edition. RT suggests that human cognition is governed by a general cognitive tendency to maximize relevance rather than by social conventions of cooperation. Relevance theory has two principles: the first one is "The Cognitive Principle of Relevance" which explain human perception, maximizing relevance and pay attention to inputs that give the greatest cognition (ibid) [3]. The second one is "the communicative", which regards every act carries a presumption so that the communicator assumes that the utterance is relevant and well-matched with the communicator's own skills therefore; the listener must do some efforts

3. Explicatures and Implicatures:

This theory present a developed version of Grice's implicatures. The meaning that a speaker communicates along with the exact connotation of the utterance is called implicature, Grice (1975: 41–58). He differentiated what is said and what is implicated. He said speakers habitually convey more than their words literally encode, and this additional meaning is recovered through inferential processes grounded in a shared assumption of cooperation [4]. The main mechanism which such inferences are triggered is Grice's Cooperative Principle and

its four maxims (Quantity, Quality, Relation, and Manner) particularly when these maxims are intentionally flouted (ibid). Although Grice's model is an initial theory in pragmatics, it has been criticized for treating cooperation as a social convention rather than deriving communication from more general principles of cognition.

This critique inspired the development of Relevance Theory which is alternative, cognitively grounded account of implicature. Relevance theory focuses on the reframing the recovery of implicated meaning as a by-product of general inferential comprehension instead of adherence to conversational maxims [5]. Sperber and Wilson's main goal is to show that implicit meanings and explicit meanings are essential parts of the communication process. Sperber and Wilson (1995:182) refer to the definition of explicit meanings as follows: "A proposition communicated by an utterance U is explicit (hence explicature) if and only if it is a development of a logical formula encoded in the utterance U." Explicit meanings are divided into two basic types: Basic Explicit Meaning and Higher-level Explicit Meaning, which is included within the term Basic Explicit Meanings. Grice indicates that conversational implicature is a set of irrational inferences that include messages that are not explicitly expressed, but rather are implied, and are formed through adherence to the principles of conversation and their violation or violation.

Implications are "everything that is not communicated explicitly." They explain the meaning of obligations as an implicit statement that is conveyed and inferred by the recipient, or between the speaker and the recipient, and thus the relationship between obligations (Implicatures) and explicit meanings (Explicatures) becomes clear through this definition.

Sperber and Wilson's description of obligations differs from Grice's interpretation of them. Specific obligations can be inferred from the speaker's expectations, so that what is said becomes relevant to the communicative context (ibid). Speaker's expectations can infer the determined implicatures so that the utterance became related. Huang (2007:195) named implicatures as "r-implicatures," recovered just by inference; permitting the hearer to understand the intended message of the speaker [6].

Kinds of Explicature

Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) distinguish explicature by the interaction it exist in, deriving it from the logical form of an utterance:

1. Basic Explicature

The primary propositional content derived by developing the shape by the utterance through decoding and inference. This is the "lowest level" of explicated meaning — the fully enriched literal proposition.

2. Higher-Level Explicature

This kinds is inserted under the "basic explicature" when describing a speech-act or un real action (e.g., "The speaker thinks that P," "or is objecting to P"). Higher-level explicatures capture the speaker's attitude toward the proposition, not just the proposition itself — for example, whether the utterance is meant as a complaint, a suggestion, or a criticism.

Types of Implicature

Sperber and Wilson (1986/1995) describe implicature as above mentioned, any communicated statement that isn't part of the explicature — i.e., meaning inferred entirely through inference.

2. Methodology

1. Implicated hypothesized

An assumption the hearer must supply from the context (or encyclopedic knowledge) in order for the utterance to produce a relevant conclusion. It functions as a missing premise in the related chain.

2. Implicated Conclusion

The proposition the hearer is meant to derive by connecting the explicature with the implicated premise(s). This is the ultimate inferential outcome the speaker wants to communicate.

Classification by strength:

Strong Implicature: an assumption the hearer is meant to recover with a high degree of confidence, as it is essential for the statement to be related and intended — the speaker takes pure responsibility for it.

Weak Implicature: one of a range of assumptions the hearer may derive; the speaker does not commit to any single one specifically, leaving greater interpretive latitude to the hearer. Weak implicatures still contribute to relevance but with lower communicative responsibility on the speaker's

4. Jaun Cole

Upon entering Northwestern University, he majored in the history of religion. He was widely acquainted with the field of Sufism, and showed interest in various world religions, especially Asian religions. The Islamic, Hindu and Buddhist religions received special attention to him. He also began studying Arabic during his bachelor's degree.

During his university studies, he prepared research about Christian-Islamic dialogue after the Second Vatican Council, in Lebanon, within a distinguished program at Northwestern University known as Traveling Scholars, which was funded by one of the university's graduates. Entry into this program was competitive, as students had to design an original research project. During that period, the Catholic Church supported discussion with followers of further religions, and the Council's documents related to Islam were characterized by a relatively positive outlook from the Catholic perspective. He participated in many meetings, and Lebanon was considered an ideal environment for such a dialogue, as numerous meetings were held, a number of publications were issued, and an elite group of the most prominent Lebanese intellectuals participated. He graduated from Northwestern University in 1975.

After that, he earned a master's degree in religious studies in Cairo, determined to achieve a near-native level of Arabic proficiency. He then joined the University of California, Los Angeles to complete his doctoral studies. Thanks to his background in historical training, he began to view history as a scientific discipline in its own right, and became interested in historical research methods, particularly by using personal papers, archives, and delving into the details of individuals' thoughts and mental worlds, a level of analysis that the phenomenological approach does not allow to the same extent. Personally and philosophically, he found himself inclined to work as a historian.

Due to his academic training at the American University in Cairo and the University of California, Los Angeles in the field of early Islamic studies, he decided to write a book dealing with the concept of peace in the Holy Qur'an, as he believed that no independent book had been written that dealt with this topic before. In this work, he focused on the concepts of reconciliation, peace, moderation, and dialogue in various verses of the Holy Qur'an. He believes that Muslims are aware of these implications, but the Western public, including Western academic circles, lacked sufficient knowledge of them. He also wrote a book about the Prophet Muhammad,

peace and blessings be upon him, and edited another book that dealt with peace movements in Islam.

5. The Model of the analysis

The present study adopts Sperber and Wilson framework which is developed and elaborated by them in. They said that utterance can go through many interrelated steps, but the analytical model adopted in this study represents the derivation of explicature and implicature as a single, integrated cognitive process rather than a linear sequence of separate steps. The model consists of four interrelated components:

Utterance: produced by the speaker, prior to any pragmatic enrichment.

Contextual Assumptions: the shared background knowledge from which the hearer magnets to interpret the utterance

Explicature: the explicit level of meaning,

Implicature: the implicit level of meaning.

Wilson and Sperber (2004: 615) put explicature and implicature in the stage worked out together against the same set of contextual assumptions. Until they reach to an explanation that satisfy the hearer's potentials of relevance.

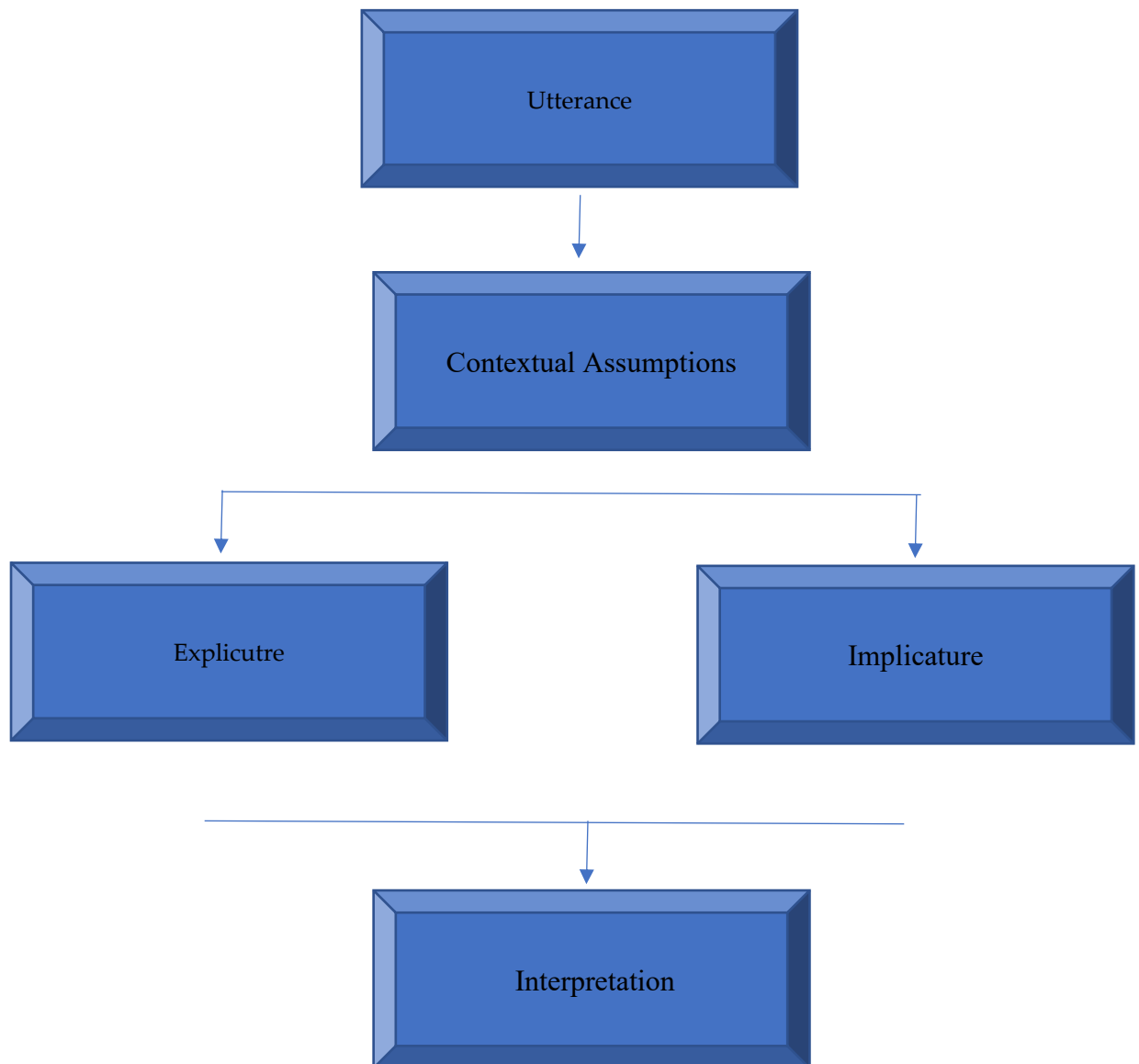


Figure 1. The Model of the Study.

3. Result and Discussion

6. The Analysis

Five extracts will be selected from the speech of Jaun Cole and analyzed according to the adopted model.

Extract One:

"I also reacted against some of the disciplinary assumptions of the history of religions as I had learned it. We were under the shadow of the University of Chicago, where phenomenology of religion was ascendant, and that approach was somewhat ahistorical. You know, it was all about myth cycles and things like that. First of all, it wasn't very relevant to Islamic studies. It developed mostly out of Hinduism, Christianity, and Buddhism. I don't know what "myth cycles" there are in Islam. That's a bit silly".

In this extract Jaun Cole explained Akhtar's question about his intellectual trajectory, "why he abandoned the Chicago-school phenomenology of religion approach in favor of history as a discipline". He starts with the sentence "I also reacted against some of the disciplinary assumptions of the history of religions as I had learned it." Which is an implicature because he wants to deliver certain meaning about the policy of the college at that time. In the second sentence: "We were under the shadow of the University of Chicago ahistorical." There is explicature the pronoun "we" which refer to Cole and his academic colleague. "Under the shadow of" metaphorically mean dominated by the university not physical shadow in its literal meaning. Cole implicitly criticized this approach that is followed by his university. In the line: "You know, it was all about myth cycles and things like that." The pronoun "it" refers to "phenomenology of religion" and "things like that" is a unclear expression improved by context to mean related thematic/comparative categories typical of that approach. the use of "You know" means that the speaker want to share background knowledge with the interviewer [7]. This is in fact regarded as explicature. The sentence "It developed mostly out of Hinduism, Christianity, and Buddhism." The pronoun "it" refers to the phenomenology of religion which historically explicates origin of the approach. Simultaneously, it implicates that "the previous claim not very relevant to Islamic studies". Also, the sentence "I don't know what 'myth cycles' there are in Islam." Explicitly mean he did not know but actually this is not a confession of his ignorance rather it is a use of implicature since he is a well-informed Scholar of Islam [8]. He is not expressing uncertainty, but he is implying that this does not fit to Islam nor to its studies. In this sentence there is a divergence between what is said and what is literally meant. In the next Sentence: "That's a bit silly.", "That" refers anaphorically to preceding sentence "myth cycles" to Islam, "a bit silly" is an Implicature to soften a stronger underlying judgment. by using understatement ("a bit"). This is a clear manner of saying less than intended to achieve a particular effect, while still being extremely relevant [8].

Extract Two:

"Then some mega-bloggers with large followings linked to me. I woke up one morning and had sixty thousand hits. In April 2004, at the height of the struggles between the Marines and the Mahdi Army, I had a million hits that month. I'd never had a million of anything".

In this extract Cole uses explicature in the sentence "Then some mega-bloggers with large followings linked to me" to describe that other bloggers placed hyperlinks to his blog. "Mega-bloggers" actually mean those who have large readerships. Cole assumes this term is already understood by his audience without explanation. In the second sentence: "I woke up one morning and had sixty

thousand hits." The word "hits" "hits" is conceptually means to the viewers of the blog page; this is Explicature. Also, there is an implicature that Coles had faced a sudden jump to 60,000 hits which mean major shift in reach and status. He implicated that he has become a widely-read public voice after an obscure academic blogger [9].

In the sentence: "In April 2004, at the height of the struggles... I had a million hits that month." Contextually, there is an explicature: a explicit date, military conflict, real-world political event and increase in the viewers. All of these implicate that the military conflict in Iraq has reached to the peak and the public seriously demand for expert to analyze what happen to them. This leads us to Implicated conclusion which is made by an implicit claim that Cole's blog had become a reference point during moments of crisis thus, the growing readership wasn't accidental.

In the line: "I'd never had a million of anything." Refer to an ellipted construction like a "million readers, views, or of any kind of measurable following in my life". This has an impicture that Cole regard himself as a traditional scholar whose life changed in unexpected way by sharing a blog, rather than seeking fame deliberately.

Actually, Cole reducing the speaker's processing effort and maximizing cognitive effect. As he did not praise himself, he did not say directly "I became influential," rather than he made the hearer draw the conclusion by watching numbers and imagery.

Extract Three

"It wasn't a frivolous Hollywood kind of celebrity. I didn't have the pink limousine. But I was well known. C. P. Snow said that a celebrity is someone who's very well known for being very well known. In a minor way — I don't want to make too much of it — I entered those ranks. It was because the country wanted the knowledge I had. They wanted the analysis I had, and I consulted with the government."

The first sentence "It wasn't a frivolous Hollywood kind of celebrity [10]. I didn't have the pink limousine." Carriers explicature which is Cole was not famous in the shallow sense of it. He was not a Hollywood star or showing wealth and entertainment. He tried to implicate that Hollywood-style fame based on appearance rather than content which is empty fame while his fame is based on knowledge. The use of metonymy in "Pink limousine" made the implication much more stronger and made a vivid rejection for those who represent the "frivolous" category of some of the well-informed celebrities. The Explicature in the line "But I was well known." Mean an assertion of genuine fame conveyed contrastively by "But." This implicate that he had real fame of another kind.

This speech of the reporter of C. P. Snow: "a celebrity is someone who's very well known for being very well known." explicitly means that being celebrate does not necessary mean to add actual achievement but simply famous for fame itself just as a circular state [11]. Implicature: Cole want to use the citation to reinforce his idea which is he did not have an empty fame. Consequently, Cole acknowledges that he joined the ranks of "celebrities but in a limited degree. "In a minor way — I don't want to make too much of it — I entered those ranks."

In the line, "It was because the country wanted the knowledge I had. They wanted the analysis I had, and I consulted with the government." Explicitly, Cole wanted to inform the audience that the U.S. government and its institutions demand him because of his knowledge and analysis. So that he is implicated that his fame arises from official demand which is related to his mentality rather than his image

Extract Four

"So that enlargement of the self, the ways in which you can widen your horizons and deepen your understanding, that's worth gold. Learning another language, another way of expressing yourself, understanding concepts: the world looks different when you know another language. There's an Arabic proverb: kullu lisān insān, every language is a person. When you learn a new language, it's like you have a new personality incorporated into yourself".

Explicitly "that" refers to what precedes it which is widening and deepening understanding by using language-learning [12]. Also, the use of metaphor in "worth gold" means a very high, almost incommensurable value.

For implicature, Cole wants to deliver to the hearers that self- enlargement by using language, exceeds material wealth in worth. Then, Cole cited an Arabic proverb which is " kullu lisān insān " this is explicitly a proverb which needs to be explained by using implicature since language and person are not literary identical. Actually, citing this Arabic proverb without translating it led to the fact that the speaker wants the hearer to expend slightly more effort to process an unfamiliar phrase so that he made great effect. Cole impacted that acquiring a language change not only what the speaker can do but also what the speaker is.

In the line "The world looks different when you know another language."

Expicture: the deictic expression "that" refers to a general reference not addressing a person in specific, resembles the proverb. Implicature: since this sentence follows a direct form it can function as a restatement as the hearer interprets the previous sentence, he can derive the implicated meaning from this sentence without any effort. " The world looks different " can be a paraphrase as new personality [13]. Henceforth, Cole did not re-argue the same idea rather he echoes it or reinforce it. By doing so, he maximizes contextual effect for minimal processing cost.

Extract Five

"Regarding to geopolitics, I don't think I have to make a strong pitch. We don't understand the Middle East, but we rampage around it like an elephant in a China shop. I have been both pleasantly surprised and deeply disappointed by my interactions with officials in Washington. Some were on the ball. A very large number were completely ignorant of the places they were trying to run. That's inadvisable".

Cole started with an introductory sentence which is explicated thoroughly and the phrase "strong pitch" in fact mean extended justification or argument. Cole manipulated this sentence to lower the hearer's processing effort as he declared that the upcoming claim is uncontroversial. Cole's second sentence used the pronoun "we" which need explication. It may refer to the U. S. government not the speaker himself. Also, the use of simile in " like an elephant in a China shop." which is explicit by using "like". Thus, it is necessary to use implicature to understand the destructive power of an elephant and the fragility of the environment [14]. There are wide range of implication that may be interpreted from this simile. U. S. power is misappropriated with its understanding. Or unintentionally caused damage. In this sensitive declare, Cole used implicature rather than expicture to protect himself from direct accountability for his claim at the same time he achieves cognitive effect.

the sentence "I have been both pleasantly surprised and deeply disappointed by my interactions with officials in Washington" is balanced and explicit on the part of meaning, Since it describes two contradictive feeling which refer to the existence of two opinions. Nevertheless, it had many implicature

meanings to be interpreted. Cole wanted to be unbiased he want to criticize the officials but not in a harsh way, he also delivered implicitly the idea that the hearers will hear a fair and credible assessment in an objective way this is an introductory to the next sentence [15].

In the line " Some were on the ball. A very large number were completely ignorant of the places they were trying to run. " Cole started with an idiom that explicitly mean "some of the officials are well-informed" henceforth it needs implicature to understand the intended meaning of the speaker. He actually manipulated the intensifiers. He uses "some" instead of saying "little". But the use of a language number is explicit without referring to a number. This implicate that the ignorant people are much more than those who are competent without saying the numbers or ratio.

Through using this theory, Cole emphasized that management would be ineffective if the number of ignorant officials exceeded that of those who are aware and knowledgeable. However, he did not state this explicitly but rather implied it, to be in the safe side, leaving it up to the listener to draw this conclusion.

4. Conclusions

Throughout the analysis, it is concluded that

The first hypothesis which is "The interaction between explicature and implicature in Juan Cole's discourse is not incidental but systematically structured." is valid, from overall the extracts explicature and implicature did not occur in isolation or randomly occurring phenomena rather explicature constantly functioned as the propositional trigger for implicature, and implicature constantly qualified, elaborated, or reversed the assumptions generated by that explicature. Henceforth, Cole organizes his discourse according to a predictable explicature→implicature trajectory.

The second hypothesis which is "The pragmatic strategies employed by the speaker to construct his implied meaning". strategies are employed deliberately as metaphor ("worth gold"), simile ("elephant in a china shop"), and metonymy ("pink limousine"). Though they are not used extensively, but this finding validates Hypothesis 2.

The third hypothesis which is "Explicature provides the necessary interpretive foundation for implicature to be understood by the hearer without which implicated meaning cannot be derived." This hypothesis is supported strongly at every analyzed extract. Implicature did not arise independently, the hearer's ability to understand the implicated premises depend on first resolving reference, explicating and disambiguating expressions of the utterance. Henceforth, implicature depends on explicature, the two levels are figured in parallel as part of a single relevance stages rather than as successive stages.

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