

The landscape of non-at-issue meaning

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I. Grice meets Frege: Conventional implicature as *Andeutung*

The difference between ‘and’ and ‘but’ is of a kind that has no expression in this *Begriffsschrift*. A speaker uses ‘but’ when he wants to **hint** [*einen Wink geben*] that what follows is different from what might at first be supposed.

(Frege 1879: 63)

Subsidiary clauses beginning with ‘although’ [*obgleich*] also express complete thoughts. This conjunction...**does not change the sense of the clause but only illuminates it in a peculiar fashion.** (*Footnote*: Similarly in the case of ‘but’ [*aber*], ‘yet’ [*noch*].)

(Frege 1892: 167)

It makes no difference to the thought whether I use the word ‘horse’ or ‘steed’...The assertive force does not extend over that in which these words differ...Much in language serves to aid the hearer’s understanding, for instance emphasizing part of the sentence by stress or word-order. Here let us bear in mind words like ‘still’ and ‘already’. Somebody using the sentence ‘Alfred has still not come’ [*Alfred ist noch nicht gekommen*] actually **says** ‘Alfred has not come’ and, at the same time **hints** [*andeutet*]—but only hints—that Alfred’s arrival is expected. Nobody can say: Since Alfred’s arrival is not expected, the sense of the sentence is therefore false. The way that ‘but’ differs from ‘and’ in that we use it to **intimate** [*andeuten*] that what follows it contrasts with what was to be expected from what preceded it. **Such conversational suggestions make no difference to the thought.** A sentence can be transformed by changing the verb from active to passive and at the same time making the accusative into the subject. In the same way we may change the dative into the nominative and at the same time replace ‘give’ by ‘receive’. Naturally such transformations are not indifferent in every respect but **they do not touch the thought, they do not touch what is true or false**...It is just as important to ignore distinctions that do not touch the heart of the matter, as to make distinctions which concern essentials. But what is essential depends on one’s purpose. **To a mind concerned with the beauties of language, what is trivial to the logician may seem to be just what is important.** (Frege 1918-19: 331)

[In his catalogue of cases in the posthumous *Logic*, After noting that the addition of particles like *ach* ‘ah’ and *leider* ‘unfortunately’ or the replacement of *Hund* ‘dog’ with *Köter* ‘cur’ “makes no difference to the thought”, Frege continues:]

The distinction between the active and passive voice belongs here too. The sentences ‘M gave document A to N’, ‘Document A was given to N by M’, ‘N received document A from M’ express exactly the same thought; we learn not a whit more or less from any of these sentences that we do from the others. Hence it is impossible that one of them should be true whilst another is false. It is the very same thing that is here capable of being true or false. For all this **we are not in a position to say that it is a matter of complete indifference which of these sentences we use**...If someone asks ‘Why has A been arrested?’ it would

be unnatural to reply ‘B has been murdered by him’, because it would require a needless switch of the attention from A to B. **Although in actual speech it can certainly be very important where the attention is directed and where the stress falls, it is of no concern to logic.** (Frege 1897: 242)

Cf. Prague School on FUNCTIONAL SENTENCE PERSPECTIVE, Lambrecht 1994 on ALLOSENTENCES, Cruse 1986: §10.6 on indirect converses (*give/receive*), etc.

EXPRESSION [vs. *unmarked alternative*]

Alfred has not yet come. [vs. *Alfred has not come*]

B received C from A,

B was given C by A [vs. *A gave C to B*]

B was murdered by A [vs. *A murdered B*]

A murdered B [vs. *A murdered B*]

p but q [vs. *p and q*]

p although q [vs. *p and q*]

ah, p; (un)fortunately p [vs. *p simpliciter*]

The cur [vs. *The dog*] howled the whole night.

The steed [vs. *The horse*] raced around the track.

ANDEUTUNG

Alfred’s coming is expected.

B is the topic of discussion

B is the topic of discussion

B is the topic of discussion

there is a contrast between p, q

p is surprising, given q

S has relevant attitude toward p

neg. evaluation of referent

pos. evaluation of referent

Dummett’s critique (1973: 2-3; 83-89) of Fregean “tone”:

➤ Frege distinguishes *Bedeutung*, *Sinn*, and [what Dummett calls] “tone” (= *Färbung* ‘coloring’ or *Beleuchtung* ‘illumination’)

➤ The notion of “tone” is problematic because it is inherently subjective, characterized in terms of ideas (*Vorstellungen*) or mental images...

Frege makes a poor explanation worse by suggesting that mental images are incommunicable in principle: no two people can ever know that they have the same mental image. It would follow that tone was a feature of meaning which was, in principle, subjective. This conclusion is a simple contradiction. Meaning, under any theory, cannot be *in principle* subjective...Tone is not, however, in itself any more subjective than sense.

(Dummett 1973: 85)

➤ While conceding that “a hint is evidently not the production of a mental image”, Dummett still objects to Frege’s analysis of the distinction between *but* and *and* as hinting at a contrast between the two conjuncts, since other sources of contrast may be in play:

Frege’s account of ‘but’ is incorrect: the word is indeed used to hint at the presence of some contrast; but not necessarily one between what the second half of the sentence asserts, and what you would expect, knowing the first half to be true...If a club committee is discussing what speakers to invite, and someone says, ‘Robinson always draws large audiences’, a reply might be ‘He always draws large audiences, but he is in America for year’; the objector is not suggesting that a popular speaker is unlikely to go to America, but that, while Robinson’s popularity as a speaker is a

reason for inviting him, his being in America is a strong reason against doing so. The word 'but' is used to hint that there is some contrast, relevant to the context, between the two halves of the sentence: no more can be said, in general, about what kind of contrast is hinted at.

(Dummett 1973: 86; cf. Bach 1999 for a similar point)

- Fregean "tone" applies more plausibly to cases of "expressive meaning", whereas the choice of *but* as against *and* "does not serve to convey any attitude on the part of the speaker, in the sense in which a speaker may evince, e.g., a respectful, apologetic or regretful attitude." (Dummett 1973: 88)

II. *but*

- (1) a. She was poor but she was honest.
b. There is some contrast between poverty and honesty, or between her poverty and her honesty.
- (2) *but*: The Gricean mantra
 - the truth of (1b) has no effect on the truth conditions of (1a), as distinct from the case of (semantic) presupposition: "Even if the implied proposition were false, i.e. if there were no reason in the world to contrast poverty with honesty either in general or in her case, the original statement could still be false;...if for example she were rich and dishonest."
 - what is said in (1a) does not semantically imply (1b), whence the anomaly of #*If she was poor but honest, then there is some contrast between (her) poverty and honesty.*
 - the implication of (1b) is detachable (removable by substitution of *and* for *but* in (1a))
 - the implication of (1b) non-cancellable (#*She is poor but she is honest, but I do not mean to suggest there is any contrast between poverty and honesty.*)
 - the inference from (1a) to (1b) is "a matter of the meaning of the word 'but'" (unlike the inferences drawn in the relevant contexts from *Jones has beautiful handwriting and his English is grammatical* or *My wife is either in the kitchen or in the bedroom*).

It does not seem plausible that there is a strict rule fixing the occasions on which we should attach significance to the order in which conjoined sentences appear in a conjunction: the difference between 'They got married and had a child' and 'They had a child and got married.' Interpreters certainly can make these distinctions. But part of the burden of this paper is that much that they can do should not count as part of their linguistic competence. The contrast in what is meant or implied by the use of 'but' instead of 'and' seems to me another matter, since no amount of common sense unaccompanied by linguistic lore would enable an interpreter to figure it out. Paul Grice has done more than anyone else to bring these problems to our attention and help to sort them out.

(Davidson 1986: 161-62)

Consider the semantics/pragmatics divide, *pace* Grice: where does conventional implicature (or F-implicature) belong? For Kaplan (1999: 20-21), it falls outside what is said and so must be pragmatic:

According to Grice's quite plausible analysis of such logical particles as "but", "nevertheless", "although", and "in spite of the fact", they all have the same descriptive content as "and" and differ only in expressive content...The arguments I will present are meant to show that even accepting Grice's analysis, the logic is affected by the choice of particle, as it should be on my view of logical validity as the preservation of truth-plus rather than (merely) descriptive truth. If this is correct, then generations of logic teachers, including myself, have been misleading the youth. Grice sides with the logic teachers, and though he regards the expressive content as *conventional* and hence (I would say) semantic (as opposed to being a consequence of his conversational maxims), he categorizes it with the maxim-generated *implicatures*.

[Kaplan (1999: fn. 12) also claims that Frege would have said that epithets "do not contribute to cognitive content and thus the study of their use belongs not to semantics but to pragmatics" But what WOULD Frege say? Or Grice?]

Grice 1989: 361 (Retrospective Epilogue, Strand Five):

distinguish CENTRAL vs. NON-CENTRAL modes of meaning by invoking criteria of FORMALITY ("whether or not the relevant signification is part of the conventional meaning of the signifying expression") and DICTIVENESS ("whether or not the relevant signification is part of what the signifying expression *says*"). If, for example, a speaker says "*p*; *on the other hand*, *q*" in the absence of any intended contrast of any kind between *p* and *q*,

one would be inclined to say that a condition conventionally signified by the presence of the phrase "on the other hand" was in fact not realized and so that the speaker had done violence to the conventional meaning of, indeed had misused, the phrase "on the other hand." But the nonrealization of this condition would also be regarded as insufficient to falsify the speaker's statement.

Thus, [+ formality, - dictiveness] = conventional implicature.

If conventional (or F-)implicature for adversatives like *but* and *on the other hand* is a matter of content, what IS the content it contributes?

The word 'but' is used to hint that there is some contrast, relevant to the context, between the two halves of the sentence: no more can be said, in general, about what kind of contrast is hinted at. (Dummett 1973: 86)

Googled examples of *p, but q too* (*p, but so is q*) support Dummett's point on this:

- (3) γWar is hell, but so is withdrawal.
- γBreast cancer is unfair, but so is life.
- γDivorce is hell, but so is a bad marriage.
- γBoyfriend is visiting soon, but so is my period!

Another example:

City Councilman Cecil Bothwell of Asheville believes in ending the death penalty, conserving water and reforming government, but he does not believe in God. His political opponents say that is a sin that makes him unworthy of office, and they have the North Carolina Constitution on their side.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/13/us/13northcarolina.html>, NYT 13 Dec. 2009
“In North Carolina, Lawsuit Is Threatened Over Councilman’s Lack of Belief in God”

- *but* and other discourse markers invoke procedural rather than conceptual meaning, and involve unexpectedness rather than contrast (Blakemore 2002, Hall 2007)
- or maybe not (Hansen 2003, Rieber 2007, Pons Bordería 2008)
- role of *but* clauses in argumentation: in *p but q*, *p* is an argument for *r*, while *q* is a stronger argument for $\neg r$ (Anscombe & Ducrot 1983; Merin 1999), whence asymmetry of *p but q* vs. *q but p* (Blakemore 2002: 103; Vallée 2008: 422):

- (4) a. He is rich but he is dissolute.
b. He is dissolute but he is rich.

But and ineffability

Blakemore (2002) and Hall (2007) note the “elusive quality of *but*”, *well*, etc.
Potts (2007: 76-77): “descriptive ineffability” as a trait symptomatic of conventional implicatures in general

Bach (1999): Conventional implicature is a myth; alleged instances in Frege/Grice/Karttunen & Peters [e.g. Grice’s *She’s poor but honest*] involve secondary components of what is said (e.g. with *even*, *but*, *too*, *still*) or higher-level speech acts (with modifiers like *frankly*; *to tell the truth*).

Potts (2005 et seq.): Retain “conventional implicature” label for a second dimension of meaning but restrict the application of such “CIs” to expressives and epithets (*that jerk*), supplements (e.g. non-restrictive relatives and appositives), and honorifics; for Potts, as for Bach, *but* and similar cases contribute a secondary aspect of what is said.

Potts’s generalization (2.5): “No lexical item contributes both an at-issue and a CI [conventional implicature] meaning” (2005: 7). But...

- (5) a. You shouldn’t vote for that bastard Jones.
b. You shouldn’t vote for that bastard.

Or cases involving T/V pronoun use, and arguably gender...

- (6) a. Tu es soûl. ‘You (sg., masc., familiar) are drunk’
b. Tu es soûle. ‘You (sg., fem., familiar) are drunk’
c. Vous êtes soûl. ‘You (sg., masc., formal) are drunk’
d. Vous êtes soûle. ‘You (sg., fem., formal) are drunk’

Ineffability revisited: intimacy, solidarity, or contempt?

Then came the other cooks, drawing anything between three thousand and seven hundred and fifty francs a month; then the waiters, making about seventy francs a day in tips, besides a small retaining fee; then the laundresses and sewing women; then the apprentice waiters, who received no tips, but were paid seven hundred and fifty francs a month; then the *plongeurs*, also at seven hundred and fifty francs; then the chambermaids, at five or six hundred francs a month; and lastly the cafetiers, at five hundred a month. We of the cafeteria were the very dregs of the hotel, despised and *tutoied* by everyone.

—George Orwell (1933), *Down and Out in Paris and London*, Chapter XIII

What's the status of non-restrictive relative clauses? For Frege (1892), (7a) asserts both (7b) and (7c) (so secondary assertions, not F-implicatures):

- (7) a. Napoleon, who recognized the danger to his right flank, himself led his guards against the enemy position.
b. Napoleon recognized the danger to his right flank.
c. Napoleon himself led his guards against the enemy position.

☞ These are cases in which both "primary" and "secondary" encoded propositions are part of what is said/at issue (and not merely implicated).

Key point (Frege, Grice, Barker 2003): What if the secondary/backgrounded content is false? cf. (8a,b) vs. (9a,b):

- (8) a. Brussels, **which is the capital of the Netherlands**, is the home of moules/frites.
b. Not only **is it rainy today**, but it's also quite cold.
- (9) a. We're poor but happy. [true if we're poor and we're happy]
b. Tu es soûl. [true if you're drunk]

Evidence from overt performatives:

- (10) a. This bill allowing torture, **which I hereby endorse**, is morally bankrupt.
b. The qualifications of Ms. X, **whom I hereby nominate for this key position**, are unquestionable.

Similarly for the *not only p but (also, even) q* construction (Horn 2000):

- (11) a. Not only do **I hereby retract my claim**, but I also hereby apologize to the cattlemen in the great state of Texas.
b. Not only do **I promise to be a good and faithful husband to you**, but also to be a patient, loving father to [children's names].

But like clausal NRRs, clausal *not only p but (also, even) q* must involve a background/secondary assertion:

- (12) a. He had begun to long for her. The longing wasn't only sexual but it was sexual.
(Ruth Rendell 1989, *The Bridesmaid*, p. 104)
b. #Not only was the longing sexual, (but) it was sexual.
- (13) a. I am not only a linguist, but I am a linguist.
b. #Not only am I a linguist, (but) I am a linguist.

- For the non-restrictives, appositives, and clausal *not only* (10)-(13), there are two clauses and two assertions (albeit one occupying backgrounded status); these are Pottsian CIs but not F-implicatures or Gricean conventional implicatures.
- But what of *but, still, even*, T/V pronouns, or discourse markers? In these cases, there's only one clause—and only one entailment. (Cf. Williamson 2003, 2009 for a similar treatment of epithets as conventional implicatures.)

S. Barker (2003):

- Contra Bach, conventional implicature phenomena—as exemplified by *but, even*, or value contents (cf. Barker 2000, Williamson to appear)—are real:

The conventional implicature possessed by a sentence S is not part of its force, but is a part of S's semantic content—rule-based content capable of falling within the scope of logical operators. Nevertheless, S's implicature makes no contribution to S's truth-conditions. (Barker 2003: 3)
- Conventional implicatures are part of *encoded* but not part of *truth-conditional* content (differing in this respect from appositives and non-restrictive relatives); they can be embedded (as implicatures, not as "said" content) and can affect judgments of assertability and validity but not truth.

Cf. Kaplan (1999)'s independent development of "validity-plus" and "truth-plus" within a "semantics of use" for the dimension of meaning contributed by expressives, including hypocoristics, ethnic slurs, epithets, and interjections, as well as second person pronouns and other honorifics. But his observations are consistent with the spirit of Frege's and Grice's approach; cf. Gutzmann 2008 for a analysis of German modal particles (*ja, doch, wohl, halt*, et al.) that bridges the gap between F-implicatures and Kaplan's semantics of use.

- For various analyses of honorifics and other expressives in terms of Pottsian CIs (≠ Gricean conventional implicatures), see Potts & Kawahara 2004, McCready 2004, Potts 2007b, and Kim & Sells 2007.

How about *therefore*?

In some cases the conventional meaning of the words used will determine what is implicated, besides what is said. If I say (smugly), *He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave*, I have certainly committed myself, by virtue of the meaning of my words, to its being the case that his being brave is a consequence of (follows from) his being an Englishman. But while I have said that he is an Englishman, and said that he is brave, I do not want to say that I have *said* (in the favored sense) that it follows from his being Englishman that he is brave, though I have certainly indicated, and so implicated, that this is so. I do not want to say that my utterance of this sentence would be, *strictly speaking*, false should the consequence in question fail to hold. (Grice 1989: 25-26)

The claim: Unlike [*q because p*], which SAYS that the truth of q follows from that of p, [*p, therefore q*] only IMPLICATES this connection—but see Bach (1999), Neale (1999, 2001), and Predelli (2003) for counterarguments.

(16) **A table of (non-)at-issue relations**

	<i>or, some</i>		<i>but, T/V</i>	<i>only, almost</i>	NRR clauses	conjuncts
RELATION →	implicature			assertorically inert	assertions	
PROPERTY ↓	conversational	conventional		entailments	secondary	primary
Is part of encoded meaning?	no	yes		yes	yes	yes
Affects truth conditions?	no	no		yes	yes	yes
Is asserted? (≈ is at issue?)	no	no		no	yes	yes
Projects? (e.g. takes wide scope*)	no	yes		yes*	yes	no

[F-implicature ↑]

*Non-assertions scope out of emotive factives/propositional attitudes
(see Karttunen & Peters 1979 for original diagnostic)

- (17) a. I just discovered that only [FDemocrats] favor taxing the 1%.
 b. It's too bad that only [FDemocrats] favor taxing the 1%.
 c. I regret that I have but one life to give to my country.
 —reputed last words of Nathan Hale (Yale, 1773); content of regret: $\neg[\#(\text{NH-lives}) \geq 2]$
- (18) a. I know Democrats favor taxing the 1%, but do ONLY Democrats favor taxing them?
 b. I know that nobody besides Democrats favor taxing the 1%, but do (#ONLY) [FDemocrats] favor taxing them?
 c. I know that nobody besides Democrats favor taxing the 1%, but I just realized that (#ONLY) [FDemocrats] favor it.
- (19) a. Dana just discovered that {Gore almost won/Bush barely won} in 2000.
 b. Kim just discovered that the Republican plan will help only [Fthe wealthy].
- (20) a. It's too bad that the Republican plan {almost passed/barely passed/didn't quite pass}.
 b. It's too bad that the Republican plan will help only [Fthe wealthy].
- (21) a. It's too bad that she's poor but honest.
 b. It's too bad that even Obama can't fix the economy.
- (22) a. It's too bad that Obama, who is President, can't fix the economy.
 b. It's too bad that Obama, who can't fix the economy, is President.

IV. Personal datives and the subject-involvement F-implicature

(Cf. e.g. Christian 1991, Sroda & Mishoe 1995, Weibelhuth & Dannenberg 2006, Horn 2007, Conroy 2007, Bosse et al. 2009, Hutchinson & Armstrong to appear)

PDs in country and mountain ballads and their modern offspring

- (23) a. And now I've married **me** a pretty little wife
 And I love her dearer than I love my life. ("Rake and Rambling Boy", trad.)
 b. I'm gonna buy **me** a shotgun, just as long as I am tall.
 (Jimmie Rodgers, "T for Texas")

- c. When I was a young girl, **I** had **me** a cowboy.
(John Prine, “Angel From Montgomery”)
- d. Now the Union Central's pulling out and the orchids are in bloom,
I've only got **me** one shirt left and it smells of stale perfume.
(Bob Dylan, “Up to Me”)
- (23') a. **I**'m gonna sit right down and write **myself** a letter. (Joe Young classic lyric, 1935)
b. **I**'m gonna (sit right down and) write **me** a letter.
- (24) a. **Ø_i** Get **you_i**, a copper kettle, **Ø_i** get **you_i**, a copper coil,
Cover with new-made corn mash and never more you'll toil.
 (“Copper Kettle”, traditional ballad)
b. My daddy he once told me
Don't **you** love **you** any man (Dusty Springfield, “We'll Sing in the Sunshine”)
- (25) a. Raised in the woods so's he knew every tree
[**pro_i**] Kilt **him_i**, a b'ar when he was only three. (“Ballad of Davy Crockett”)
b. She said **she** married **her** an architect,
Kept her warm and safe and dry. (Dan Fogelberg, “Same Old Lang Syne”)

and in prose [novels/TV shows set in Chicago, New York, Minnesota, and Philadelphia]

- (26) a. “**I**'m going to have to hire **me** a detective just to follow you around.”
(1988 Sara Paretsky novel, *Blood Shot*, p. 191)
b. “I wish **I** could afford **me** a swimming pool and a Buick and all. I was at
Diamond Head thirty-eight years, no counting the war, but **I** sure never got **me**
a retirement deal like that.” (1992 Sara Paretsky novel, *Guardian Angel*, p. 312)
c. “It's too bad we don't have any of those hellebores”, I say. “**We** could drop
them in the Meer and poison **us** some fish.”
(Ayelet Waldman (2006), *Love and Other Impossible Pursuits*, p. 224)
d. “If you attend church just to go through the motions, God'd rather **you** get **you** a
bottle of bourbon and a whore and go to a hotel and have **you** a good time.”
(Uncle Al in Garrison Keillor's *Lake Wobegon Summer 1956* (2001), p. 274)
e. I keep logs of illegal huntin' here on the wildlife preserve. Poachers, hunters—
they come by at night, tryin' to pinch ‘**em** some deer meat.
(Forest ranger to detectives on “Cold Case”, CBS, 28/11/04)

[No restriction to argument places; NON-SUBCATEGORIZED pronouns]

- (27) a. **I** need **me** a Coke.
b. **I** seen **me** a mermaid once. [from movie “Hunt for Red October”]
- (28) a. **He** bought {**himself/him**} a new pick-up.
b. **He** needs {***himself/him**} just a little more sense.
c. What I like is goats. **I** jus' like to look at **me** some goats. [Sroda & Mishoe 1995]
d. **We** want **us** a black German police dog cause I had one once.
- (29) a. **She** fed {***her/herself**} some cornbread.
b. **She** gave {***her/herself**} a big raise. (vs. **She** got **her** a big raise.)

[PDs co-occur with a subcategorized dative indirect object—iff latter is external]

- (30) a. **He**'s gonna buy {**him**/***himself**} a pick-up for his son.
b. **He**'s gonna buy (***him**) his son a pick-up.
c. **I** need **me** a little more time for **myself**.

- (31) a. **She**_i bought {**herself**/?**her**}_i and Kim some ice cream.
b. **He**_i cut {**himself**/?**him**}_i and Bob a piece of cake.
c. **I** need {**me**/***yours truly**/***this guy**} a new shotgun.

Characteristics of PDs (based partly on Webelhuth & Dannenberg 2006)

- PD constructions always co-occur with a quantified (patient/theme) direct object
[But cf. *I lay me down*; *Ø Sit you down*, *Ø Hie thee hence*.]
- PDs can't be separated from the verb that precedes and case-marks them
- May lack any external (PP) pronominal counterpart (Green 1974: 193-94):
Bill played him a lullaby vs. **Bill played a lullaby for him*
- PDs can occur in positions where indirect object is ruled out and can co-occur with (rather than substituting for) overt dative or indirect object (see (30)).
- PDs are WEAK PRONOUNS (Cardinaletti & Starke 1999; Bresnan 2001); thus, they can't be stressed or conjoined (but for many speakers (31a,b) aren't that bad), nor do they allow a full NP counterpart (see (31c)).
- There's no consistent thematic role for PD nominals, although they sometimes look like non-subcategorized benefactives; can be suppressed salva veritate (> get Case but no θ -role) although they may affect non-truth-conditional meaning (see below).
- In any case, they do not represent true datives/recipients/goals.
- There's no restriction against third person PD pronominals for most speakers (but there may be some residual person-based asymmetry for some speakers: 1st > 2nd > 3rd)
- PD pronominals are not objects of their verbs; they are **non-arguments** coreferential w./ subject (can't really be "bound pronominals" because they're not bindable). Hence, they are not subject to the **co-argument** version of Condition B (Pollard & Sag 1992, Reinhart & Reuland 1993)

The PD is not necessarily either dialectally restricted or new, but its constraints have evolved over the centuries...

(32)



—Terrell Owens, 2007

A recent development:

I (just) love me some X, where *X* is not semantically quantified but is a name, pronoun, generic, etc. Helped by popularity of Toni Braxton's #1 hit pop song, "I Love Me Some Him", since then achieving status of a meme or SNOWCLONE (cf. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_snowclones)

I love me some him, I'll never love this way again

I love me some you, Another man will never do

γ I just love me some Jude Law.

—posting on salon.com

My husband used to LOVE him some Jack Daniels. [= a prominent brand of whiskey]

—Halle Berry's character to Billy Bob Thornton's, "Monster's Ball"

<http://www.hayllar.com/dec00/51200.html>

γ **I just love me some cats!** Don't you just LOVE cats?!...Grace keeps to herself these days. And her crime of the month is to pee in my big house house plant. "**I love me some plants.** The green sets off my beauty. And the soil is just right for a little wee."

<http://www.bitchypoo.com/2001/March/08.html>

γ In fact, I just read the first of the Kat Colorado series, which my beloved

Moira sent me for my birthday. **I just love me some female kick-ass**

detectives, and when the hell is Sue Grafton going to put the next one out?

Opener of story in humor e-column, 7/22/02, reported by Mark Mandel on ads-l:

Let's make sure we've got this clear, right from the start: **I love me some Crocodile**

Hunter. (Referring to the TV show and the movie.)

γ **I love me a big man**, I purely do.

(from an on-line story)

What do non-argument PDs add if not a 2nd object or goal?

☞ an F-implicature of subject intentionality/success/benefit/satisfaction

(33) a. **He** shot **him** two squirrels.

b. #**He** (got drunk and) shot **him** two coonhounds (by mistake).

(34) a. **She** caught **her** a catfish.

b. # **She** caught **her** a {cold/case of the clap}. [unless she caught it on purpose]

Some potentially problematic attested PDs:

(35) a. [I'm gonna] eat **me** some hamburgers. I haven't eaten hamburgers in three years.

b. **He** needs **him** just a little more sense. (< Michael Montgomery's database)

c. **That house** needs **it** a new roof. (from Sroda & Mishoe 1995)

d. **He** rode **him** around with a head in his trunk for a week. (< M. Montgomery)

Polar asymmetries in PD licensing (Googled data, 1 March 2009):

(36) a. **I love me some X**: 1,020,000 vs. **I hate me some X**: 23,400 (*Yankees, exams, emo*)

b. **She loves her some X**: 833 (*grapefruit, sparkly dance boys, Ozzy, chocolate, jesus, Halloween, Z cars, kraft dinner*) vs. **She hates her some**: 7* (*J. Lo, Mao*)

c. **I want me some X**: 650,000 (*fonts, Krispy Kremes, candy, monitors,...*)

d. **I saw me some X**: 28,400 (relating to entertainment, fun, goal attained, etc.)

e. **I found me some X**: 142,000 (*happiness, friends*) vs. **I lost me some**: 7* (*clothes*)

[* of which one is a link to Horn 2008]

- (37) a. I love me some John Cusack. **I hate me some** Fate and Destiny. [re “Serendipity”]
 b. I’m gonna get my drink on/**I’m gonna hear me a sad song**. [2007 Toby Keith song]

Positive polarity status of PDs:

Resistance to negation: 0 hits for “*I don’t love me any...*”; 900 hits on “*I don’t love me some...*”, but these tend to involve syntagmatic priming or double negation:

Okay, I don't love me some Adam Sandler, the way I love me some Cadbury Eggs and the way I love me some latex kitchen gloves. But his new movie, Punch-Drunk Love...

I love me some M. Night, but I don’t love me some Village. This is a huge misstep for the once burgeoning director. The Village is a lame ass duck. ... [with priming; cf. (37a)]

Which is not to say I don't love me some Wham!

At what point do fanatics say to themselves, 'Okay, I know killing is supposed to be all wrong and shit, but dammit if I don't love me some God!?' ...

But that doesn't mean I don't love me some cinnamon twists to dip into my non-organic coffee, or to eat in bed, or the car, or, you know, wherever. ...

Just because I'm not watching Elf repeatedly does not mean I don't love me some Christmas.

- the vast majority are of the form *(It's) not/It isn't that I don't love me some...*
- Don't think that I don't love me some...*
- I can't say I don't love me some...*

Some robust empirical contrasts, courtesy of Google [links to my papers deleted]:

“I have me some”	22,600	
“I have me a”	37,300	
“I don’t have me a”	80	
“I don’t have me any”	9	<i>Pity I don't have me any beers</i>
“I lack me a/any”	6	<i>i lack me a microwave oven and didn't feel like frying</i>
“I want me some (X)”	677,000	
“I don't want me any (X)”	3	
“I like me some”	128,000	
“I like me a”	1700	
“I don’t like me a”	6	<i>Not that I don't like me a bit of Matt</i>
“I don’t like me any”	1	<i>I don't like me any Hillary at this point</i>
“I dislike me some/any/a”	6	<i>I dislike me some Paradise Hilton</i>

- Other F-implicata (e.g. those associated with epithets, T/V use, *even*, modal particles, definites, and evidentiality) scope out of negation and are resistant to ordinary (and sometimes even metalinguistic) negation. (*Not even Hercules can lift that stone* doesn’t negate *Even Hercules can lift that stone*, but instead paraphrases *Even Hercules can't lift that stone*.)

(38) **INEFFABILITY**: *the content of F-implicata is often elusive or hard to pin down, e.g.*

- the implicature of effort or difficulty associated with *manage*
- the source of the positive or negative assessment in the implicatures associated respectively with *deprive* and *spare* (cf. Wilson 1975)
- the precise contribution of evidential markers (Aikhenvald 2004, Davis et al. 2007, Matthewson et al. 2007)
- the nature of the contrast/unexpectedness implicated by *but* (see discussion in §2)

- the characterization of the scalar conventional implicature associated with *even* (relative or absolute? unlikelihood or noteworthiness?)
- the nature of the expressive attitude embodied in racial and ethnic slurs and other epithets (Williamson 2003, 2009; Potts 2007)
- the precise notion of uniqueness or individuability constituting F-implicature of definite descriptions (cf. Horn 2007, Horn & Abbott to appear)
- the appropriateness implicatures for *tu* vs. *vous* or other **T** vs. **V** 2nd person sg. pronouns within a given context in a particular sociolinguistic community of practice (**T** can be affectionate, presumptuous, comradely, or condescending; **V** can be polite, aloof, diplomatic, or hostile; cf. Brown & Gilman 1960, Mühlhäusler & Harré 1990, Taavitsainen & Jucker 2003, Greenhall 2007)

➤The fact that it is difficult to pin down precisely what it is that PDs contribute to the semantics of the sentences in which they occur, as eloquently demonstrated by the literature on the construction, is an indirect argument for situating that meaning—however it is to be represented—as an F-implicature.

➤What motivates (or permits) this property of ineffability for F-implicatures? It is plausible that the edges of **truth-conditional** meaning should be discrete (modulo vagueness), while inconsistency in the mental representation of **non-truth-conditionally** relevant content is less pernicious. If you know generally that my use of *vous* rather than *tu* signals something in the range of formal respect, distancing, conventional politeness and/or lack of intimacy, my precise motives may remain underdetermined, but if you don't know whether I'm using a 2nd person or 3rd person pronoun, the indeterminacy would be more serious. Similarly, you will want to know whether I bought the car for myself or for my son, and hence to whom an indirect object pronoun refers, but whether or not you can figure out precisely why I affirm "I bought **me** a car for my son" rather than simply "I bought a car for my son," no difference in argument structure or truth conditions will arise.

V. Around the world with non-argument datives

Old/Middle English:

Sweet (1900) and Keenan (2003) on the "PLEONASTIC DATIVE" of Old English

In OE a personal pronoun in the dative is often added reflexively to a pronoun in the nominative but **without materially affecting the meaning**, as in *hē ondrēd him þone mann* 'he was afraid of the man', literally 'feared for himself', *hīe ġewiton him* 'they departed'. (Sweet 1900: §1106, *bodface* added)

[F]rom Late OE through ME we also find many non-theta (pleonastic) occurrences of pronouns. They do not satisfy either a semantic role requirement or a syntactic requirement of the verb. In OE they are usually dative, sometimes accusative, never genitive or nominative. They are always bound to the local subject, agreeing with it in person, number and gender and **serve semantically to heighten the involvement of its referent: e.g. the subject acted intentionally or was involved in the action in some way other than the role it has in virtue of being the subject argument**. At times they suggest a telic interpretation. (Keenan 2003: §1.2, *boldface* added; examples include (39a,b))

- (39) a. forðæm **hi him** ondrædað ða frecenesse ðe hi ne gesioð CP.433
because they them fear the danger that they not see c880
- b. ac **he** ne wandode na **him** metes to tylienne. ... & nam **him** on orfe
but he not hesitated at all him provisions to provide... and took him in cattle
 & on mannum & gewende **him þa** east werd to his feder.
and in men and ...went him then eastward to his father
 & gewendon **heom þa** begen east weard ... Chron(E)1052
and went them then both eastward ...

Latin (Bourciez 1930: §118c):

Extended use of the reflexive in late Latin "dans l'usage populaire, pour indiquer d'une façon plus intensive la part que le sujet prend à l'action; beaucoup de verbes se sont ainsi construits, notamment des verbes de mouvement."

- (40) a. γ**Je me** bois un bon café chaud. lit., 'I drink me a good hot coffee'
 b. γJ' ouvre le frigo, **je me** bois un verre de vin rouge, **je me** détend dans mon canapé.
 'I open the fridge, I drink (me) a glass of red wine, I relax on my couch'
 c. γ**Je me** lis tantôt la Bible et le Coran, du Porno et du mystère.
 'I read (me) sometimes the Bible and the Koran, porno and mysteries'
 d. γ**Je me** fais un voyage. [6210 hits, mostly 1st person] 'I make (me) a trip'
 e. γManger pour elle devient secondaire ou alors **elle se** prend un repas devant le pc.
 'Eating becomes secondary to her, or she has (her[self]) a meal in front of her p.c.'
 [Note that the reflexive clitic is required here: **Elle_i lui_i prend un repas...*]

(Westphalian/Niederrhein) German: (*gratia* Silke Lambert, p.c.)

- (41) a. **Ich** trinke **mir** jetzt einen Kaffee. 'I drink me now a coffee'
 b. {**Er/Sie**} trinkt **sich** einen Kaffee. 'He/She drinks her[self] a coffee'
 [as in (40e), this occurs with reflexive only, not pronominal]

See WordReference Forum thread on *sich etwas essen/trinken* at
<http://forum.wordreference.com/showthread.php?t=214623>

also **Polish** (Dąbrowska 1997), **Hebrew** (Gesenius 1910, Muraoka 1978, Halevy 2007)

Warlpiri:

Simpson (1991: 382) on Warlpiri overt pronominal adjunct-style datives

- (42) a. ...ka-nyanu kuyu nyanungu-ku pi-nyi. Liwirringki-rli-ji.
 PRES-REFL meat it-DAT hit-NONPAST Lizard sp.-ERG-EUPH
 '...it kills *itself* animals, that Lizard'
 b. Palkarni-rlipa-nyanu yalumpuju ngalipa-ku-jala marda-rni.
 scarce-1PL.SUBJ-REFL that.near we.PL.INCL.-DAT-CLEAR hold-NONPAST
 'We'll keep these scarce things just for ourselves'

Legate (2001) relates these to Eng. 'I'm gonna bake me a cake'

Free/non-argument datives indexing non-subject affectees

(ethical dative, nonlexical dative, non-subcategorized dative, *dativus (in)commodi*)

French and other Romance: Leclère (1975), Barnes (1980, 1985), Authier & Reed (1992), Herschensohn (1992), Cuervo (2003)

German: Abraham (1973), Wegener (1989), Hole (2006), Lambert (2007), Gutzmann (2007)

Hebrew—Ancient (Gesenius 1910, Muraoka 1978) and Modern (Berman 1982, Borer & Grodzinsky 1986, Halevy 2007)

Old and Middle English: Sweet (1900), Keenan (2003)

Walpiri: Simpson (1991), Legate (2001)

Various languages: Lamiroy & Delbecque (1998), Hole (2006)

(43) Maling (2001) on German FREE/ETHICAL DATIVE

- a. Helf **mir** mal deinem Vater in der Küche.
help me-DAT a-minute your-SG father in the kitchen
'Go help your father in the kitchen for a minute for me'
- b. Der David hat **mir** der Claudia schon zuviel Geschenke gegeben.
The-David has me-DAT the-Claudia-DAT already too-many gifts-ACC given
'I think [lit., 'To me'] David has already given Claudia too many presents'

This extra dative...is interpreted as a **beneficiary or person adversely affected by the event**...I assume that this dative is **not subcategorized for** by the verb. As an adjunct rather than an argument, it is **not a grammatical object**, and thence not a counterexample to the descriptive generalization that German allows at most one dative object per clause. (Maling 2001: 432, *emph. added*)

[Actually, though, "free datives" really constitute a dative family (or continuum), some but not all members analyzable as CIs (Gutzmann 2007).]

Lambert (2007): characteristics include syntactic optionality, non-argument status, preference for 1st person referents, affectedness (*Betroffenheit*) or cognitive/emotional involvement of referent (based on speaker's assessment)

Similar "affected dative" constructions in Hebrew and Romance

see Leclère 1976, Barnes 1980, 1985, Authier & Reed 1992, Herschensohn 1992 on the range of phenomena involving "non-lexical" datives in French and Berman 1982, Borer & Grodzinsky 1986, and Halevy 2007 for Hebrew

In German, Romance, Slavic, Modern Hebrew, etc., free datives are often taken to include or relate to external (alienable) possession constructions (cf. e.g. Payne & Barshi 1991):

[T]he possessive and the ethical dative are different manifestations of one and the same basic phenomenon, viz. that of introducing entities into the sentence structure which, from a syntactic point of view, are not lexically predicted by the verb and which semantically correspond to entities that are **not actively involved in the process but nonetheless affected by it**, in one way or another.

(Lamiroy & Delbecque 1998: 63, *emphasis added*)

O'Connor (2007): EPCs exhibit preference for 1st person possessors, involve “speaker’s stance or judgment with respect to the outcome of the event for the possessor” and allow speaker to “exploit a **relatively underspecified conventional implicature** to convey scorn, respect, distance, or empathy, or to otherwise enrich hearer’s understanding of their stance toward the fate of the extra-thematic possessor”

Lambert (2007): Parallel between ethical datives and **modal particles** in German

- (45) a. Aber komm **mir** nicht im langen Kleid! (Lambert 2007: (21), from *Empfang*,
but come me-DAT not in.the long dress poem by Richard Dehmel)
 b. Aber komm (mir) **ja** nicht im langen Kleid!
 Schmid 1988, Wegener 1989: ethical dative as modal particle (MP)

German modal particles (*ja, doch, denn, halt, bloß,...*) and F-implicature:

See Gutzmann (2008: 57-63) for a treatment of *Modalpartikeln* within the framework of conventional implicature-type accounts à la Frege/Grice and Horn 2007, 2008 (or the “use-conditional” account in Kaplan 1999).

☞ MPs are a small, basically closed class of optionally occurring items that are not inflected, can’t be stressed or conjoined, occur only in the “middlefield”, can’t be negated/questioned, take sentential scope, and are often constrained by mood or illocutionary force.

- (46) Peter is ein Linguist. ‘Peter is a linguist’
 (47) a. Peter is **ja** ein Linguist. ‘...as you (should) know’ [old information for H]
 b. Peter is **doch** ein Linguist. ‘...in contradiction to an earlier claim’
 c. Peter is **halt** ein Linguist. ‘...which is an incontrovertible fact’
 (as in *Krieg ist halt Krieg* ‘War is [MP] war’, there’s nothing you can do about it)
 (48) A: Ich bin **ja** ein Syntakiker ‘I am [MP] a syntactician’
 B: Nein! [only “No you’re not”, not as rejecting the **ja**]
 B’: #Du bist **ja** kein Syntakiker
 (but B’ would be fine in response to A’: “I do not understand Minimalism”)

Residual issues

- How coherent is the class of lexical items, particles, and syntactic constructions that give rise to F-implicatures?
- Do we need to admit both F-implicatures and non-asserted entailments? (Yes!)
- What is the status of F-implicatures vis-à-vis presuppositions?

Jayez (2004), Jayez & Rossari (2004):

- (Pragmatic) presuppositions are a subset of conventional implicatures, namely those constituting part of the given information.
- Conventional implicatures may be explicitly communicated or embedded, but are not asserted and cannot be directly refuted.
- Non-refutability is shown by the infelicity of responses “You’re wrong” or “That’s false” to conventionally implicated material. (Or “Bullshit”?)

The *whaddaya mean* class of refutations (in lieu of negation):

- (49) a. Whaddaya mean EVEN Hercules can lift the rock? (cf. D. Lewis 1979: 339)
 γWhaddaya mean {even a nurse could do it/even though I’m a guy/even me}?
 b. Whaddaya mean THE baby is crying? There’s lots of babies here.

- (50) a. #That's false/#Bullshit. Hercules is the strongest guy here, of course he can lift it.
 b. #You're wrong/#Bullshit—there's lots of babies here.
- (51) A: "Her name is Caroline. She's an Italian girl but she's pretty."
 B₁: "What do you mean, *but* she's pretty, Ma?" Frank said. "Why not '*and* she's pretty'?"
 B₂: # "Bullshit, Ma." Frank said. "Why not '*and* she's pretty'?"
- (52) A: Lance loves musical comedies and has seen "Mamma Mia" twice.
 He is, therefore, gay.
 B: Bullshit, that doesn't follow. [*gratia* Gregory Ward for the example]

Compare with cases of assertorically inert meaning components:

- (53) A: I almost flunked out
 B: Bullshit/That's false: you DID flunk out.
- (54) A: I love only you!
 B: Bullshit/?You're wrong. You only love yourself (you love nobody).
 Bullshit/?That's false. You don't love anybody.

But personal datives pattern with conventional implicatures:

- (55) A: Toby heard him a sad song.
 B: #Bullshit. OK, he heard a sad song, but no way was it on purpose.

Coda

As Grice himself acknowledged, "The nature of conventional implicature needs to be examined before any free use of it, for explanatory purposes, can be indulged in." I hope to have shown today in surveying a range of expressive meanings in natural language that the application of a coherent and explanatory notion of conventional but non-truth-conditionally relevant content, in the tradition of Frege and Grice, is (relatively) free from bullshit.

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