



An Animated and Narrated Glossary of
Terms used in Linguistics
presents

Implicature



What is an implicature?

An implicature is something meant, implied, or suggested, and yet is distinct from what is being said.

Example:

Suppose someone said, “*With a sigh, Grizzly closed its eyes for the last time.*”

The speaker may be implicating: **Grizzly dies.**
There is nothing in the sentence that says that Grizzly dies.



Communicating Implicatures

Implicatures are not always successfully communicated.

E.g.

With a sigh, Grizzly closed its eyes for the last time.

The speaker may be implicating: **Grizzly dies.**

But the listener may think the speaker is trying to implicate that **Grizzly is now blind.**

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Establishing Implicatures

- Because implicatures are rarely explicitly expressed, it is very hard to establish if the listener/reader has grasped the intended implicature.
- As such, any inference about the implicatures obtained from an implicature-loaded expression is subject to debate and requires clarification from the author of that expression.

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Further Reading

- Bach, Kent (2005) The Top 10 Misconceptions about Implicature. In Birner, Betty and Gregory Ward (eds.) *A Festschrift for Larry Horn*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. Retrieved 25 May 2009 from <http://userwww.sfsu.edu/~kbach/TopTen.pdf>
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- Davis, Wayne (2009) Implicature. In Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Winter 2008 edition. Retrieved 25 May 2009 from <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2008/entries/implicature/>
- Grice, H. Paul (1975) Logic and Conversation. In Peter Cole and Jerry L. Morgan (eds.), pp. 41-58.
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The End

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Hong Kong Baptist University.