

# On F-implicature: Myth-analysis and rehabilitation

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The nature of conventional implicature needs to be examined before any free use of it, for explanatory purposes, can be indulged in. (Grice 1989: 46)

In addition to introducing the very successful product line of conversational implicatures, Grice and his successors have assembled a possibly inchoate class of phenomena under the trade-name of CONVENTIONAL IMPLICATURE, whose success in the scholarly marketplace has been decidedly mixed. A conventional implicature associated with expression *E* is a non-cancelable contribution to the content of an expression whose falsity does not affect the truth conditions of *E*. This construct has evoked much recent skepticism—Bach (1999) has consigned it to the dustbin of mythology, while Potts (2005 et seq.) has undertaken a pyrrhic rehabilitation via redefinition—but Grice’s admittedly sketchy device for treating aspects of content that are irrelevant to the truth conditions of an asserted proposition has a rich lineage. Frege (1892, 1897, 1918) was concerned to delineate a possibly heterogeneous class of meanings that do not “affect the thought” or “touch what is true or false”, in many ways directly prefiguring Grice on conventional implicature. While much recent scholarship has followed Dummett (1973) in dismissing Frege’s positive proposals in this area as representing a confused, subjective notion of “tone”, this fails to do justice to Frege’s intention and practice. I argue here that for a range of connectives, particles, and constructions—some proposed for the role by Frege and/or Grice and others not considered by them—an approach invoking the notion I shall dub F-IMPLICATURE remains eminently plausible.

## 1. The Fregean landscape of sub-sense relations

In addition to the presupposition (*Voraussetzung*) of reference for proper names in sentences like *Kepler {died/didn’t die} in misery* (Frege 1892: 40), Frege also allows for the weaker relation of “side-thought” (*Nebengedanke*) of existence for universally quantified statements, an essentially pragmatic relation which involves material neither meant nor presupposed as admitted (Frege 1906: 306-7). The former constitutes a necessary condition for an assertion to be made; the latter does not (see Horn 2007 for elaboration).

But this does not exhaust the inventory of Fregean relations for implication beyond—or below—the domain of sense and reference. In fact, the problem arises before the distinction between *Sinn* and *Bedeutung* is even drawn, in the *Begriffsschrift*:

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)

Grounds for to invoking such hints or suggestions recur elsewhere. Considering a spectrum of linguistic phenomena ranging from particles like *although*, *but*, *yet*, *still*, and *already* to active/passive alternations and word order, Frege devoted several passages throughout his works to describing these expressions and constructions that “aid the hearer’s understanding” without, however, affecting the propositional content—or, in Frege’s parlance, the thought. Here is Frege in “*Über Sinn und Bedeutung*” on the meaning contributions of adversative particles (here and below, **boldface** is added):

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*].) We could indeed replace the conditional clause without harm to the truth of the whole by another of the same truth value; but the light in which the clause is placed by the conjunction might then easily appear unsuitable, as if a song with a sad subject were to be sung in a lively fashion. (Frege 1892: 38)

Crucially, then, the difference between *p and q* and *p although q* does not affect the truth conditions of the proposition involved, a claim that appears correct. If I bet you \$100 that Robin will marry Chris although Chris is extremely poor and it develops that Robin does marry Chris, but precisely because of, not in spite of, Chris’s impecuniary state. Then the *although*-condition is not satisfied, but it is clear (to me, at least) that I have won the bet, for which all that matters is the two parties marry.

Frege provides an inventory of phenomena lending themselves to similar analyses in “*Der Gedanke*”, beginning with the choice between the neutral *horse* [*Pferd*] and its evaluatively laden counterparts like *steed* or *nag* [*Ros, Gaul, Mähre*]:

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 [*andenten*] 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)

The thought in Frege's theory of meaning corresponds to the notion of what is said in Gricean and neo-Gricean theory<sup>1</sup>; in current terms the key claim is that the phenomena under discussion here do not affect the determination of what is said. In stating *Alfred still has not come*, I say that he hasn't come, while "hinting" that his arrival is expected; *p but q* differs from *p and q* in "intimating" a sense of contrast. These two verbs in Geach's rendering—*hint* and *intimate*—both translate Frege's *andeuten*, a verb we can accurately (with Gricean hindsight) gloss as '(conventionally) implicate'; we can nominalize it as *Andeutung*. While the historical significance of Frege's remarks in this area is often overlooked (for example, Frege is nowhere mentioned in Chris Potts's (2005) major monograph on conventional implicature), the *Andeutung* relation, for a component of linguistic meaning that does not affect propositional content or "touch what is true or false", is a direct precursor of Grice's conventional implicature. (As a logician, Frege was less concerned with the pragmatic phenomena to which Grice developed the more familiar notion of conversational implicature.)

Among Frege's intriguing, if largely overlooked, commentaries in this area is a passage in the unpublished 1897 *Logic* (Frege 1897: 242) touching on the division of labor between semantics and discourse pragmatics. 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)

At issue here are those alternations that involve the packaging of content motivated by considerations of what the Prague school linguists were later to dub functional sentence perspective: the choice between allosentences (Lambrecht 1994) involving active/passive pairs or alternants involving indirect converses (Cruse 1986: §10.7) like *give* and *receive*, motivated in each case by the goal of mapping topics into subject position. Frege's view is also a prescient foreshadowing of the modular approach to meaning in natural language: render unto logic what is relevant to sense, reference, and truth conditions, render unto

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<sup>1</sup> To be sure, this is not an entirely straightforward matter. Grice 1989: 359-68) offered his own reconsideration of the matter in Strand Five of his retrospective epilogue, and the delineation of what is said remains at the heart of scholarly disputes in neo-Gricean and post-Gricean pragmatics; see Bach (2001), Saul (2002), Carston (2002), and Horn (to appear) for elaboration and references.

pragmatics what is relevant to usage so long as it concerns distinctions without a difference to the thought or propositional content.

The examples motivating Frege's appeal to subsense relations, which we are temporarily denoting as *Andeutungen* ('suggestions, hints'), thus extends to a range of cases we can compile tabularly:

<b>EXPRESSION</b> [vs. <i>unmarked alternative</i> ]	<b>ANDEUTUNG</b>
Alfred has not <u>yet</u> come. [vs. <i>Alfred has not come</i> ]	Alfred's coming is expected.
B received C from A, B was given C by A [vs. <i>A gave C to B</i> ]	B is the topic of discussion
B was murdered by A [vs. <i>A murdered B</i> ]	B is the topic of discussion
<b>A murdered B</b> [vs. <i>A murdered B</i> ]	B is the topic of discussion
p <u>but</u> q [vs. <i>p and q</i> ]	there is a contrast between p, q
p <u>although</u> q [vs. <i>p and q</i> ]	p is surprising, given q
<u>ah</u> , p; ( <u>un</u> ) <u>fortunately</u> p [vs. <i>p simpliciter</i> ]	S has relevant attitude toward p
The <u>cur</u> [vs. <i>The dog</i> ] howled the whole night.	neg. evaluation of referent
The <u>steed</u> [vs. <i>The horse</i> ] raced around the track.	pos. evaluation of referent

TABLE 1

The legacy of Fregean subsense relations, as itemized in the passages cited here, has been anything but straightforward. Ultimately, the problem may be that Frege was more concerned in collecting such phenomena for the purpose of setting them aside rather than in any attempt to characterize them positively. In this respect, too, he foreshadows Grice, whose goal in (briefly) delineating the category of conventional implicature was more to say what token exemplars are not—viz., part of what is (centrally) said or what can be rationally calculated—than to say what they are.

This has not stopped most analysts from placing Frege's examples of the kind we have collected in Table 1 into a mixed bag labeled, in Dummett's celebrated term, TONE. For Dummett (1973: 2-3, 83-89), tone is a rendering of the Fregean notions of *Färbung* 'coloring' or *Beleuchtung* 'illumination'. But Dummett argues that 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)

Dummett's conclusion that Frege's characterization of subsense relations is incoherent due to the inherent subjectivity he invoked has become received wisdom; cf. e.g. Neale (1999, 2001). As Neale (1999) puts it, "Dummett shows decisively that Frege's positive position on colouring is unenable, so I will spend no more time on it." But it is not clear that "Frege's positive position" is anything Frege would have recognized, much less endorsed. When actually discussing the examples that have been most closely scrutinized,

including the *but* vs. *and* distinction or what *cur* adds non-referentially to *dog*, Frege writes not of any *Vorstellungen* communicated but rather of what the speaker *andeutet* ('suggests, hints'). Alternatively, as in the passage from the *Begriffsschrift* or two decades later in the *Logik* (Frege 1897: 152), the speaker *gibt einen Wink* ('hints') that some contrast exists between the clauses *aber* conjoins or that the *Köter* is not highly esteemed. Crucially for Frege (as for Grice), this is a distinction without a truth-conditional difference; the thought would be the same whichever lexical item is chosen. But while the two terms in each case are not interchangeable, a hint or suggestion is not ipso facto a subjective "idea".

Since Frege uses the two terms *andeutet* and *gibt einen Wink* alternately for a non-truth-conditional meaning that a speaker suggests, hints, or intimates (essentially = conventional implicature) while never entertaining the kind of data for which Grice develops the notion of CONVERSATIONAL implicature, I shall dub this subsense ingredient of conventional content F-IMPLICATURE.

While conceding that "a hint is evidently not the production of a mental image", Dummett still (correctly) objects to Frege's analysis of the distinction between *but* and *and* on empirical grounds, a point to which we return below. But it still appears to me that Dummett is mischaracterizing Fregean doctrine (to the extent that it is a doctrine) of subsense relations. Interestingly, Dummett (1973: 88) sees Fregean "tone" as more plausibly applying 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." This would be an easier claim to evaluate if we could be more confident on just what sorts of "expressive" examples Dummett has in mind, but it is certainly true that current work on conventional implicature has focused largely, although not exclusively, on expressive constructions (see e.g. McCready 2004, Potts & Kawahara 2004, Potts 2005, 2007b, Kim & Sells 2007). A partial list of expressions that have been analyzed in such terms in post-Fregean work is given in Table 2:

EXPRESSION	F-IMPLICATURE
<u>F</u> [Hercules] lifted the rock <u>too</u> [vs. prejacent, i.e. same sentence minus <i>too</i> ]	other relevant agents lifted it
<u>Even</u> <u>F</u> [Hercules] lifted the rock [vs. prejacent] Fr. <u>Tu</u> es soûl [vs. <u>Vous</u> êtes soûl]; Ger. <u>du</u> [vs. <u>Sie</u> ], Sp. <u>tu</u> [vs. <u>usted</u> ]	other, less surprising agents did so ∃ sufficient degree of solidarity similarly, between S, H (or S>H in status)
<u>She</u> [vs. <u>he</u> ] is asleep	subject is (fe)male
Chris has <u>children</u> [vs. <i>a child</i> ]	Chris has > 1 child
Emphatic particles, e.g. Jap. <i>yo</i> (Davis 2006); cf. also McWhorter 2004 on AAVE <i>yo</i>	Reinforcing illocutionary strength
Evidential markers, e.g. Turkish <i>-mİş</i> , <i>-DI</i> (cf. Aikhenvald 2004, Davis et al. 2007)	S's evidence for prop. content is indirect/direct respectively
I read <u>the</u> book (cf. Horn 2007)	denotatum is unique in context

TABLE 2

## 2. Frege, Grice, and the contribution of *but*

Grice's first differentiation between the relation in question and those on either side of it (conversational implicature, semantic presupposition) is presented, label-free, in the course of his defense of the causal theory of perception (Grice 1961: 126-32). Grice's description of the status of (1b) with respect to (1a) includes the claims listed in (2)

- (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)
  - 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*).

Six years later, when Grice returns to the relation in question and affixes the label of conventional implicature, *but* again has pride of place (along with *therefore*; [1967]1989: 25); perhaps without recognizing it, Grice thus walks in the footsteps of Frege, for whom the contrast suggested or hinted at by 'but' was the primary instance of *Andeutung* or F-implicature. It may be argued that expressions falling under this analysis represent a recalcitrant residue for Grice (who was concerned with delineating what is said and what is conversationally, and hence calculably, implicated) as they did for Frege (who was concerned with the thought, i.e. with sense and potential reference); for both, detecting an F-implicature facilitates the real work by clearing away the brush. But Grice also undertakes to situate this relation within a map of what we refer to (though he does not) as the semantics/pragmatics divide. His contributions in this area, if not always accepted, are widely recognized, as in this passage from Davidson:

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 which is meant of 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)

But how, exactly, does the sorting work? If descriptive content, reflecting what is said, falls within semantics and if what is conversationally implicated (e.g. the ‘for all I know, not both p and q’ upper-bounding implicatum associated with the utterance of the disjunction “p or q” or the negative effect of the Gricean letter of recommendation) falls within pragmatics, where does conventional implicature fall? One standard view—impossible to confirm directly, since Grice never refers to pragmatics as such<sup>2</sup>—is that by falling outside what is said, the conversationally implicated is pragmatic (see e.g. Gutzmann 2008: 59). One argument on this side is terminological; in Kaplan’s words (1999: 20-21),

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*.

To be sure, conventional implicatures are implicatures. But then again, they are conventional; we are indeed dealing here, unlike in the maxim-based cases, with aspects of content. In essence, the question comes down to which of the two diagrams in Figure 1 we take to more faithfully represent Grice’s thinking. While most exegesis (including Horn 1989: 146 as well as Kaplan above) focuses on the unity of the implicature category and thus opts for the left-hand tree, it is arguably the right-hand tree, adapted from Neale 1992: 523, that more accurately reflects what is said by Grice.

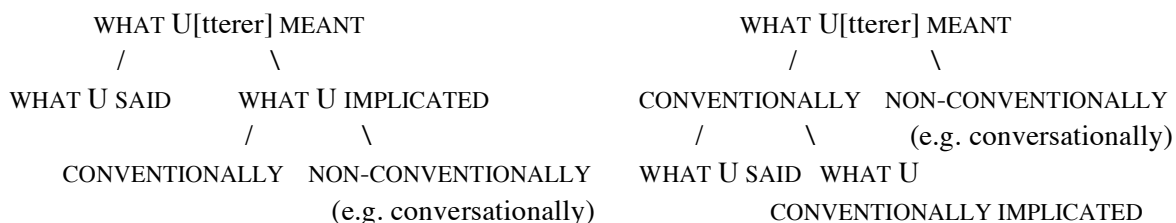


FIGURE 1

Two decades after the William James lectures, Grice revisits the situation of these categories in his Retrospective Epilogue (“Strand Five”: 1989: 359-65), where he differentiates central and non-central modes of meaning by invoking the two criteria of

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<sup>2</sup> Of course, Grice *could* have referred to pragmatics. We need to be even warier of similar representations about Frege, as when Kaplan (1999: fn. 12) argues 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”. Given that the semantics/pragmatics distinction postdated Frege by several decades, we cannot be certain just how Frege would have classified his *curs* and *nags*, much less his *Boches*.

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. (Grice 1989: 361)

Thus, formality without dictiveness yields conventional implicature, although the term itself appears nowhere in the Epilogue.

If conventional (or F-)implicature for adversatives like *but* and *on the other hand* is a matter of content, just what is the content? Many contemporary critics of the Frege-Gricean picture of *but*, e.g. Bach (1999), have focused on the insufficiency of the “contrast” implicature. The first such observer is Dummett (1973: 86):

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.**

While Dummett points out that Frege (and, by extension, Grice) is too restrictive in spelling out what *p but q* adds to *p and q*, others have proposed alternative treatments, invoking not contrast—even context-dependent contrast—but surprise or the denial of expectation, i.e. the unexpectedness of *q* given *p*. While relevance theorists have argued that *but* and related discourse connectives invoke procedural rather than conceptual meaning (Blakemore 2002, Hall 2007), others have questioned the distinction or its application (Hansen 2003, Rieber 2007, Pons Bordería 2008).

Neither contrast or unexpectedness in themselves account for the role played by *but* clauses in argumentation (Anscombe & Ducrot 1983; cf. also Merin 1999: 203-9 for a formalization within decision-theoretic semantics): in *p but q*, *p* constitutes an argument for *r*, while *q* constitutes a stronger argument for  $\neg r$ . Thus Dummett’s first committee member presents one reason for inviting Robinson; the objector, while conceding this point, offers a stronger reason for not inviting him. The lack of any necessary intrinsic contrast between the two clauses connected by *but*, as observed by Dummett, is further indicated by the possibility of *p, but q too* or by the frame illustrated in the googled sampler in (3):



- (3) “War is hell, but so is withdrawal”  
 “Breast cancer is unfair, but so is life”  
 “Divorce declining, but so is marriage”  
 “Divorce is hell, but so is a bad marriage”  
 “Boyfriend is visiting soon, but so is my period!!?”

An argumentation-grounded account of the non-truth-conditional contribution of *but* also makes sense of an otherwise puzzling asymmetry in the interpretation of *p but q* clauses; the perspectives urged toward the subject in (4a) and (4b) are very different indeed.

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

(Cf. Blakemore 2002: 103 and Vallée 2008: 422 for approaches to the asymmetry of *but*.)

So just what is the contribution of *but* and why is it so hard to pin down? This difficulty is widely recognized. Blakemore (2002: 53-54), for example cites the “elusive quality of *but*”, and she notes elsewhere that other discourse particles like *well* are also “frustratingly elusive” (2002: 128); cf Hall (2007: 155-56) for similar observations. More generally, as we shall see, this “descriptive ineffability” (to adopt the term from Potts 2007: 76-77) is a trait symptomatic of conventional implicatures in general.

### 3. Conventional implicature and its discontents

For Grice ([1967] 1989), a conventional implicature *C* associated with an expression *E* manifests the following two definitional properties: (i) by virtue of being conventional, *C* constitutes a non-cancelable aspect of the meaning of *E*, and (ii) by virtue of being an implicature, *C*'s truth or falsity has no affect on the truth conditions of *E*.

Like Fregean “tone”, the notion of conventional implicature has had a somewhat rocky history. Karttunen & Peters (1979) proposed folding the better established (but, they argue, inconsistently defined and poorly understood) relation of presupposition into conventional implicature, for which they offered a multidimensional compositional treatment within an extended version of Montague Grammar. Their primary example, explored in considerable depth, involves *even*:

- (5) a. Even BILL likes Mary.  
 b. Bill likes Mary.  
 c. EXISTENTIAL IMPLICATURE: There are other x under consideration besides Bill such that x likes Mary.  
 d. SCALAR IMPLICATURE: For all x under consideration besides Bill, the likelihood that x likes Mary is greater than the likelihood that Bill likes Mary.

In the K&P analysis, (5a) entails (and indeed is logically equivalent to) (5b) while conventionally implicating both (5c) and (5d) (or the conjunction of the two).<sup>3</sup>

Similarly, consider the non-scalar additive particle *too* or *also*:

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<sup>3</sup> As with *but*, the number and content of the implicature(s) associated with *even* has been a matter of contention for some time; cf. Kay (1990), Horn (1992), Francescotti (1995), Rullmann (1997), Rieber (1997), and Schwenter (2002) for some relevant considerations.

- (6) a. [<sub>F</sub>GEORGE] is worried about the economy too.
- b. George is worried about the economy.
- c. Someone else [accessible in the context] is worried about the economy.

As with Frege’s cases of F-implicature, the inference induced by *too* (however we capture it; cf. Kripke 1990 for complications) is irrelevant to the truth conditions of the proposition: (6a) is true if and only if (6b) is true. The inference from (6a) to (6c) is not cancellable<sup>4</sup> without anomaly (*#GEORGE is worried about the economy, but he’s the only one*), but it is detachable in the sense that the same content is expressible in a way that removes (detaches) the inference, as in (6b).

For Bach (1999), on the other hand, conventional implicature is a myth; alleged instances in Grice or Karttunen & Peters—or indeed, in Frege—involve either secondary aspects of what is said (as with *even, but, although, still*, and similar particles) or higher-level speech acts (as with adverbial modifiers like *frankly* or *to tell the truth*). Bach’s principal opposition to the Fregeo-Gricean line on *but* centers on the behavior of “ACIDS” (alleged conventional implicature devices) in embedded contexts. Without rehearsing the issues here, I note that Bach’s arguments based on his “IQ [indirect quotation] test”—

An element of a sentence contributes to what is said in an utterance of that sentence if and only if there can be an accurate and complete indirect quotation of the utterance (in the same language) which includes that element, or a corresponding element, in the ‘that’-clause that specifies what is said.

(Bach 1999: 340)

—has been challenged on a number of fronts by, among others, Carston (2002: §2.5), Blakemore (2002: 56-8), Barker (2003: fn. 21), and Greenhall (2007).

As noted, Bach (1999) also objects to the particular analysis of *but* sketched by Frege and Grice, and in this he is quite correct. Similarly, Grice’s characterization of *therefore* as involving a conventional implicature (1989: 25-26)—

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.

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<sup>4</sup> The cancellability diagnostic is not as straightforward as it may appear. Potts (2005: 83) takes Karttunen & Peters (1979) to task for describing the use of the name *Bill* as conventionally implicating that the referent is male, given the cancellability of this suggestion (cf. for example Johnny Cash’s “A Boy Named Sue”). Fair enough. But Potts concludes that that “the proper classification of maleness is as a conversational implicature.” However, he offers no derivation of such an implicature from the conversational maxims, nor could he. Defeasible culture-bound generalizations like *People named ‘Bill’ are male* are not conversational implicatures; cancellability is a necessary but not sufficient diagnostic for conversational implicature.

—has been challenged on empirical grounds by Bach (1999), Neale (1999, 2001), and Predelli (2003). Defending this analysis is certainly a more difficult task in the case of *therefore* than it is for its fellow candidates *but* and *after all* (along with several of Frege’s nominees); Grice is here essentially arguing that unlike *q because p*, which SAYS that the truth of *q* follows from that of *p*, *p, therefore q* only implicates this connection, but this judgment is not universally shared. This may well be a linguistic point on which speakers differ; it is certainly possible that the status of aspects of word meaning could shift from outside to within the umbrella of what is said (or what Potts calls “at-issue” meaning), as indeed recognized by Frege:

Of course borderline cases can arise because language changes. Something that was not originally employed as a means of expressing a thought may eventually come to do this because it has constantly been used in cases of the same kind. A thought which to begin with was only suggested by an expression may come to be explicitly asserted by it. (Frege 1897: 241)

It is plausible that this kind of shift, exemplified in the well-known phenomenon of the “euphemism treadmill”, could be responsible for the instability of implicated vs. “at issue” meanings of particles and other expressions.

Bach’s revised analysis of *but* and *therefore* proceeds from his rejection of the “OSOP” (one sentence one proposition) assumption to the embracing of multidimensional semantics. In *p but q*, both the conjunction and the (context-dependent) contrast between the conjuncts qualify as components of what is said; our reluctance to brand (1a) false if just the (1b) component fails to hold derives not from (1b)’s status as (merely) implicated but from the fact that it is not the primary assertion.

In his book-length treatment of the relation, Potts (2005) retains Grice’s brand name for conventional implicature but alters the product by restricting the application of “CIs” to expressives (*that jerk*), supplements (e.g. non-restrictive relatives and appositives), epithets, and honorifics. Potts follows Bach in arguing for the asserted or, in his terminology, “at-issue” status of the *but/even* class.<sup>5</sup>

But while the notion of secondary assertion, invoked in one form or another by both Bach (1999) and Potts (2005), is a useful construct, there is evidence that it is a better fit for some of the Potts’s “CI” cases than it is for the original range of phenomena falling under F-implicature. Thus, consider the case appositive or non-restrictive relative clauses as in Frege’s (1892: 38) celebrated example in (7).

- (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.

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<sup>5</sup> Other critics of the Gricean line on implicatures include Stanley (2002), who proposes a general constraint on the relation of what is said to what is communicated, his “Expression-Communication Principle”, which is inconsistent with conventional implicature, and Iten (2005), who presents a number of challenges to the Fregean-Gricean consensus on the status of F-implicatures from the of Relevance-theoretic perspective. (See also the Carston 2002 and Blackmore 2002 references on procedural meaning cited above.)

—clearly does involve two “at-issue” or asserted propositions, although one assertion, that in the relative clause (7b), is backgrounded. Frege maintains that the falsity of either (7b) or (7c) results in the falsity of (7a), although his intuition has been challenged. In fact, whether we are inclined to judge a sentence false on the basis of the falsity of its contained NRR clause depends on our assessment of the significance of that information in that clause for the overall claim. Thus, my assertion that “New Haven, which is the capital of Connecticut, is the home of Yale University” might be accepted as true if it answers a question about the location of various Ivy league colleges but false if it answers a question about which state capitals host Ivy league institutions. But in cases of true F-implicature, the falsity of the implicated content can never render the containing sentence false, only inappropriate. (Cf. Barker 2003 for related observations.)

One of the strongest arguments for Frege’s dual-assertion analysis of such cases (and against Potts’s CI-analysis) is the insertability of an overt performative within the NRR, which would be inconsistent with that clause being merely implicated (or presupposed):

- (8) a. The bailout bill, which I hereby pledge to support, is unconscionable.  
 b. The qualifications of this woman, whom I hereby nominate, are unquestionable.

Similar results hold for the *not only p but (also, even) q* construction (Horn 2000), in which *p* and *q* are both “at issue”, in Potts’s sense, but *q* is foregrounded over *p* whether or not *q* in fact entails *p* in a particular instance. Once again, the evidence from the distribution of overt performatives indicates that both *p* and *q* are put forward as assertions, promises, etc., as seen in the googled attestations in (9):

- (9) 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 does this possibility attested with such clausal constructions extend to *but*, *still*, *even*, and similar particles, to evidential markers, or to epithets or other expressives? It’s hard to imagine any examples that could be used to argue the point. In these cases—contra Bach (1999) and Potts (2005)—the traditional Fregeo-Gricean line remains eminently plausible.<sup>6</sup> Nor are these the only expressions that lend themselves to this approach.

One of the strongest cases for F-implicatures involves second person T/V pronoun choice, as in the distinction between *tu* and *vous* in French or *du* and *Sie* in German. More

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<sup>6</sup> I will not discuss Potts’s treatment of parenthetical supplements as CIs here, except to note that they do not map onto simple embedded structures. Thus, while Potts (2005: 92) takes (i) and (ii) to be synonymous,

(i) Max, it seems, is a Martian.

(ii) It seems that Max is a Martian.

this cannot be the case, since “but he isn’t really” can only be felicitously appended in the latter case. Similarly, compare (iii) and (iv) (assuming coreference):

(iii) It seems that Max is older than he (really) is.

(iv) #Max is, it seems, older than he (really) is.

See Amaral et al. (to appear) for other problems with Potts 2005.

clearly than *but* (and certainly *therefore*), the T/V distinction does not involve what is said, “makes no difference to the thought”, and leaves truth conditions unaffected, but it does involve conventional, non-calculable aspects of meaning.<sup>7</sup> These pronouns also cast doubt on Potts’s generalization (2.5) (2005: 7) that “No lexical item contributes both an at-issue and a CI meaning”, since such pronouns index both a second-person referent and an appropriateness condition.<sup>8</sup> The choice between *Tu as tort* and *Vous avez tort* (‘You’re wrong’) is clearly based on the speaker’s assessment of the social context and not truth conditions. Similar remarks could be entertained for natural gender, such as the choice between *he* and *she* in English or analogous gender distinctions in other languages. Thus if I affirm “*Tu es soûl*”, it is not part of the thought or of what is said that I believe a certain social relationship obtains between us **or** that I believe you to be male; both propositions are indeed **communicated**, but what is **said** is simply that you are drunk. If this is right, then what is said in all of the variants in (10) is identical.

- (10) 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’

Note that once again, as with *but* and *even*, the question of ineffability arises: it is difficult to say with any confidence just which use conditions determine the choice between T and V forms. Standardly invoked considerations of intimacy or solidarity conveyed by *tu* don’t extend naturally to the kind of contempt *tutoyer*-ing can convey:

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

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<sup>7</sup> Levinson (1983: 128-29) suggests, but does not pursue in detail, a conventional implicature-based analysis of T/V pronoun choice. A speaker’s move from the T to the V form, or vice versa, will often generate conversational implicatures signaling an increased intimacy, alienation, contempt, etc.; it is the static if complex values of the pronouns of power and solidarity (Brown & Gilman 1960, Mühlhäusler & Harré 1990, Taavitsainen & Jucker, eds. 2003) that lend themselves to an F-implicature treatment. See also Keenan 1971 for an earlier treatment of T/V pronouns in terms of pragmatic presuppositions and Kaplan 1999 and Greenhall 2007 for related use-conditional approaches.

<sup>8</sup> Another problem for the generalization is the fact that Potts’s expressives are all adjectival modifiers or appositives (“*that damn guy*”, “*that asshole Harry*”) rather than nominal epithets per se (“*I wouldn’t hire that scoundrel*”, “*Why did you vote for that asshole?*”). In the latter case, a lexical item clearly does “contribute both an at-issue and a CI meaning”—no problem, of course, for the echt Fregean/Gricean view. Williamson (to appear, fn. 16) makes a similar point.

From a different direction, Kaplan 1999 has argued for an extended notion of “truth-plus” and a “semantics of use” to deal with the dimension of meaning contributed by expressives, including hypocoristics, ethnic slurs, epithets, and interjections, as well as second person pronouns and other honorifics,<sup>9</sup> but his observations are consistent with the spirit of Frege’s and Grice’s approach; cf. Gutzmann for a analysis of German modal particles like *ja*, *doch*, *wohl*, *halt*, et al. that bridges the gap between F-implicatures and Kaplan’s semantics of use.

In this connection it may be worth touching on one attempt to refute the view of the T/V distinction through the lens of conventional implicature. Tsohadzitis (1992: 572) observes that while (11a) could be true (if I do always use the V form in speaking to Paul), its counterpart in (11b) is necessarily false, indeed self-falsifying. The same facts hold, in reverse, for (11’a,b); it is an illocutionary contradiction for me to use the second-person singular to Paul while denying I would ever do so.

- (11) a. Je vous parle toujours au pluriel, mon cher Paul.            [◇T]  
       b. Je te parle toujours au pluriel, mon cher Paul.            [□F]
- (11’) a. Je ne vous parle jamais au singulier, mon cher Paul        [◇T]  
        b. Je ne te parle jamais au singulier, mon cher Paul.        [□F]

Similar considerations apply to the contrast in (12) (= ‘At this moment, I begin to use the T form to you’).

- (12) a. En ce moment, je commence à te tutoyer.                    [◇T]  
       b. En ce moment, je commence à vous tutoyer.                [F]

Thus, Tsohadzitis concludes, the T/V distinction must be truth-conditionally relevant, ruling out a conventional-implicature-based analysis.

But this argument really hinges not on the truth-conditional contribution of second person pronouns but on the formal role of self-reference here and in analogous cases, e.g. those in (13) and (14), where it would be unwarranted to infer that *I* and *yours truly* are referentially distinct or that we must distinguish the contribution of *Bart and Lisa* and *Lisa and Bart* to compositional semantics.

- (13) a. I never refer to myself in the third person.                [◇T]  
       b. Yours truly never refers to himself in the third person.    [□F]
- (14) a. I never refer to Bart and Lisa in alphabetical order.        [□F]  
       b. I never refer to Lisa and Bart in alphabetical order.        [◇T]

Thus, pace Tsohadzitis, self-referential or metalinguistic minimal pairs of the kind seen in (11)-(12) don’t bear on the thesis that F-implicatures are truth-conditionally irrelevant.

Before returning to the theoretical status of F-implicature, I shall suggest that there are more candidates for this status than are dreamt of in Frege’s or Grice’s philosophy.

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<sup>9</sup> Analyses of honorifics and other expressives in terms of Pottsian CIs (≠ Gricean conventional implicatures) have been given in Potts & Kawahara 2004, McCready 2004, Potts 2007b, and Kim & Sells 2007.

#### 4. F-implicature and the king(s) of France

While Russell (1905) famously considered both the existence (at-least-ness) and uniqueness (at-most-ness) conditions of definite descriptions to be entailed and asserted in singular sentences and Strawson (1950) took both conditions to represent (what he later termed) presuppositions, it can be fruitful to try to separate out these two conditions. While the failure of the existential premise may indeed result in falsity (or at least non-truth), there appears to be no clear evidence that a definite description is ever judged intuitively false on the grounds that uniqueness (or, more generally, maximality) is violated. (See Horn 2007 for arguments that it is indeed uniqueness or maximality and not familiarity that is involved in distinguishing definite from indefinite descriptions.)

- (15) a. The king of France isn't bald—(because) there isn't any.  
b. #The consul of Illocutia isn't bald—(because) are two of them.
- (16) A: The baby is crying.  
B: # {That's false/The baby's not crying}, there's LOTS of babies here!
- (17) A: The baby is crying.  
B: No, you're wrong, there's no baby around. That's my Siamese cat.

When uniqueness/maximality is felicitously challenged as in (18), what results is more reminiscent of the non-satisfaction of an F-implicature, as in the standard examples in (19), than a claim of falsity.

- (18) A: The baby is crying.  
B: What do you mean, "THE baby"? There's LOTS of babies here!
- (19) a. What do you mean EVEN Hercules can lift the rock? (cf. D. Lewis 1979: 339)<sup>10</sup>  
b. Whaddayamean she opposes the war BUT she's patriotic?  
c. "Her name is Caroline. She's an Italian girl but she's pretty."  
"What do you mean, *but* she's pretty, Ma?" Frank said. "Why not '*and* she's pretty'?" —Stephen McCauley (1987), *The Object of My Affection*, p. 209

To be sure, there are marginal cases in which implicated uniqueness seems to fall within the scope of negation, as in (20) (due to Emma Borg, p.c.), but I take this to be parallel to (21), where negation is used metalinguistically to assert not the falsity of an unnegated proposition (e.g. the one in (20A)) but the infelicity of an utterance due to the non-satisfaction of the appropriateness conditions of the focused item.

- (20) A: I met the vice-chancellor today.  
B: You didn't meet "THE vice-chancellor"; we have three VCs at our university.
- (21) She isn't "poor BUT honest"—there's no real contrast between the two.

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<sup>10</sup> Similar examples are easy to find by googling:

(i) Whaddaya mean {even a nurse could do it/even though I'm a guy/even me}?

Another standard rejection of the F-implicature is effectuated by querying the offending item:

(ii) "So he's suspected of something new. No big revelation, his tendencies were obvious even to me.

"Even?"

"I was a senior in high school"

—Jonathan Kellerman (2007), *Obsession*, p. 267

More telling is the long recognized fact that *It is not true* cannot be used to object to a uniqueness claim, although it is impeccable when rejecting existence of the denotatum:

- (22) a. It is not true that the King of America is a fascist; there is no such entity.  
b. #It is not true that the Senator of America is a fascist; there are 100 senators.  
(Horn 1972: ex. (1.41))

Along the same lines, as Kempson has noted (1975: 110), (23a,b) are equally “incoherent” with *the* and *a*, given that non-uniqueness is irrelevant to the truth of both indefinites and definites.

- (23) a. #It is not true that {the/a} king of France visited the exhibition because there is more than one king of France.  
b. #It is not true that {the/a} head of school came to see me because we have two heads of school.

But note that the same pattern obtains for standard cases of F-implicatures, given that truth per se (of the proposition at issue) is not involved:

- (24) a. #It is not true that EVEN Hercules can lift the rock  
b. #It is not true that she’s poor BUT honest.

On the account sketched here and defended in more detail in Horn 2007, uniqueness (or more generally maximality) is conventionally signaled by *the A*, à la Russell, but does not rise to the level of an entailment or truth condition of *The A is B*. Rather, a speaker’s utterance of *The A is B* F-implicates that the hearer is in a position to individuate the intended A within the context of utterance.

## 5. Frege got him a new locus classicus: The personal dative as an F-implicature

A familiar syntactic feature of dialectal (Southern and Appalachian) U.S. English is the optional occurrence of a nonsubcategorized “personal dative” pronominal in transitive clauses which obligatorily coindexes the subject but whose semantic contribution is ill-understood. This personal dative (PD) bears suggestive if not always straightforward relations to constructions in such languages as French, German, Walbiri, Hebrew, and Old English involving what have been variously termed “ethical”, “free”, “non-lexical”, or “affected” datives. Some of these datives are coreferential with the subject (e.g. *Je me prends un petit café*) while others are non-coreferential (e.g. *Ils lui ont tué son oiseau*); they typically invite benefactive and malefactive (adversative) understandings respectively.

Our focus here is the English personal dative, on display in a range of traditional country and mountain ballads and their modern descendants [**boldface** used here to indicate coreference, not contrast or focus]:

- (25) Well, I’m a rake and a ramblin’ boy  
There’s many a city I did enjoy;  
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.)

- (26) a. I’m gonna buy **me** a shotgun, just as long as I am tall  
(Jimmie Rodgers, “T for Texas”)



- b. I'm gonna {grab/catch} **me** a freight train (various songs)
- c. When I was a young girl, **I** had **me** a cowboy  
(John Prine, "Angel From Montgomery")
- d. **I** had **me** a man in summertime/He had summer-colored skin  
(Joni Mitchell, "Urge for Going")
- e. 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")

The ordinary pronominals here contrast minimally with the expected reflexive in e.g. "I'm gonna sit right down and write **myself** a letter." (The PD counterpart *I'm gonna write **me** a letter* would also be possible in the relevant dialect, provided that *me* is not a Goal argument.)

While first person singular "bound" pronominals predominate, second and third person cases are also possible in the backwoods:

- (27) Ø<sub>i</sub> Get **you<sub>i</sub>** a copper kettle, Ø<sub>i</sub> get **you<sub>i</sub>** a copper coil,  
Cover with new-made corn mash and never more you'll toil.  
You just lay there by the junipers, when the moon is bright,  
Watch them jugs a-fillin' in the pale moonlight.  
(“Copper Kettle”, traditional ballad)
- (28) Born on a mountain top in Tennessee  
The greenest state in the land of the free  
Raised in the woods so's he knew every tree  
[**pro<sub>i</sub>**] Kilt **him<sub>i</sub>**; a b'ar when he was only three.  
(“Ballad of Davy Crockett”)

Note the co-occurrence of the PDs in (3) and (4) with other well-known instances of Appalachian English features (cf. Wolfram & Schilling-Estes 1998)—the determiner in *them jugs*, the verb forms *lay* and *kilt*, the noun *b'ar* [= *bear*], contracted *so-[a]s*, a-prefixation and “g-dropping” in *a-fillin'*.

Moving from song lyrics to prose, we see PDs, while still restricted to (informal) register, ranging freely over person, number, and geography:

- (29) 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.”  
(2006 Ayelet Waldman novel, *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.  
(Ranger to detectives on “Cold Case”, CBS, 28/11/04)

These examples are set in Chicago, Chicago, New York, Minnesota, and Philadelphia respectively.

As seen in (30)-(32), PDs are not restricted to argument places; they occur where true datives (including true reflexive goals) cannot, they fail to saturate the subcategorization frame of ditransitives, and they co-occur with an external subcategorized indirect object:

- (30) a. **I** need **me** a Coke.  
b. **I** seen **me** a mermaid once. [from movie “Hunt for Red October”]
- (31) 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.
- (32) a. **She** fed {**\*her/herself**} some chitlins.  
b. **She** gave {**\*her/herself**} a big raise. (vs. **She** got **her** a big raise.)
- (33) 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**.

Syntactically, the salient feature of PDs is their apparent violation of Principle B; because they are not arguments, they are ipso facto not co-arguments with the subject and therefore do not trigger the co-argument version of Principle B advocated by Pollard & Sag (1992) and Reinhart & Reuland (1993). Semantically, their salient property is their omissibility and their failure, when present, to affect the truth conditions of the sentences in which they occur.

The grammatical characteristics of the personal dative construction, along with its sociolinguistic function and its cross-linguistic analogues, are explored in more detail in Horn 2008 (see also Conroy 2007); for our current purposes, we shall concentrate on the semantic and pragmatic conditions on the occurrence of PDs in dialectal English. Just what is the semantic contribution of the non-argument pronominal to the clause in which it occurs, given that it does not alter truth conditions? What are the characteristics of predicates that license PDs? First, while many naturalistic occurrences of PDs involve such verbs as *get*, *buy*, *make*, *have*, *want*, and *need*, one relatively recent addition to the set of licensers is worth noting. In the decade since Toni Braxton’s pop song “*I Love Me Some Him*” (lyrics by SoulShock & Karlin, Andrea Martin, and Gloria Stewart) with the chorus

*I love **me** some him*  
*I’ll never love this way again*  
*I love **me** some you*  
*Another man will never do*

reached the top of the charts in 1997, the title has generated a snowclone<sup>11</sup> of the form *I (Just) Love Me Some X*. Note that X here is not semantically quantified (the singer does not adore just an unspecified subpart of her beloved) but is a name, pronoun, generic, etc. that

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<sup>11</sup> See the wiki-entry at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Snowclone> for much more on snowclones.

must occur with an indefinite to satisfy the constraints on the PD. Thus T.O.'s T-shirt declaration below essentially reduces to the observation "*I love myself*".

(34) The "*I love me some*" snowclone

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**I LOVE ME SOME ME**

—slogan popularized by American football player Terrell Owens ("T.O.")

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**I just love me** some Jude Law.

—posting on salon.com

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**My husband** used to *love him* some Jack Daniels.

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

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

**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."

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**I love me** a big man, I purely do. (from an on-line story; note generic indefinite)

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**I love me** some fat bitches! More cushion for the pushin'.

(The rapper Redman, in 2001 movie "How High", *gratia* Kelly Nedwick)

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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 now the movie.)

(Opener of story in e-column, 7/22/02, reported by Mark Mandel on ads-1)

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As in the examples cited earlier, these PDs typically involve positive affect, often conferring a benefit to the subject. Thus compare the minimal pairs in (35) and (36), in which the personal dative is awkward or unacceptable for most speakers in the absence of intention.

- (35) a. **He** shot **him** two squirrels.  
b. **#He** (got drunk and) shot **him** two coonhounds (by mistake).
- (36) a. **She** caught **her** a catfish.  
b. **#She** caught **her** a {cold/case of the clap}.

Predictably, the versions in (36b) are fine in the unlikely event that the cold or case of the clap was contracted intentionally. Affect-linked asymmetries in the licensing of PDs are reflected in the data in (37), collecting entries googled on 1 April 2007.

- (37) a. **I love me some X**: 636,000 vs. **I hate me some X**: 516 (*Dr. Phil, Yankees, exams, emo*)  
[**I just love me some X** (see §3 above): 867 vs. **I just hate me some X**: 0]
- b. **She loves her some X**: 630 (*grapefruit, sparkly dance boys, Ozzy, chocolate, jesus, Halloween*) vs. **She hates her some**: 5 (*J. Lo, Mao, Patriots*)
- c. **I want me some X**: 34,900 (*fonts, Krispy Kremes, candy, monitors,...*)
- d. **I saw me some X**: 488,000 (relating to entertainment, fun, goal attained, etc.)
- e. **I found me some X**: 346,000 (*inspiration, happiness, friends*) vs. **I lost me some**: 8370 (many of the form *I lost me some weight*)

The examples with apparent negative affect are often more positive than it may initially appear; many of the *I lost me some X* examples occur in the frame *I lost me some weight*, where the loss is the result of intentional action. When *see* licenses PDs, it typically alludes to the result of a conscious effort of looking; along the same lines, consider the 2007 Toby Keith song lyric “I’m gonna get my drink on/I’m gonna hear me a sad song” (*gratia* Will Salmon), in which the sad song is not encountered accidentally but deliberately sought out. In other cases, a PD with negative affect is facilitated by local syntagmatic priming, often in a contrastive context. Thus a blog evaluating the movie *Serendipity*, which featured John Cusack as protagonist and fate and destiny as plot elements, includes the verdict in (38):

(38) **I** love **me** some John Cusack. **I** hate **me** some Fate and Destiny.

Another factor favoring the appearance of PDs is the spontaneous, occasion-specific nature of the utterance, typically signifying the satisfaction of a current intention, need, or desire. In (39)—the response of Miss South Carolina (the geographically challenged contestant in the 2007 Miss Universe pageant) to the query “What’s the first thing you’ll do when you get home?”—the PD expressing the speaker’s current dining plans disappears in the reportive follow-up.

(39) [**I’m gonna**] eat **me** some hamburgers. I haven’t eaten hamburgers in three years.

While many PDs (with *get*, *buy*, etc.) directly involve possession, others—in particular with *need* or *want*—look forward to a future possession marking the completion or satisfaction of a current modal or propositional attitude, as in (30), from Michael Montgomery’s extensive database.

(40) **He** needs **him** just a little more sense.

Both *need* and *want* are typically analyzed as embedding possession—to need/want is to need/want to have<sup>12</sup>—and *have* is a canonical PD predicate.

Other attested examples are more recalcitrant, extending the construction to contexts in which the “personal” dative is impersonal (although still benefactive in a sense) or affective but not obviously benefactive, even in an extended sense:

- (41) a. **That house** needs **it** a new roof. (Sroda & Mishoe 1995)  
 b. **He** rode **him** around with a head in his trunk for a week. (M. Montgomery, p.c.)

Narrowing down the contexts in which PDs appear (or appear naturally; it’s hard to determine any absolute exclusions, especially as the construction spreads beyond its original home turf) helps determine the meaning they contribute. But what is the status of that meaning? If PDs are not subcategorized by the verb, and *a fortiori* not (indirect) objects (the “Southern Double Object” label of Webelhuth & Dannenberg (2006) notwithstanding), what are they? If personal datives do not constitute arguments of the predicate, what is their semantic contribution, if any, to the sentences in which they appear?

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<sup>12</sup> Evidence for this analysis includes the distribution of time adverbials modifying the interval of possession: *I {need/want} your printer until tomorrow afternoon (for a week, ...)*.

Unsurprisingly, I propose that the PD contribute an F-implicature of subject affect, imposing an appropriateness constraint on its felicitous assertion, viz. that the speaker assumes that the action expressed has or would have a positive effect on the subject, typically satisfying the subject's perceived intention or goals.

One property that PDs share with (other) F-implicatures is what Potts (2007b) calls INEFFABILITY: the content of conventional implicatures is notoriously elusive. In this respect, it patterns with

- (42)
- 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 nature of the contrast/unexpectedness implicated by *but* (see earlier discussion)
  - 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, to appear; Potts 2007a,b)
  - the precise notion of uniqueness or individuability constituting F-implicature of definite descriptions (cf. Horn 2007 and references cited therein)
  - the appropriateness implicatures for *tu* vs. *vous* or other **T** vs. **V** 2<sup>nd</sup> 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, Greenhall 2007)

Thus 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.

But what motivates (or permits) this property of ineffability for F-implicatures? It is plausible that the edges of truth-conditional meaning should be discrete, 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, and/or lack of intimacy, my precise motives can be left underdetermined, but if you don't know whether I'm using a 2<sup>nd</sup> person or 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 mention buying it for my son, no difference in argument structure or truth conditions will emerge.

Another feature of the PD that speaks to its F-implicature status is its resistance to negation. We saw in (37) above that PDs generally prefer emotively positive contexts that reflect the fulfillment of the subject's intentions or goals. More generally, we noted the contrast between *love* (whether or not resulting from the snowclone) and *hate*. Now, as it happens, there are over 23,000 raw google hits for "*I don't love me some X*", but these tend overwhelmingly to involve either syntagmatic priming (recall (38)) or the canceling effect of double negation:

(43) “love me some” under negation

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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...

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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. ...

---

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

---

I don't presume to be Chris Sims, but damned if I don't love me some Christmas - the trees, the presents, the music, and the tv specials. ...

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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!?' ...

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Run DMC or something (not that I don't love me some Run DMC, cuz I do

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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.

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Indeed, the vast majority of negated *love me some* cites are of the form “(It's) not/It isn't that I don't love me some X”, or “Don't think that I don't love me some Y”, or “I can't say I don't love me some Z”.

When we move to other PD predicates, the results are similar. Some empirical contrasts, courtesy once again of Google, with samples of the outliers:

(44) “I have me some”	1,460,000
“I have me a”	782
“I don't have me a”	14
“I don't have me any”	1
<i>I wants me some medicine but I don't have me any cash.</i>	
“I lack me a/any”	0
<hr/>	
“I want me some (X)”	27,300
“I don't want me any (X)”	1
<i>I don't want me any of those sissy pants girly men that believe you can get good, or better, information out of people with tactics other than threats</i>	
<hr/>	
“I like me some”	28,900
“I like me a”	924
“I don't like me a”	5 (3 in scope of double negation)
<i>I'm not going to lie and tell you that I don't like me a slice of cake once in a while</i>	
“I don't like me any”	1 ( <i>I don't like me any wasps</i> )
“I dislike me some/any/a”	3
<i>I dislike me some FGM as well as the next gal.</i>	
<i>I must be honest, as much as I dislike me some Parasite Hilton,</i>	
<i>Wow, I dislike me some Nascar, but it actually sounds fun to watch in Japanese!</i>	

As is well known (and partially illustrated in §4), some of the standard examples of F-implicature are essentially impermeable to negation.<sup>13</sup> If you tell me *She's poor but happy* and I am willing to agree that she possesses both properties but reject your conveyed expectation that poverty and happiness generally contrast, it's not clear how I can convey this, especially with a simple negative (*?She's not poor but happy*). Some F-implicata can be attacked with metalinguistic or echoic negation, while others (e.g. the assumptions conveyed by the use of epithets or T/V pronouns) consistently scope out of negation. Once again, the behavior of the PD construction as positive polarity items effectively resisting the scope of negation is consistent with their treatment in terms of F-implicature, a conventional but non-truth-conditional contribution to content.

## 6. F-implicature: residual issues

I have tried to demonstrate the utility of what I call F-implicature, subsuming a variety of relations Frege introduces under different (or no) names along with Grice's relation of conventional implicature (a.k.a. "formality without dictiveness"). Symptoms of status as an F-implicature include detachability, non-cancellability, irrelevance to the truth conditions of (or the thought expressed by) the sentence that contains them<sup>14</sup>; additional characteristics include the projection out of embedded contexts, the immunity to certain kinds of objection, and ineffability or context variation of the content of the implicature.<sup>15</sup>

For both Frege and Grice, but not necessarily for linguists "concerned", in Frege's words, "with the beauties of language", identifying the constructions in question—a motley collection of particles, speaker-oriented sentence adverbs, prosodic features, word order effects—serves largely to isolate them in terms of what they are not: they do not affect the thought, the truth-conditionally relevant meaning of a given expression, and at the same time they can't be computed by general principles of rational interchange. We have expanded the collection (or cited other work that so expands it) to encompass a number of other candidates for F-implicature status, including additive and scalar particles, evidential markers, 2<sup>nd</sup> person pronouns, epithets and other expressives, the uniqueness condition on definites, and non-argument personal datives.

Along the way, we touched on Pottsian CIs, which we've seen do not map onto Gricean conventional implicatures (or their Fregean precursors). While the classical implicature examples are reanalyzed (following Bach) as part of what is said (for reasons I find unpersuasive), the leading result of the Potts approach involves positing multiple propositions corresponding to a given sentence. I have suggested this is exactly the right

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<sup>13</sup> Gutzmann (2008), for example, shows that *ja* (implicating that the proposition is already known to the hearer), along with other modal particles like *halt* (implicating the obviousness of p), *doch*, and *wohl*, as opposed to truth-conditionally relevant particles like *nur*, *allein*, *vielleicht*, scope out of negation. (Gutzmann advocates a Kaplan 1999-style use-conditional approach to these particles that is very much consistent with the F-implicature approach urged here.)

<sup>14</sup> It should be clear by now that in referring to F-implicatures (or conventional implicatures) as truth-conditionally irrelevant (to what is said), I am not claiming—nor is Frege or Grice—that their own content is itself non-truth-conditional; cf. Bach 1999: 331-32 on this fallacy.

<sup>15</sup> Thanks to Eliza Block for helping me organize these properties more coherently, while also raising doubts about whether the putative F-implicating devices really form a natural class. My current speculation is that the very salient distributional differences Block isolates within this category are attributable to the syntactic differences among the implicature triggers but I will have to defer these questions to another occasion.

move in the case of non-restrictive relatives and *not only...but also* constructions, but only if we accept that both propositions are in principle truth-conditionally relevant, unlike true F-implicatures.

Predelli (2003) in fact adopts a dual-propositional approach to the traditional implicature cases. He analyzes utterances into MESSAGE and ATTACHMENT, essentially constituting primary and secondary components of what is said. For Predelli, attachments—while corresponding roughly to Gricean conventional implicatures—are truth-conditionally relevant, but this assumes (incorrectly) that all of the relevant examples behave alike. In particular, his arguments against the truth-conditional transparency of the causal connection conveyed by the “attachment” for *therefore* fails to generalize to the case of *but*, much less T/V pronouns, *even*, or our other F-implicature candidates.

For Barker (2003), on the other hand, putative conventional implicature phenomena—as exemplified by *but*, *even*, or value contents (cf. Barker 2000, Williamson to appear)—constitute...well, conventional implicatures. These are integrated compositionally:

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 constitute part of **encoded** content but not part of **truth-conditional** content (differing in this respect, as we have seen, from appositives and non-restrictive relatives); their falsity does not project as falsity of the expression to which they contribute. Barker cites the examples in (45)

- (45) a. #It is true that even Mother Teresa was pious.  
b. #It is false that Elvis was world-famous but nevertheless unknown around here.

to show that conventional implicatures can be embedded (as implicatures, not as “said” content) and can affect judgments of assertability and validity. (Cf. Kaplan (1999)’s independent development of the notion of “validity-plus”.)

Williamson (2003, to appear) presents a spirited defense of Frege’s account of epithets (e.g. *cur*, *Boche*) that also draws on conventional implicature, and insightfully addresses a potential objection to an F-implicature analysis of such pejoratives: How can we reconcile the intuition that someone might assent to (46a) and reject (46b)

- (46) a. Every dog is a dog.  
b. Every dog is a cur.

with the claim that the difference between *dog* and *cur* is merely a matter of Fregean “tone” and not sense? Williamson (2003) responds:

Such problems undermine Frege’s simple account of propositional attitude ascriptions, not his claim that pairs like ‘cur’ and ‘dog’ have the same truth-conditional meaning. For similar problems arise even for pairs of synonyms with the same tone. Kripke (1979) gives the example of the synonymous



natural kind terms ‘furze’ and ‘gorse’. A speaker might...acquire normal competence with both without being sure that they refer to exactly the same kind of plant. Thus ‘He believes that all furze is furze’ and ‘He believes that all furze is gorse’ appear to differ in truth-value. It does not follow that ‘furze’ and ‘gorse’ are not synonyms after all. Such problems show nothing special about pejoratives. Whatever the right account of propositional attitude ascriptions, it is compatible with the Fregean view that ‘cur’ and ‘cog’ differ in tone but not sense (truth-conditional meaning).

Finally, and again very much in the spirit of Grice’s (and Frege’s) approaches to F-implicature, Jayez (2004) and Jayez & Rossari (2004) argue that discourse markers are not part of what is said or asserted. Conventional implicatures, they maintain, may be explicitly communicated and may be embedded, but are not asserted and cannot be directly refuted. They argue further that presuppositions, as traditionally conceived, are a subset of conventional implicatures—those constituting part of given information. (The relationship between conventional implicature and presupposition has been a matter of controversy for scholars from Levinson (1983) to Amaral et al. (to appear), but again I cannot address this issue here, in part because of the difficulties in determining the linguistically relevant notion of presupposition.)

On the topic of non-refutability, it is worth noting that besides the responses of “*You’re wrong*” or “*That’s false*”, which Jayez & Rossari (2004) show cannot attach to conventionally implicated material, another all-purpose refuter is “*Bullshit!*”, as explored in the celebrated commentary presented by Ward (2003) on this very occasion five years ago. (Ward credits Craige Roberts for her work in designing the *bullshit* diagnostic.) Substitution of *bullshit* for *whaddaya mean* in the test frames in §4 produces anomaly:

- (47) A: “Her name is Caroline. She’s an Italian girl but she’s pretty.”  
 B<sub>1</sub>: “What do you mean, *but* she’s pretty, Ma?” Frank said. “Why not ‘*and* she’s pretty’?”  
 B<sub>2</sub>: #”Bullshit, Ma.” Frank said. “Why not ‘*and* she’s pretty’?”

*Bullshit!* is equally incapable of cancelling the F-implicature of *even*, as *Merde!* is for that of an inappropriate *tu* or *vous*. On the other hand, as Gregory Ward points out (p.c.), the causal component of *therefore* is a viable candidate for *bullshit*-rejection, which supports its banishment from the ranks of F-implicature:

- (48) A: Lance loves musical comedies and has seen “Mamma Mia” twice.  
 He is, therefore, gay.  
 B: Bullshit. That doesn’t follow.

If I have succeeding in establishing anything in this study, it is to demonstrate that a coherent notion of conventional but non-truth-conditionally relevant content in the tradition of Frege (1879, 1892, 1897, 1918-19) and Grice (1961, [1967]1989), is free from bullshit.

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