

A Pragmatic Analysis of Conversational Implicature in Selected Qur'anic Texts

Key Words: Implicature, Cooperative principles, Conversational Zainab Tariq Abdul-Kareem

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Abstract

The Holy Qur'an is highly structured and constructed. It is a rich source of using rhetorical and metaphorical devices in spite of its simple language. Therefore, some meanings in the Holy Qur'an cannot be captured literally. Rather it requires an essential knowledge to get the right meaning. So, this paper aims at investigating the most important types of implicature, the conversational implicature, that are found in the Holy Qur'an. The study selects specific Qur'anic verses that contain invisible meanings. The model that has been adopted in this study is Grice (1975). However, the study provides first a brief account of the area of pragmatics and the notion of the context, and then it continues to discuss the three issues of Gricean implicature in general, and maxims of conversation, and the conversational implicature in particular. Then the study analyzes the implied conversational meanings that are found in seven Holy Qur'anic verses. The Qur'anic verses are analyzed according to Grice's maxims (quantity, quality, relevance, and manner).

implicature.

1. Introduction

Meaning cannot be conveyed only by the inherent meanings of words and sentences in conversation (Paltridge, 2012). Rather, it is produced by various elements such as the purpose of the interaction, the correlation among the participants themselves, and the context of the utterance (including linguistic and physical context). However, in religious and divine books, there are certain texts that contain a special meaning in nature. Thus, there are problems raised with such texts, namely, the texts that are found in the Holy Qur'an. A certain Qur'anic verse may have a different meaning from that literal one. For instance, the following verse has a further implied meaning that what is said literally:

قال تعالى : " ان الذين يبايعونك انما يبايعون الله يد الله فوق ايديهم" (الفتح: ١٠)

Here, in this verse there is an indication to the hand of God. But actually this does not mean that God puts his hand upon the hand of proponent people. But, it has a further implied meaning which involves that God is proponent and adherent to those people who vote to the prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

1.1 Objectives

The study aims at:

1. Identifying the notion of conversational implicature that is found in the Holy Qur'an.

2. Investigating the correlation between Grice's maxims and conversational implicature.
3. Analyzing the religious Qur'anic verses in order to find out how the maxims are flouted and lead to the conversational implicature.

1.2 Research Question

1. What is the most significant type of implicature that is found in the Holy Qur'an?
2. In which sense do Grice's maxims correlate with the conversational implicature?
3. How does the conversational implicature occur in the Holy Qur'an?

1.3 Limits

The study will be limited to illustrate the concept of conversational implicature, specifically flouting and violating the Grice's four maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner in English. The application of the study will be limited to seven selected verses from the Holy Qur'an that contain conversational implicature.

1.4 Data

The data collection will be restricted on just seven verses of the Holy Qur'an from different chapters including Surat Al- Ana'am, Al-Nisa'a, Al- Bakara, Yusuf, and Maryam.

2. Gricean Implicature

Generally, implicature can be defined as "an additional conveyed meaning", it is something more than just words and sentences (Yule, 2000: 35). It was first observed by the philosopher Paul Grice in his famous article "Logic and Conversation" in 1975.

According to Grice's approach, speaker's meaning constitutes both 'what is said' and 'what is implied'. Thus, the component of 'what is said' belongs to the area of semantics and, therefore, is determined by the truth conditions. 'What is implicated', on the other hand, belongs mainly to the area of pragmatics and, so, is not identified in terms of truth conditions. The reason behind Grice's paper success is that it is regarded as the first effort which makes a clear distinction between literal meaning and suggested (or implicated) meaning. Grice used both *implicate* and *implicature* to refer to the suggested meaning and so it makes it distinct from the literal meaning. Implicature means to cover certain ways to convey the literal information which has not been stated. TOTAL SIGNIFICATION OF AN UTTERANCE is used to cover both the sum of the literal meaning of the sentence and the implicated meaning of the utterance of that sentence. Hence, semantics deals with sentence meaning which is abstract, while pragmatics deals with the utterance concrete meaning, that is ,what goes beyond the inherent meaning of words and sentences (Mey, 2009: 365; Botlyan: 1; Saeed, 2006).

In addition to that, Cruse (2006: 85) states that the term implicature refers to the intended parts of the meanings of utterances though do not anticipate as part of what is being said in action of utterance nor they follow rationally from

what is said. Moreover, Horn (2006:3) states that implicature builds the bridge between what is said and what is communicated. What is said is the literal meaning of the sentence and is identified by the elements of grammar and structure with the use of indexicals.

However, to illustrate the notion of implicature, Birner (2013) states that Grice noticed that the meaning of a word like *and* goes beyond the literal (hence its truth conditional) meaning as logical conjunction. Thus, its meaning is variable one, because it occurs in various contexts. So, *and* in sentences like 'Yesterday I ate three meals and took two naps' and 'Jennifer forgot to study her exam and got D.' has different meanings. The inferences that will be made by the audience here will vary since *and* occurs in different contexts. In the first sentence, there is no suggestion that the meals occurred before the naps. The second sentence, on the other hand, has two inferences, that is, the inference of ordering and the inference of causation. The hearer will infer that Jennifer's forgetting to study occurred first, and then she failed. Her forgetting to study leads and causes her get a low degree. So, the inferences are not made by the inherent meaning of the word *and* alone, but it is context that is responsible for determining its meaning (41).

In such cases, context has a great impact on understanding the meaning. Therefore, Grice looked at the ways in which contextual effects contribute and affect the meaning. What he did is he set specific rules and considered them as basics in conversation. The rules are identified in terms of Cooperative Principles (Paltridge, 2012: 39; Birner, 2013: 41).

Moreover, the implicated meaning is either conversational or conventional. So, there are two types of implicature, namely, conversational implicature and conventional one. And what is implicated conversationally is either generalized or particularized implicature. Conventional implicature is determined by specific words and expressions such as 'but, even, yet, etc. Conventional implicature so is determined by the meaning that is raised by the use of these words (Horn, 2006: 4; Yule, 2000:45; Birner, 2013:62).

2.2 Gricean Cooperative Principle

The cooperative Principle was first suggested by H.P Grice as a basic description of the ways which rise the conversational implicatures. Grice depicted the conversation as a co-operative action in which contributors implicitly agree to put up with certain standards (Cruse, 2006:40). So, the basic notion behind this principle is that participants must be cooperative ones in conversation. Thus, Grice (1975) pointed out "make your conversational contributions such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged".

According to Birner (2013), it seems that people should be cooperative in conversation in the sense that "they stick to the topic (or at least relevant side topics), they say interpretable things in a reasonably concise way, and they try to complete their thoughts while not giving distracting or irrelevant details". There are four maxims that should be taken into consideration in conversation:

1. The Maximum of Quantity: Say adequate, however, don't say excessively.
2. The Maximum of Quality: Say simply what you're certain of and what is accurate.
3. The Maximum of Relation: Say only what is related and significant.
4. The maximum of Manner: Be clear, ephemeral and definite.

In fact, speakers either obey (observe), violate, flout, or opt out the maxims. There is a clear correlation between these maxims and the notion of implicature. That is, when one of the maxims is flouted or violated, the meaning of the sentence will not be understood as it is supposed to be (intended). Therefore, the maxims of conversation have a great effect on determining what the speaker intends of what she/he says. When speakers observe and obey the conversational maxims, it would seem that it is easy for the hearer to make the appropriate inferences that what is meant is exactly of what is said. Therefore, the cooperative principle is useful in pointing and figuring out the conversational implicature (Bach, 2006:4).

2.3 Gricean Theory of Conversational Implicature

Conversational implicature is one basic type of the implicature in which it is based on the utterance and it depends highly on the contextual effects. So, it is implicated from the form of an utterance. It is deduced via the Cooperative principle and its conversational maxims. The meanings that are implicated through this type of implicature is non-truth conditional. So, it is context dependent, that is, if the context was different, then the meaning would vary accordingly (Crystal, 2008: 238; Birner, 2013: 62).

Mey (2001: 46) interprets the conversational implicatures as our way of understanding an utterance in any conversation in accord of what we anticipate to hear. For instance, if someone asks a question like 'what time is it?' an answer like 'The bus has just gone by' will make a perfect sense to the person who asks, since it occurs in particular context of situation. So, the context in this situation is that there is a bus that passes everyday by an exact time.

Paltridge, however, defines the conversational implicature as that inference that is made by the listener in order to get the speaker's intended meaning basing on the literal meaning of the speaker himself, the conversational principles and its maxims. For instance, when somebody says 'there is nothing on TV', he does not mean that there is nothing at all. But, he means that there are no programs that he interested in (2012: 50-1).

Two categories of conversational implicature exist involving generalized as well as particularized conversational implicature. Thus the generalized conversational implicature is being stated according to Cruse (2006), independent of context. That is, "an implicature counts as generalized if it is explicitly cancelled and is to that extent independent of context"(71).

e.g. None of the Victorian mothers had any idea how their daughters were accustomed to be kissed.

In the above example, the following inferences will be made:

-Most of the mothers were Victorian.

-Not all of the mothers were Victorian.

Here, there is nothing particularly mentioned about the Victorian mothers or the Victorian age in the context. In turn, the implicature is made on the basis of the word *most*. So, *most* implicates *not all* and *most*. In this case, on the basis of selecting certain values from the scale, there is another type of implicature raised by the use of these values within the generalized one, so-called scalar implicature (Birner, 2013: 63).

The second type of conversational implicature, which is particularized one, on the other hand, is a context dependent. "A 'particularized' conversational implicature depends on a specific context and is not a default message component" (Cruse, 2006:71).

e.g:

A: Can I speak to Jane?

B: Jane is in the bath.

In this example, there is an implied negation in B's response that Jane is now busy, so she cannot speak with you. It means that the answer is 'No'.

Conversational implicatures are not entailment (they do not follow logically from what is said), cancellable or defeasible (can be denied by the speaker), calculable (can be worked out based on the utterance, the maxims and the context of the utterance), indeterminate (one particular utterance can give various inferences in a particular context), nonconventional (do not depend on certain words and expressions), and non-detachable (they are not tied to the same words, but the same implicature rises by different words in the same context) (Verschueren & Ostman, 2009: 107; Cruse, 2006: 38; Horn, 2006: 4; Yule, 2000: 44; Birner, 2013: 68-72).

3. Data Analysis and Discussion

This section is devoted to analyze a set of particular verses quoted from the Holy Qur'an. Each one has an implied meaning which is different from that literal meaning of the sentence. The implicature which is raised behind each of them results from flouting the conversational maxims. Therefore, these are evaluated conferring the Grice's maxims (relevance, quantity, manner and quality).

Text.1

(يَكْذِبُونَ كَانُوا بِمَا آلَيْمٌ عَذَابٌ مُرْسًا وَلَهُمْ اللَّهُ فَرَادَهُمْ مَرَضٌ قُلُوبِهِمْ فِي) 10البقرة:

"Their hearts contain malice so God has increased their [share of] malice. They will have painful torment because they have been lying" (Irving, 10)"

In this Holy verse, the term 'مرض'، disease' has a special meaning. It does not mean any natural disease that plagues human beings. Rather, it means the social diseases and the nastiness (or badness) that those disbelievers have in their hearts like skepticism, hypocrisy, belying, envy, and so on. Indeed, doubt in believing and accepting the principles of the religion is known as disease, because generally it refers to getting out of the health of the body. The same happens with hearts unless it is plagued by doubt. So, "في قلوبهم مرض" means here

luke warmth of the right. Moreover, both maxims of relation and quantity are violated, because of the term social diseases, so, more information has been stated than is required.

Text.2 "قد مكر الذين من قبلهم فأتى الله بنيانهم من القواعد فخر عليهم السقف من فوقهم و اتاهم العذاب من حيث لا يشعرون" (النحل: ٢٦)

"Those before them schemed, and God reached for their through buildings through its foundations, so the roof caved in on and torment came at them where they did not even suspect it." (Irving, 26)

The maxim quantity is being contravened in this verse just to create the sense that there is no real ceiling which God damaged. Thus; فخر عليهم السقف means the bane comes to them from the safe side they have. Moreover, the word that God smashes their blasphemy and disbelieving is mentioned to make exaggeration. So, it is necessary to be "من فوقهم", that is mentioned here, because the ceiling is certainly above.

Text.3

4شقيبا) مريم: رَبِّ بِدُعَائِكَ أَكُنْ وَلَمْ شَيْبَا الرَّأْسُ وَاشْتَعَلَ مِنِّي الْعَظْمُ وَهَنْ إِنِّي رَبِّ قَالَ)

"He said: "My Lord, my bones are tottering for me and my head is glistening with white hair, while I have never been grumbling in my appeal to You, my Lord!" (Irving, 4)

In overhead citation, Zakaria's speech is not to convey us about his old age but to indicate his feebleness in front of the supremacy of Allah. Subsequently, he gives additional information in a slanting way by flouting the maxim quantity just to present the disguised meaning. Likewise, he also mentions the later stage of life indirectly, where human become deficient of physical strength because of old age.

3.2 Maxim of Quality

Text.4

(و منهم اميون لا يعلمون الكتاب الا امانى و ان هم الا يظنون) البقرة ٧٨

"Some of them are illiterate and do not know the Book except to say "Amen" [to it]. They are solely guesstimating" (Irving, 78)

In the above verse, the word "ومنهم" means from those jews those that God narrates their stories in the Qur'an. "لا يعلمون الكتاب" does not mean the book. That is, they do not know the rules, the principles, the verdicts, and the canon of God. They are just like animals "بهائم". Also the word "اماني" refers to different implicatures. It means the lied sayings they say, or it perhaps means recitation they recite and do not know what it means, it also means that their untruthful delusions made them believe as they lived in paradise however, fact is that these are their unreliable thoughts. Hence, both of the words including الكتاب and امانى defy the maxim of quality as these signify the reader's yearning in knowing and realizing the implicature prepared by them.

Text.5

(ثم لم تكن فتنتهم الا ان قالوا و الله ربنا ما كنا مشركين)

الانعام ٢٣

"Then their excuse would be nothing but that they would say: By Allah, our Lord, we were not polytheists."(Irving:23)

In the above verse, polytheists say that were not polytheists, but they lie and violate the Maxim of Quality to imply they lie to be forgiven by Lord.

3.3 Maxim of Relevance

Text.6

"يا معشر الجن و الانس الم ياتكم رسل منكم يقصون عليكم اياتي و ينذرونكم لقاء يومكم هذا، قالوا شهدنا على انفسنا و غرتهم الحياة الدنيا و شهدوا على انفسهم انهم كانوا كافرين" الانعام ١٣٠

"O assembly of Jinn and men! did then not come to you messengers from among you, relating to you My communications and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours? They shall say: We bear witness against ourselves. And this world's life deceived them, and they shall bear witness against their own souls that they were unbelievers" (Irving,170)

Here, Jinn and men give an answer which is not relevant to the asked question. They violate the Maxim of Relevance to imply they acknowledge and accept their sin, neglect and being unbelievers while they say this world's life deceived them.

3.4 Maxim of Manner

Text.7

اللَّهُ وَ مَكَانًا شَرُّ أَنْتُمْ قَالَ لَهُمْ يُبْدِيهَا لَمْ وَ نَفْسِهِ فِي يُوسُفُ فَأَسْرَهَا قَبْلُ مِنْ لَهُ أَخٌ سَرَقَ فَقَدْ يَسْرِقُ إِنْ "قَالُوا تَصِفُونَ" يوسف: ٧٧ بِمَا أَعْلَمُ

They said: "If he has been [caught] stealing, then a brother of his stole something previously." Joseph reserved his secret to himself and did not disclose it to them. He said: "You are in a worse plight God is quite conscious of what you describe." (Irving:77).

This dialogue represents no name of Joseph and his brothers' audiences' unawareness about the theft of Joseph. As brothers said that Benjamin is a thief, thus knowingly they flout the maxim of relation. Subsequently, there appears no relationship among designating Benjamin and Joseph for goblet stealing. However, when it is revealed by the brothers that Joseph and Benjamin are thieves, the purposely isolate themselves from both of them. Thus, they flout this maxim to give the affirmation of ten real brothers than other two as Joseph & Benjamin are their stepbrothers. They want to express themselves as good people. Thus, it is obvious that the exculpated themselves by flouting the maxim of relation. Grice's two definitions about manner of maxim termed the interlocutor orderly & brief which also meant as they should avoid pointless wordiness and now this maxim was flouted by brothers of Joseph. When audiences have no former information, by talking specifically about one extra thing made the Joseph's brothers flout the manner maxim to exonerate themselves once again.

Conclusion

Pragmatics is the study of invisible meaning. There is a pragmatic meaning behind each spoken or written discourse. Therefore, pragmatics deals with communication function rather than the form of the utterance itself. Thus, some utterances, including Qur'anic texts, contain more than the literal meaning. There is a need to summon pragmatic information in order to interpret such verses. However, conversational implicature refers to the suggested meaning that is derived from the Cooperative Principle. The cooperative principle states that there are four maxims used by people in conversation to interact and understand with each other well. So, these maxims enable the people to interpret the spoken and written discourses. The four maxims are: maxim of quantity, quality, relevance and manner. Thus, conversational implicature rises when one of these maxims flouted or violated. Flouting the conversational maxims in the Holy Qur'an returns back to different issues and there is a purpose behind such implied meanings. Thus, it is because the rhetorical style that is used in the Holy Qur'an, no one can make such discourse. Also, flouting the maxims is used to reduce the harshness of some expressions and hence to create euphemism. Moreover, flouting the maxims is to make emphasis as well as to capture readers' minds for certain issues and concepts. The study also has found out that the implied meaning that is found in the Qur'an cannot be understood and interpreted by casual readers unless they return back to the exegesis and consult them in order to find out the right meaning.

تحليل تداولي للاستلزام الحوارية في نصوص قرآنية مختارة

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المخلص

ان لغة القرآن الكريم مبنية ومرتبطة بصورة منظمة للغاية حيث إنها مصدر غني لاستخدام وسائل البلاغة والاستعارة، وعلى الرغم من لغته البسيطة لكن لا يمكن في القرآن الكريم الاعتماد على المعنى الحرفي، بل يتطلب معرفة أساسية للحصول على المعنى الصحيح. لذا تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى معرفة أهم أنواع الاستلزام وهو الاستلزام الحوارية في المحادثة الموجودة في القرآن الكريم. تعتمد هذه الدراسة على آيات قرآنية محددة تحتوي على معاني غير مرئية وان النموذج الذي تم تبنيه في هذه الدراسة هو (Grice, 1975). ومع ذلك، تقدم الدراسة أولاً وصفاً موجزاً لمجال التداول ومفهوم السياق، ثم تستمر بشكل عام في مناقشة القضايا الثلاث المتعلقة بالاستلزام للعالم غرايس، احكام المحادثة، الاستلزام الحوارية بشكل خاص، ثم تحلل هذه الدراسة المعاني التحادثية الضمنية الموجودة في سبع آيات قرآنية كريم ويتم تحليل الآيات القرآنية وفقاً لأقوال غرايس (الكمية، النوعية، المواعمة، الأسلوب).

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