

Realizations of Conversational Implicatures in *The Great Gatsby*- A Psycholinguistic Perspective

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Received: November 30, 2020

Accepted: December 29, 2020

Online Published: December 29, 2020

doi:10.5430/elr.v9n4p42

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/elr.v9n4p42>

Abstract

The studies of conversational implicature mainly focus on discourse analysis, but relatively few studies are from psychological perspective. This paper aims to investigate how specific words and silence of the masterpiece *The Great Gatsby* manifest conversational implicatures related to psychological states. The paper is based on the corpus of chapter seven from *The Great Gatsby*, with high frequency words (i.e. 'the', 'and', 'well', 'heat') selected quantitatively in statistics using corpus linguistics methods such as segmentation, clustering, and frequency. The analysis of examples extracted from the novel could manifest that specific words as well as silence are psychologically adequate for conversational implicatures. The psychological accounts of conversational implicature are convincing in the novel, not only rendering it a masterpiece but also leading us to the inquiry of psychologically-based implicatures.

Keywords: conversational implicature, psycholinguistic perspective, context, silence

1. Introduction

Conversational implicature is the key to understanding words and utterances in daily communication. Only by figuring out meaning beyond the literal words can we achieve a successful communication. Generally, looking beyond the lines is based on inference and intention recognition. No matter what it is actual words or even silence, the communicative context, the speaker's relationship, and their motivations and so on, function harmoniously to form the background of conversational implicature, in which rich meaning proceeds. To calculate a conversational implicature is to predict what has to be supposed in order to preserve the supposition that the Cooperative Principle is being observed, and there may be various specific explanations (Grice, 1975). The central account for conversational implicature traces to intention of participants involved in a conversation or setting. Certain consequential effects of utterances could be found in the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, or of the speaker, or of other persons (Austin, 1967). Implicature is achieved by realizing cognitive fix and target intention of the speaker besides the mere content of utterances (Korta & Perry, 2011). To achieve a successful communication, intention recognition is crucial in decoding the implied meaning. Intention, in nature, is mind-reading related to thoughts and thus may be a psychological game. The important role of psychological states played in realizing conversational implicature is undeniable.

As most implicature identifications are closely related to mind reading of the speaker, the psychological accounts of conversational implicatures may be adequate. Unfortunately, little effort has been made on this cross-disciplinary issue. The recent trend in pragmatics study calls for associations among different areas. This paper aims to illustrate conversational implicatures concerning areas of psycholinguistics, corpus linguistics, and discourse analysis by looking from the novel *The Great Gatsby*. Its creativity lies in valuing a masterpiece in literary from a cross-disciplinary perspective and providing psychological evidence to conversational implicature.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Implicature

Implicature is an important issue in pragmatics study. Pragmatics is the study of meaning in contexts, in which contextual features are interacting with semantics and how more gets communicated than is said. According to Grice (1975), implicatures arise based on the assumption that parties in the conversation are generally cooperative.

Cooperative principle involves the underlying logic comprehension of the world. However, participants may observe, violate, flout or opt out of the maxims of quantity, quality, relevance, and manner. Whenever violation occurs, listener(s) might make inferences of the speaker's utterances beside its literal meaning. Meaning could be decomposed of what is said, and what is implicated. Implicature is an additional conveyed meaning that is more than the literal meaning. Conversational implicatures is adapted to serve and primarily employed to serve particular purposes of speakers (Grice, 1975).

2.2 Psychological Adequacy

Psychological adequacy is to account for how principles or theories fit into the psychological states of people, which is inspired by Chomsky's (2006) observational, descriptive, and explanatory adequacy. It is a criterion to examine whether theories are in accordance with the internal mechanisms involved in language processing. When dealing with human and human relationships, cognition is of great importance as it is the base of all behaviors. Among psychological factors, intentions of speaker may greatly affect hearer's interpretation of utterances. To be concise, theories related with human language may be psychological adequate.

2.3 The Great Gatsby

The author of *The Great Gatsby* is Fitzgerald who is good at using precise and gorgeous words to create a restless and magnificent atmosphere. His works are famous for their delicate language and rigorous structure. Previous studies have demonstrated its significance in the arena of literary. *The Great Gatsby* gains popularity for its natural expression of the feelings of the characters, for its vivid description of the real modern atmosphere of urban life, for its complex writing skills such as stream of consciousness in expressing the young people's mental state and social life.

2.4 Research Gap

As stated above, conversational implicature, psychological adequacy, and *The Great Gatsby* are in intense discussion within its own discipline. In pragmatics, the study of conversational implicature mainly deals with its application in a discourse or novel. In psycholinguistics, many studies have been done on the theories and representations with regard to language comprehension, language production, and language acquisition. In literature, *The Great Gatsby* has been appreciated and analyzed from different perspectives concerned with characteristics, content organization, and metaphor aesthetics. However, an inquiry of conversational implicature in *The Great Gatsby* from a psychological view has little been touched yet. It has shown that conversational implicature is about inference and intention recognition, which are directly guided by people's psychological states. Thus, there is this correlation between conversational implicature and psychological adequacy from which we could proceed. Conversations in *The Great Gatsby* should also follow conversational implicature as in real-life conversation. If so, the novel masters its details with great delicacy, creating an indulged environment for readers. This paper would focus on how details in *The Great Gatsby* manifest conversational implicature and how these implicatures are related to the characters' psychological states, which can be seen in the following method.

3. Method

3.1 Procedures

The Great Gatsby is our main corpus in this paper. With the contribution of corpus linguistics, we segmented the novel and chose one chapter for detailed analysis (which is Chapter 7). Then, based on word frequency, some high frequency words are selected for further discussion in their roles played in conversation implicature. Kintsch and Vipond (1979) confirmed that readability is not determined solely by the text, but is an interaction between the text and the readers, among which, frequency of words in the text would be the best predictor of readability. Thus, word frequency is the criteria to choose these words.

After the words are chosen, we analyzed conversations in Chapter 7 to see how they reflect characters' mental state and their conversational implicature within the discipline of discourse analysis.

3.2 Corpus Based Segmentation

Methods in corpus linguistics are used in chapter selection of *The Great Gatsby*. Firstly, different word categories are classified according to natural language processing. These word categories are selected for vector normalization to guarantee data convergence. In this article, Euclidean Distance is used to calculate the normalized data of distance vectors among different chapters. *The Great Gatsby* is divided into nine chapters (Marked 1-9) to accomplish hierarchal clustering. The results are shown in figure 1 below.

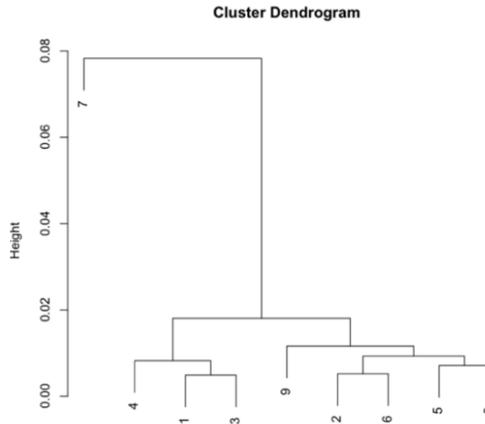


Figure 1. Hierarchical Clustering

From the clustering plot, it is clear that chapter seven is significantly distinctive from other chapters of the novel. Chapter 7 is the climax where all clashes are overt and the prelude to the closing of the story. Besides, conversations are particularly flourishing in the climax in which characters argue with each other. This is why chapter 7 is chosen as the material for analysis. This paper would like to illustrate some of the implicatures captured from chapter 7 from psychological perspectives.

Then, one-sample test is conducted to find out the distinctive use of some specific categories in chapter 7 compared with other chapters (see table 1-4).

Table 1. One-Sample Test of DT

	Test Value = 5.54					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
DT	-6.518	8	.000	-2.06045	-2.7894	-1.3315

Table 2. One-Sample Test of NN

	Test Value = 11.97					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
NN	-7.617	8	.000	-5.10287	-6.6477	-3.5581

Table 3. One-Sample Test of CC

	Test Value = 2.19					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
CC	-6.053	8	.000	-.77708	-1.0731	-.4810

Table 4. One-Sample Test of UH

	Test Value = 0.1					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
UH	-8.188	8	.000	-.06931	-.0888	-.0498

Among all categories, categories such as DT (determiners such as this, the, a), NN (singular or mass noun), CC (coordinating conjunction such as *and*), and UH (interjection such as oh, well) in chapter 7 are significantly distinctive from others.

3.3 Corpus Based Frequency

Specific words may exemplify implicatures and contribute to conversational context, as shown in the following table 5 and 6.

Table 5. Top Three Words from Word Frequency

word	Overall Frequency	Overall Frequency Ratio (%)	Frequency (Chapter 7)
the	2390	6.34659302	450
and	1540	4.08943651	240
a	1394	3.70173668	202

According to word frequency of the whole novel, the top 3 specific words based on word frequency are *'the'* (DT category), *'a'* (DT category), and *'and'* (CC category). In chapter 7, the top 3 frequently used words are *'the'* (frequency: 450), *'and'* (frequency: 240), and *'I'* (frequency: 239). We could see that words *'the'* and *'and'* are in the top 3 no matter in whole novel or in chapter 7. From the corpus data, the percentage of UH (interjection) in chapter 7 outweighs the whole novel. Among the interjections, the words like *'oh'*, *'yes/no'*, *'well'* are of popularity. We picked out *'well'* for further analysis as it is quite powerful in generating implicatures.

Table 6. Top Three Distinctive Words in Chapter seven

Keyword	Keyness	Frequency
Tom	+43.47	87
Jordan	+19.04	35
heat	+18.09	14

Three distinctive words (*'Tom'*, *'Jordan'*, *'heat'*) are selected from chapter seven as they are high frequency content words. Tom and Jordan are two characters' names in the novel so the word *'heat'* is chosen to see how it functions for implicature. Thus, words being analyzed in the following content are *'the'*, *'and'*, *'well'*, and *'heat'*.

4. Implicatures From Specific Words

4.1 The Specific Word *'the'*

One common example of generalized conversational implicature comes from definite article *'the'*. Generally speaking, it is indefinite article *'a'* that signifies the first time bringing up a NP topic and *'the'* as the reference to previous NP content. However, traditional accounts of *'the'* as the anaphor of NP could not cover all its usage. It is quite common *'the NP'* is used for generic reference and definite specific reference. Its implicature is that the NP it precedes does exist. *'The NP'* is unmarked for proximity, i.e. it is a neutral deictic term, not marked with proximal features.

A psychological view of focus and cognitive resources could clarify its usage in generic and specific reference. The less cognitive resources needed, the more likely a concept or memory is activated. Whenever a topic/theme is the focus in mind, the noun is easily activated. The thing we are focused on could be retrieved with less cognitive recourses, provided by the contexts and previous texts contributing to the identifiability of the NP Example 1 below from the novel demonstrates how *'the'* is used in a context without explicit mentioning of the NP.

(example 1)

“Did you see any trouble on the road?” he asked after a minute.

“Yes.”

He hesitated.

“Was she killed?”

“Yes.”

“Who was the woman?” he inquired.

“Her name was Wilson. Her husband owns the garage. How the devil did it happen?”

The context of this conversation is that the two characters passed the same road consecutively. Based on their common background of a severe car accident which deprived a woman's life on this road, this conversation unfolds. The pronoun '*she*' has no referent in the text, but as their focus is on the car accident, the reference of '*she*' and '*the woman*' is directly pointed to the injurer and '*it*' to the accident. As the situation provides a seemingly appropriate context for their talking of the accident, which is the topic of their conversation, the access of '*the woman*' is of a lower threshold in cognitive resources. Besides '*the*' as a specific reference of the injured women, its usage of a generic reference is in '*How the devil did it happen*'. It is obvious that '*the devil*' has no referent. But it is this topic of the car accident which makes it comprehensible. A possible explanation could be '*the*' strengthened its force in their emotional states toward the accident, perhaps surprise and confusion. Within particular contexts, function of '*the*' may vary, but they show correlation with the focus of the topic and with less cognitive resources.

4.2 The Specific Word '*and*'

Another word which embodies implicature is *and*. The word *and* may be treated as instances of conventional implicature in different structures, simply 'in addition' (example 2) or 'and then' (example 3 & 4) indicating sequence (Yule, 1996). These examples are extracted from chapter 7 of the novel.

(example 2) “She looks like me. She's got my hair and shape of the face.” (example 2)

(example 3) “The Bles-sed pre-cious! Did mother get powder on your old yellowy hair? Stand up now, and say-How-de-do.”

(example 4) “What'll we do with ourselves this afternoon?” cried Daisy, “and the day after that, and the next thirty years?”

Besides conventional implicatures, '*and*' may exemplify different functions in conversational contexts.

(example 5) “I hadn't seen him around, and I was rather worried. Tell him Mr. Carraway came over.”

In example 5, '*and*' could serve the sentence with various functions. It can be interpreted as simply addition. That is the speaker Mr. Carraway tells the butler that '*hadn't seen him around*' and '*was rather worried*' are the two reasons for his visit. If p and q are simply p & q, then it could be replaced by q and p. But the interpretation of '*I was rather worried and I hadn't seen him around*' is quite different from his original propose of visiting Gatsby to make sure if he is fine. The reversed version emphasizes more on the speaker's own worries as if the speaker needs to some comfort talk to get rid of his worries. An alternative perspective is to take '*and*' as time sequence marker. For a rather long period '*I hadn't seen him*' and then '*was rather worried*'.

(example 6) “And Mr. Thomas Buchanan, the athlete?” I inquired.

The word '*And*' in example 6 is not combining two segments, but used as initials. The context is that '*I*' (the speaker Nick) came to visit Tom and Daisy, and he saw Daisy and Jordan in a room he entered. By stepping into the room, Nick inquired '*And Mr. Thomas Buchanan, the athlete*'. As can be seen, both conventional implicatures of '*and*' mentioned above could not justify the situation. Perhaps, a more cognitive associated interpretation could account for its usage in conversations. Conversation can be regarded as a process of new information being integrated to older ones, making the more important propositions being activated more in the working memory. The bridge between new and old information is '*and*'. The reanalysis of examples is made from a psychological perspective of '*and*' alongside its implicatures.

In example 5, the word '*and*' adds his worry for Gatsby on the old information that he '*hadn't seen him around*'. A causality relationship between old and new information should be considered more appropriate. As for example 6, the utterance is not to ask whether Mr. Thomas is the athlete, although it might be a possible if sees Mr. Thomas in person. The real situation is not to ask for where Mr. Thomas is, but as an opening or greeting to the ladies in the

room. In his expectation, Mr. Thomas should be in the room as well. The word *'and'* is the initial word of his utterance, it could be analyzed as a coordinator of his expectation in mind and more of a functional category. To fully understand the implicature of specific words like *'and'*, contexts are certainly crucial and the intention of the speaker under the certain context are of same significance.

Example 5 and 6 are two examples of how the word *'and'* could be analyzed in conversations with various functions. To put the word *'and'* in the context, normally its semantic meaning is shadowed by pragmatic usage, mainly as a coordinator to combine segments whether between actual utterances or between thoughts and utterances. It is a marker of adding new information to the old ones.

4.3 The Specific Word *Well*

The English discourse particles *well, oh, ah, so, anyway, actually, still, after all*, and the like might be described as 'maxim hedges' that indicate for recipients just how the utterance so prefaced matches up to co-operative expectations (Brown & Levinson, 1978). Hedges are common in psychology as people need time to organize their thoughts. It seems that the word *'well'* itself could exhibit implicit meaning, not to mention its function as a prelude to implicatures. In general, format of disagreement is prefaced with token agreement such as *'yes'*, or with *'well'*, or they are delayed in adjacency pairs during conversations (Levinson, 1983). The word *'well'* not only provides more time for language planning, but also softens their tone, perhaps like a compromise. The following examples 7 and 8 below illustrate how the word *'well'* is used in the conversation.

(example 7)

"Remember Biloxi," Jordan warned her. "Where'd you know him, Tom?"

"Biloxi?" He concentrated with an effort. "I didn't know him. He was a friend of Daisy's."

"He was not," she denied. "I'd never seen him before. He came down in the private car."

"Well, he said he knew you. He said he was raised in Louisville. Asa Bird brought him around at the last minute and asked if we had room for him."

From the context, everyone wants to figure out who Biloxi was. Tom thought *'he was a friend of Daisy's'* but Daisy denied it. In turn, Tom's response was *'Well, he said he knew you'*. The mere existence of *'well'* renders a subtle preference to defense. To some extent, Tom's using *'well'* lessens his certainty in his previous remark, which is a declarative that Biloxi is a friend of Daisy's. Tom's defense to Daisy was that Biloxi said he knew you, implicating the logic of his inference that *'He was a friend of Daisy's'*. Example 8 below gives further evidence on the implication implicated by *'well'*.

(example 8)

(Gatsby:) "Who was the woman?" he inquired.

(Nick:) "Her name was Wilson. Her husband owns the garage. How the devil did it happen?"

(Gatsby:) "Well, I tried to swing the wheel—" He broke off, and suddenly I guessed at the truth.

(Nick:) "Was Daisy driving?"

(Gatsby:) "Yes"

Gatsby's response to *'how the devil did it happen'* is not an explicit explanation of how the accident happens but starts with the word *'well'*. As Levinson (1983) states, the particle *'well'* in English serves to warn the recipient that some inferencing must be done to preserve the assumption of relevance. *'Well'* has no semantic content, only pragmatic specifications for usage. The using of *'well'* signals Gatsby is adhering to the cooperative principle and is speaking in an appropriate way. He doesn't want to explicitly tell the truth as it might be a little harsh. Rather, he says it with non-semantic word *'well'*, perhaps his mixed feelings are hidden in it. The utterance *'Well, I tried to swing the wheel'* is not quantitatively qualified for answering the interrogative. Nevertheless, Nick *'guessed at the truth'*. *Well* may be a signifier of high possibility of implicature that follows it. It is likely that this hardship embodied in both the *'try to'* and *'swing'* that leads the listener (Nick) to visualize Gatsby is the co-pilot in the car. Thus, he may *'guess at the truth'* that Daisy is the driver who causes the major catastrophe.

4.4 The Specific Word *Heat*

Heat and hot co-occur frequently in this chapter 7. The semanticist would say that hot and warm are distinguishable from the range of heat. Heat is more of a conceptual word and more abstract compared to hot and warm. When hot is used, the implicature contains the degree of heat should be high. Often, the representation of heat is concerned with

specific features and items related, such as hot, sweat, irascibility, etc. The embodiment of heat, especially hot, may contribute to the emotional feelings and further actions of people in that context.

(example 9)

“We’ve got enough to get us to town,” said Tom.

“But there’s a garage right here,” objected Jordan. “I don’t want to get stalled in this baking heat.”

Tom threw on both brakes impatiently, and we slid to an abrupt dusty stop under Wilson’s sign.

Under this specific hot weather (context), Jordan’s ‘*I don’t want to get stalled in this baking heat*’ is likely to irritate others, mainly Tom the driver. Jordan’s stating the objective distance to the garage and emphasizing on the hot weather surely is illocutionary. Her implication is that she wants the car to be filled with fuel to ensure they won’t get stuck on half way. It also has perlocutionary effects. Tom acts on the speech and steps on the brakes, implicating he is going to add fuel. The heat certainly created a depressing and chaotic atmosphere, which played a role in participants feelings and way of action, as indicated by Jordan’s complaint and Tom’s impatient moves.

A notice here is that if ‘*But there’s a garage right here*’ is deleted from the conversation, the utterance of Jordan would convey a totally different meaning, perhaps as a confirmation to Tom’s utterance or some sort of causal talks just to take her turn. As mentioned in the coordination ‘*and*’, the function is more important in the overall situation. She started her talk with ‘*But*’, not as a signal of contrast or comparison, just to emphasize. This could also be seen by the word ‘*right*’ with its scalar implicature to show how convenient is to add fuel in this garage in front of them. The utterance ‘*But there’s a garage right here*’ provides a felicity condition of her implicature to show perlocutionary force.

5. Implicatures of Silence

Paralinguistic features of language are dealing with the way of information transmitted besides specific utterances. It includes non-verbal elements in conversations, such as silence, hesitation, gestures, and also verbal segments such as uh, ah, etc. Paralinguistic features may fulfill multiple functions at a given time in a conversation, thus may arouse implicatures determined by participants’ intentions within different contexts. This part would illustrate how the theory of mind and linguistic planning theories in psycholinguistics could be used to distinguish different implicatures of silence.

5.1 Theory of Mind

Theory of Mind is put forward by Kenneth Crank. It is the ability to understand the mental states of oneself and the human beings around them, including emotions, beliefs, intentions, desires, and knowledge. It should be the base of successful human interaction. A tricky thing is that we could only utter sentences with sub-maxim of quantity in order to obey the maxim of quality. The classic example is:

A: How did Harry fare in court the other day?

B: Oh, he got a fine

If it later transpires that Harry got a life sentence too, then B (if he knew this all along) would certainly be guilty of misleading A, for he has failed to provide all the information that might reasonably be required in the situation (Levinson, 1983). Silence, such as hesitations or pauses during conversations, might be violating the sub-maxim of quantity due to the theory of mind, in which participants know the independence of thoughts among people. That is, as information asymmetry pervades, people holding more information could have uttered less than informative and meanwhile seemingly as they are being cooperative.

The particular context of silence can alter the interpretation or even the nature of it. After the disastrous car accident, Gatsby and Nick meet each other at Daisy’s place, and it is where the conversation takes place as in example 10 below.

(example 10)

(Gatsby): “Is it all quiet up there?” he asked anxiously.

(Nick): “Yes, it’s all quiet.” I hesitated. “You’d better come home and get some sleep.”

He shook his head.

(Gatsby): “I want to wait here till Daisy goes to bed. Good night, old sport.”

Nick ensures Gatsby the peace up there in the house as this is what Gatsby inquires. This quietness, in Gatsby’s view,

is a representation of things settled and Daisy being fine. In this particular context, especially after a disastrous shock, silence is preferable because at least, no complaints or burdens added may be soothing. However, silence is magical in that participants could have various standpoints and thoughts in it. In this silence, Nick also sees that Tom and Daisy nodding with his hands on hers, which seems like they are conspiring something. But this implicature of their gesture is not mentioned to Gatsby. Nick's hesitation might have something to do with his struggling whether to tell or not. This hesitation, from the theory of mind, is totally different from what Gatsby is thinking. Nick understands Gatsby is unaware of the fact it is Tom's mistress died in the accident but Gatsby doesn't. At last, he chooses not to tell and dropped some of what he thought as unnecessary details in his utterance. It seems that Nick totally understands this information asymmetry underlying their talk and theory of mind. Another example 11 below comes from the unexpected silence in seemingly formalized adjacency pairs.

(example 11)

"Is Mr. Gatsby sick?"

"Nope." After a pause he added "sir" in a dilatory, grudging way.

People may assume that *sir* conventionally implicates that the addressee is male and socially higher in rank than the speaker (Levinson, 1983). The conventional implicature of '*sir*' is to some degree deteriorated by the pause. If the servant's answer was '*Nope, sir*', it might be natural and realistic. A silence before adding '*sir*' to the utterance '*nope*' is a trigger to implicature. The servant is reluctant to show respect or welcome to the visitor (Nick). This is why Nick regards this '*sir*' uttered in a dilatory, grudging way.

When the hearer recognizes the intention and implications made by the speaker, the hearer may say accordingly or act on the potential request, which is the illocutionary or perlocutionary force of utterances. One property of implicature is deniability, in that the speaker could cancel the implicature with words as in example 12 below.

(example 12) "They carried him into my house," appended Jordan, "because we lived just two doors from the church. And he stayed three weeks, until Daddy told him he had to get out. The day after he left Daddy died." After a moment she added as if she might have sounded irreverent, "There wasn't any connection."

From example 12, Jordan's utterances might implicate that daddy's death might be relevant to the man. This implicature is possibly achieved as hearer would bridge gaps in daddy's orders, his actions, and father's death automatically to make it coherent based on the theory of mind. The silence here shown in '*after a moment*' demonstrates that people are thinking about the correlations of her utterances and her intention of saying it. It seems that Jordan also realizes that it may guide hearers to infer that he is responsible for the death. But as this implicature is not true, she denies the implicature by saying '*There wasn't any connection*'. Implicature arises and could be recognized by the speaker and hearers. If a speaker realizes this implicature is not what he means or may cause misunderstandings, he could simply cancel this implicature by adding another explanatory or complement remarks.

Overall, obvious silence in conversation function as a clue for implicature as people are trying to figure out the implicit meaning or intention, as declared in the theory of mind.

5.2 Linguistic Planning

Besides of silence from the theory of mind concerning about whether to say or not and the amount of information conveyed, silence is a natural phenomenon in language production when people organize their words. The cycle of planning and production is a natural pattern that we alternate between planning speech and articulatory processes in language production. We plan our utterances in cycles: we express a portion of our intended message, pause to plan the next portion (speech is hesitant), articulate that portion (speech is fluent), pause again, and then back again. One underlying reason that we tend to hesitate during speech production is that linguistic planning is cognitively demanding, as shown in example 13 below.

(example 13)

"By the way, Mr. Gatsby, I understand you're an Oxford man."

"Not exactly."

"Oh, yes, I understand you went to Oxford."

"Yes—I went there."

A pause. Then Tom's voice, incredulous and insulting:

"You must have gone there about the time Biloxi went to New Haven."

Another pause. A waiter knocked and came in with crushed mint and ice but, the silence was unbroken by his ‘*thank you*’ and the soft closing of the door. This tremendous detail was to be cleared up at last.

“I told you I went there,” said Gatsby.

“I heard you, but I’d like to know when.”

The first pause here is more like a silence from language planning due to its recall of previous talks about Biloxi. Cognitive efforts are essential in linguistic planning, more needed when referents are under-activated. Amit (1999) proposed that NP processing is determined by informational load: the amount of information an anaphor contains, either aid the identification of the antecedent, or add new information about it, or both. The talk of Biloxi was far way before this conversation takes place. Certainly, it takes time for Tom to access it and encode his words based on the gist of the previous talk. In the talk of Biloxi mentioned in their conversation far way before this one, we get the idea that Biloxi is possibly a liar who gossips his Yale experience. The background knowledge to all people in the room is that Yale is located in New Haven. Just as the fact that Biloxi did not even go to Yale, not to mention the time of his attending Yale, Tom’s ‘*You must have gone there about the time Biloxi went to New Haven*’ is definitely opting out the maxim of quality. His ironic utterance is a conversational implicature, in which would cost more time in comprehension and planning for the next turn in conversation. Furthermore, the second pause would be a resemblance of embarrassment as it is face-threatening to Gatsby. Obviously, participants realize the overt meaning implied in the threatening utterance and stay in silence. This silence is rather complexed. Everyone in the room may be planning to say something to break this silence and embarrassment. Gatsby defends himself by ‘*I told you I went there*’, restating his standpoint to break the silence.

The theory of mind, to some extent, is the basis for language planning. They are inseparable throughout the whole process of communication and conversations. Not only can they account for silence, but also the overall implicature is related to them.

6. Conclusion

This paper attempts to analyze conversational implicatures introduced by specific words as well as by silence from a psychological account of *The Great Gatsby*. The selection of conversations is of statistical significance as selection methods of chapter 7 and specific words are quite objective and quantitatively qualified. Conversational implicature are being investigated from both specific words and from paralinguistic silence. From implicatures of words (*‘the’*, *‘and’*, *‘well’*, *‘heat’*) itself and their implicatures in specific context, we see conversational implicatures are based on focus, cognitive resources, intention, and embodiment. From implicatures implied by silence, we see theory of mind and linguistic planning theory are intermingled in silence and its conversational implicature. It is obvious subtle changes of order or deletion of a particular word/utterance may ruin the conversational implicature as suggested in the original novel. The power of specific words, no matter function words or content words, and the power of silence spare no effort in providing details making the conversations psychologically adequate for implicatures. The psychological accounts of conversational implicature are convincing in the novel, not only rendering it a masterpiece but also leading us to the inquiry of psychologically-based implicatures.

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