| **RESEARCH ARTICLE**

Analysing Conversational Implicatures in Two Chapters of the Book of John from the Holy Bible

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| **ABSTRACT**

This study seeks to analyse the Conversational Implicatures (CI) of Jesus Christ's farewell speech in chapters 13 and 14 of the gospel of John from New King James Version of the Holy Bible. It explores the Pragmatics theories of Generalized Conversational Implicatures (GCI) and Particularized Conversational Implicatures (PCI) to explain the hidden messages embedded in the selected chapters drawing upon Yule (2010). Through a descriptive qualitative method, the study excavates the selected chapters to get the invisible viz. implied meanings of Jesus Christ's messages. The findings reveal that the chapters under consideration are full of conversational implicatures, philosophical in nature and difficult to understand by a simple reading. The Pragmatic theory of GCI and PCI is used to unfold the hidden messages. These findings are not based on conventional or literal meanings only, but on the contextual ones as well, taking into account the cultural era of Jesus Christ. It has been unveiled that Jesus Christ demonstrated humility, endurance, love and faith.

Resumé

Cette étude vise à analyser les implicatures conversationnelles (IC) du discours d'adieu de Jésus-Christ dans les chapitres 13 et 14 de l'évangile de Jean de la nouvelle version King James de la Sainte Bible. Il explore les théories pragmatiques des Implicatures Conversationnelles Généralisées (ICG) et des Implicatues Conversationnelles Particularisées (ICP) pour expliquer les messages cachés intégrés dans les chapitres sélectionnés en s'appuyant sur Yule (2010). Grâce à une méthode qualitative descriptive, l'étude fouille les chapitres sélectionnés pour obtenir les significations invisibles, c'est-à-dire implicites, des messages de Jésus-Christ. Les résultats révèlent que les chapitres étudiés sont pleins d'implicatures conversationnelles, de nature philosophique et difficiles à comprendre par une simple lecture. La théorie pragmatique de l'ICG et de l'ICP est utilisée pour dévoiler les messages cachés. Ces conclusions ne se fondent pas uniquement sur des significations conventionnelles ou littérales, mais également sur des significations contextuelles, en tenant compte de l'époque culturelle de Jésus-Christ. Aussi, a-t-il été révélé que Jésus-Christ a fait preuve d'humilité, d'endurance, d'amour et de foi.

1. Introduction and Literature Review

Communication is part of humanity and language is a medium through which communication occurs. The act of speech is thus human and a non-instinctive way of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires through a system of arbitrarily chosen sounds woven around medium called language. According to Brown (2000), language is a system which includes spoken or written symbols that can be used as a tool to communicate with each other in a community. Consequently, language is what shapes the

world and how people conceive the world around them in order to encode meaning. Enacting thoughts into words or action can be considered as interaction, which can be either verbal or nonverbal between two or more participants.

Conversations aim to exchange ideas, information, thoughts or feelings on a specific subject matter and can be studied scientifically. Mey (2001) states "Pragmatics studies the use of language in human communication as determined by the conditions of society. (p.6)" Likewise, language is a medium through which the manners, morals and mythology of society is passed on to the next generation. In a similar vein Mey (2001), ''conversational implicatures concern the way we understand an utterance in conversation in accordance with what we expect to hear '', (p.46). Similarly, Grice (1970), the father of the theory of conversational implicatures, remarks that what is meant in conversation often goes beyond what is said or written. He also observes that this additional non-literal meaning is not only deducible but also predictable. Very often language users say something to mean another thing. They do this to leave the task of interpretation and inference to the hearers /readers, who will try their best to infer meaning to what they read or listen to.

A conversational implicature is a systematic phenomenon of meaning one thing by saying something else. Grice (1975) draws a line of dichotomy between what is said, which he recognizes as being closely related to the conventional meaning of the words uttered, and what is conversationally implicated, which can be inferred from the fact that an utterance has been made in context. Since the author's spread of this theory, known as conversational implicatures, the field has become one of the major research areas in pragmatics. The present paper introduces the notion of conversational implicatures, discusses some key issues that lie at the very heart of the recent debates to reliably distinguish between semantic entailments and conventional implicatures, on the one hand, and conversational implicatures, on the other hand.

The main research objective to carry out the current study stems from the observation made after reading the selected chapters of the book of John from the Holy Bible. It is commonly discovered that the conversations therein are full of non-explicit, pragmatically oriented and folded messages that a simple reading is not sufficient to understand. As a result, the study aims at deciphering such hidden messages through the lens of conversational implicature theory for a better understanding of the selected chapters from the Holy Bible.

The present study questions the different types of implicatures that are embedded in the two selected chapters and the key message Jesus Christ wants to pass across to His disciples and to the world, in general. Besides, it has been hypothesized that both selected texts encompass lot of different types of implicatures via which Jesus Christ has conveyed implicit important messages. As it appears, the present research concerns the application of the theory of implicatures to a non-fictional book to uncover the embedded messages the selected texts carry, while some former studies have applied the same pragmatic theory to fictional and non-fictional texts, as well.

Grice (1975) identifies four types of implicatures, which include Conventional Implicature (CI), Conversational Implicature (CI), Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) and Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI). For the sake of precision, the present study focuses mainly on Generalized Conversational Implicatures (GCI) and Particularized Conversational Implicatures (PCI). GCI are inferences that occur by default in any type of context and can also be defined as conversational implicatures that are inferable without reference to a special context while PCI, on the contrary, are context dependent.

These are inferences that require the interlocutor's knowledge in a very specific context during a conversation to understand what is being discussed or talked about (Yokossi, D., T., Datondji, C., A., Koutchadé, I., S., 2022). According to Suryadi and Muslim (2019), a PCI is one in which "the interlocutors indirectly require more assistance to understand the meaning of a conversation because the context used in this type is not general in nature" (p.86).

Mustafa (2010) has investigated through a comparative study between implicature in linguistics and journalism, the interpretation of implicature as a pragmatic inference in such selected journalist texts as advertisements, news reporting, headlines, and human-interest stories. Through a descriptive method, he postulates that meaning is an obscure issue that needs pragmatic inferences like implicature to be appropriately understood. In addition, he has revealed that implicature is a vital pragmatic component that bridges the gap between what is literally said and what is intentionally meant in the process of communication. From the foregoing, implicatures play a vital role in media language by bridging the gap between different cultures since they help journalists in their papers to appeal to the interests and the attitudes of the intended readers. Thus, journalism always benefits from implicature both in its style of variations and its causation to the pragmatic cultural transfer of political, economic and social news stories.

Rahayu and Safnil (2016) have analyzed the various types of implicatures in 25 informal students' conversations used by the English education study program. The investigation reveals that the collected conversations embedded three types of

implicature namely, Conventional Implicature, Generalized Conversational Implicature and Particularized Conversational Implicature manifested through the use of both generalized and particularized conversational implicatures by the students to imply meanings in their utterances. The researchers would have done better if they had gone further to show the impacts of the use of both conversational implicatures on the students' understanding of the informal communication initiated among themselves.

Lubis (2015) investigates conversational implicatures of Indonesia lawyers club program on TV One to observe the types of maxim violation that potentially cause conversational implicatures. His findings reveal four types of maxim violations in lawyers' club program on TV One chiefly the maxim of quantity, the maxim of quality, the maxim of manner, and the maxim of relevance. The dominant type of maxim violation appeared in the study is the maxim of quantity. The reasons of the dominant type, according to the researcher, deal with, showing up pain and core of the problem to the audience, saving one face, defending certain groups and blaming the government. Though a very interesting research work, his study has failed to reveal the types of conversational implicatures caused by the flouting of the Gricean cooperative principle maxims in lawyers' club program on TV one. It has also failed to uncover the various meanings encoded by the conversational implicatures resulting from the flouting of the maxims in the TV program.

In a similar study, Daniel T. Yokossi et al (2022) have undertaken a Pragmatic Study of Generalized and Particularized Implicatures in "The Arrangers of marriage''from Adichie's *The Thing Around your Neck* to discover that arranged marriage is not the best as that can raise some dust in later days of the marriage. Therein, the study has also ascertained that this practice is common among so many Africans immigrants in abroad. Many use that method to secure a job and stay thus the marriage on paper. The analyses have disclosed 27 Generalized Conversational Implicatures and 18 Particularized Conversational Implicatures that have together helped them to detect the hidden messages imbedded in the selected short story. Having briefly reviewed the related literature in the domain, the display of the theoretical construct urges to delineate the scientific path to be followed in the course of the analysis and interpretation.

2. Theoretical Construct of Conversational Implicatures

In fact, there is a collective postulation that speakers can imply meanings that go beyond the literal interpretation of their words, and listeners can infer these meanings based on context, shared assumptions, and certain principles of conversation. Such a collective postulation is technically known in the domain of linguistics or precisely in that of pragmatics as Conversational Implicatures. The term "implicatures" refers to the meanings that a speaker conveys or implies, rather than directly affirming. These meanings go beyond the literal content of what is orally said. This theory, (Grice 1975), posits that conversational implicatures arise when a speaker's utterance deliberately violates one or more of the Cooperative Principle maxims and the listener uses rational thinking to figure out what the speaker is intending to convey. As a matter of fact, conversational implicature "concerns the way we understand an utterance in conversation in accordance with what we expect to hear" (Mey, 2001, p. 46) and consequently, there are no conversational implicatures if no maxim is flouted.

It appears thus that implicatures play a fundamental role while considering how people use language to convey meaning in context. As a pragmatic concern, the notion of "implicatures" is introduced by Grice (1970) to suggest that we do not just say things in their literal sense but, often, we do imply some context-dependent information to signpost our expectations. Implicatures are of two main types viz. Conventional Implicatures and Conversational Implicatures.

2.1 Conversational Implicatures

Conversational Implicatures occur in the course of everyday conversation and depend on the context and the Cooperative Principle (Grice 1975). Conversational Implicatures are typically derived by flouting or violating one of the maxims of communication (Quantity, Quality, Relation, or Manner), and listeners infer the intended meaning. As for Conventional Implicatures, they do not depend on the context of the conversation but are instead tied to the meaning of specific words or phrases in a language. They are part of the conventional meaning of the expression itself.

2.1.1 Generalized Conversational Implicatures

Generalized Conversational Implicatures are the type of implicature that arise from a general understanding of the context, not reliant on specific conversational details. Generalized conversational Implicatures (GCI) are inferences that refer to the non-explicit meaning that occurs by default in any type of context (Grice, 1975).

They are typically triggered by certain words or phrases that often imply a specific meaning in most contexts. Such words or phrases that encode Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) include "some", "not all", and "most". For instance, to decode the intended or implied meaning in *Most Africa men are polygamous,* one does not have to refer to any specific context of the

uttered words, but rather has just to retrieve what is implied from the word "most" therein and to recover that "some of the African men or not all of them are Polygamous". This is true because it is obvious most of them are.

Another illustration can be found in B's request to A's statement below:

Example:

A: "I'm going to the store."
B: "Can you pick up some milk?"

In this case, it is generally understood that A is going to the store is a relevant response to B's request. The implicature here is that A will likely pick up the milk, even if A does not explicitly confirm it.

2.1.2 Particularized Conversational Implicatures

Particularized Conversational Implicatures (PCI) and are called ad-hoc implicatures. as they are closely linked to specific or particular contexts. The success of these inferences is linked to knowledge about the shared knowledge and circumstances of the conversation. To get down to essentials, what is implied or intended in this type of implicature is retrieved from not only knowledge of or about the context of what is said, but also from the flouting of any of the Gricean cooperative principle maxims. They involve reasoning based on particular details that are unique to the situation.

Example:
A: "Do you know if John is coming to the party?"
B: "Well, he's at work right now."

The implicature here is that John is probably not coming to the party because he is at work. This meaning arises from context and shared knowledge about John's probable schedule.

2.2 Conventional Implicatures

As far as Conventional Implicatures are concerned, Yule (1996: 45) considers them as the ones which are "associated with specific words that result in additional conveyed meanings when those words are used". Actually, in Conventional Implicature, what is conveyed is the conventional meaning of the word used. When we say conventional meaning, we are referring to the literal meaning or dictionary meaning of a word.

Conventional grammar is the generally agreed upon standard of English grammar.   Conventional Implicature does not depend on any particular linguistic context. Conventional implicature is an implicature that is part of the agreed meaning of a lexical item or expression, rather than derived from principles of language use, and not part of the conditions for the truth of the item expression.

2.3 Gricean Maxims Cooperative principles

Grice (1975)'s Cooperative Principle suggests that people in conversation generally assume that they are working together to achieve effective communicative goals. In order to communicate effectively, speakers and listeners follow certain conversational strategies, or maxims, which are referred to as:

Maxim of Quantity: Provide an appropriate amount of information (not too much, not too little). In other words, provide as much information as required.

- **Maxim of Quality**: Do not provide information that is false or for which you lack sufficient evidence. Simply put, be truthful.
- **Maxim of Relation**: Make your contribution relevant to the conversation. This maxim recommends one to be relevant, and say things that are pertinent to the discussion.
- **Maxim of Manner**: Avoid ambiguity and be as clear as possible, organizing information in a straightforward way. It requires concision and order.

When a speaker deliberately flouts or violates one of these maxims (e.g., by being too vague, providing insufficient information, or making a seemingly irrelevant statement), the listener is expected to infer the intended meaning through implicature. This means that the listener must work out the intended meaning by considering the context, the speaker's intentions, and the whole conversation. The flouting of maxims invites the listener to make inferences beyond the literal interpretation.

3. Practical Analysis of Conversational Implicatures in the Selected Chapters
3.1 Generalized Conversational Implicatures Uncovered in the selected Chapters
The instances of Generalized Conversational Implicature identified in chapters 13 and 14 of the Book of John from the Holy Bible are displayed and numbered as follows:.

1. **Simon Peter**: , "You shall never wash my feet!"
2. **Jesus Christ**: "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."
3. **Simon Peter**: "Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head!"
4. **Jesus Christ**: "He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." "You are not all clean."
   "I do not speak concern all of you" .
5. **Jesus Christ**: "Most assuredly one of you will betray Me".
6. **Jesus Christ**: "A new commandment I give to you", "that you should love one another"; "as I have loved you, that you also love one another".
7. **Jesus Christ**: "By this all will know that you are My disciples".
8. **Simon Peter** : "I will lay down my life for your sake"
9. **Jesus Christ**: "will you lay down your life for my sake" ?
10. **Jesus Christ**: "most assuredly, I say to you the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times".

3.2 Particularized Conversational Implicatures Uncovered in the Selected Chapters
As for the Particularized Conversational Implicatures, the identified implicatures in the chapters under study are listed hereafter:

1. **Simon Peter**: "Lord, are You washing my feet?"
2. **Jesus Christ**: "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."
3. "Do you know what I have done"? "You call Me teacher and Lord, and you said well, for so I am". "If I then, Your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet". "I know whom I have chosen''.
4. **Jesus Christ**: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I sent receives Me"; "and He who receives Me receives He who sent me".
5. John the beloved: "Lord who is it"?
6. **Jesus Christ**: "What you do, do quickly"?
7. **Judas Iscariot**: "Having received the bread, he went out quickly".
8. **Jesus Christ**: "Now the son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him". "If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately".
9. **Jesus Christ**: "Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer". "You will seek Me" ; "Where I am going you cannot, so now I say to you".
10. **Simon Peter**: "Lord where are you going"?
11. **Jesus Christ**: "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow afterward".
12. **Simon Peter**: "Why can I not follow you now"?
13. **Jesus Christ**: "Let not your heart be troubled"; "you believe in God, believe also in Me". "In My father's house are many mansions".
14. **Jesus Christ**: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself"; "that where I am there you may be also". "And where I go you know, and the way you know".
15. **Thomas**: "Lord we do not know where you are going, and how can we know the way"?
16. **Jesus Christ**: "I am the way, the truth and life". "No one comes to the Father except through Me".
17. **Jesu Christ**: "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also"; "and from now on you know Him and have seen Him".
18. **Philip**: "Lord, show us the Father, and it will be sufficient for us".
19. **Jesus Christ**: "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip"?
20. **Jesus Christ**: "He who has seen Me has seen the Father"; "so how can you say, show us the Father" ?
21. **Jesus Christ**: "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me"?
22. **Jesus Christ**: "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me". "And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another helper, that He may abide with you forever".
23. **Jesus Christ**: "But you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you".
24. **Jesus Christ**: "I will not leave you orphans"; "I will come to you". "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see, Me".
25. "At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and My Father, and you in Me, and I in you".

26. **Another Judas not Iscariot**:" Lord how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world"?
27. **Jesus Christ**: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My words"; "and My Father will love him, and We will come to him".
28. **Jesus Christ**: "He who does not love Me does not keep My words"; "and the words which you hear is not Mine but the Father's Who sent Me".
29. **Jesus Christ**: "I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me".

Obviously, the chapters under study from the Book of John of the Holy Bible contain a reasonably high rate of Particularized Conversational Implicatures and a relatively low rate of Generalized Conversational Implicatures, which deserve to be interpreted in the following subsection.

3.3 Interpretation of the Findings

The above extracts are conversations between Jesus and His disciples with reference to the instances of Conversational Implicatures. Statistically, the Generalized Conversational Implicatures (GCI) score 10/39, or 25.64% while the Particularized Conversational Implicatures (PCI) score 29/39, or 74.36%. The current interpretation of the conversational implicatures aims at deciphering the hidden messages they carry on the basis of their functions and contexts of utterance..

First of all, the Generalised Conversational Implicatures (GCI) imply that Peter was asked by Jesus-Christ to wash his feet, which he fervently refused, knowing well the Jewish tradition of honouring one's Master and not the other way round. Where he says: "You shall never wash my feet!", "you" stands for a person deixis referring backward to Jesus-Christ. Jesus-Christ has been his Master for three years. Peter has never disobeyed any of His instructions. Yet in this sole situation, he disobeyed Him. This blatant disobedience is grounded in the cultural fact that only a servant, a disciple, or someone in a lower position can perform the act of feet washing not someone in a position of authority. This is an indication that the foot washing is symbolic and characteristics of the deep love, humility and spiritual cleansing Jesus-Christ is teaching to His disciples. He is thereby, teaching them by example so that they can imitate Him in the world.

Moreover, the GCIs in the above texts show that Jesus-Christ, having realized that the time had come to leave the earth, has chosen to point out to them the difficulties that lay ahead. Washing their feet is a form of humility. Considering the time and the prevailing Judaism in which Jesus-Christ was born, the high priests preferred to be served rather than to serve others. In such a time and in such a context, it was almost forbidden for a leader to stoop so low as to wash the feet of his followers.

When Jesus Christ returns to the table, He has shocked them by revealing that one of them was going to betray Him. This was the final tipping point that pushed everything over the edge, leaving the disciples completely confused and disorientated. None of the disciples could imagine or understand that one of them could sell the Master for money. Peter again broke the silence by asking John the beloved to ask the Master who such a person could really be? Due to His divine awareness, Jesus Christ revealed the person by giving a piece of bread to Judas Iscariot, offering him implicitly, a chance to change and seek for forgiveness. He revealed to them that His time on earth was over. Peter, who was emotional, told Jesus Christ that he would go with Him at any cost, even to the point of dying with Him. Jesus Christ made him understand that he couldn't stand for Him in the scenario ahead.

29 PCIs have been uncovered in the chapters understudy. For example, "I know whom I have chosen" implies someone is left out. Judas Iscariot was considered not chosen by Jesus Christ because the devil, at that point, had possessed his heart to betray his Master. There are a lot of PCIs in the statement as this "he who receives whomever I sent receives Me, and He who receives Me, receives He who sent Me", this implies the relationship which exists between Him and the Father. The PCI here is about what the world will make them pass through after the death of Jesus Christ. Especially, because they were associated with their Master, this association can create more problems for them after His departure.

"What you do, do quickly" implies so many interpretations pragmatically. Judas Iscariot is the keeper of the moneybag. One can easily thought the Master is sending him to buy some items for the feast of pass-over which was the stand of the disciples; but rather He is telling him Judas: be fast about your betrayal plan or go ahead with the business of the betrayal quickly. While Jesus Christ was addressing Judas in these words, one can predict that the project of betrayal is part of God's plan.

In addition, Jesus Christ tells His disciples where He is going, they could not follow Him now, to imperceptibly refer to His death. Peter went on to know why he cannot follow the Master in this journey since they had been with Him for three years and a half, and He had never forbidden him from following Him. This has made Peter perplexed but vibrantly, Jesus Christ replied unto him "Let not your heart be troubled, I will go to the Father to prepare a place for you." Jesus Christ did not openly tell them where He

was going the way also. The place here signified "heaven". He said they knew where he was going and the way to that place, which caused more confusion for the disciples. This made Thomas open up to him saying that they did not know where he was going, so how could they know the way? Surprisingly Jesus said: He is the way, the truth and the life. The hidden message of this conversation implies the is the way to eternal life.

Considering the literal declaration of Jesus Christ that goes "No one comes to the Father except through Me", it becomes perceptible that He is exclusively the sole and unique way to salvation not in religious organisations or beliefs. This confirms again His oneness with His Father as above stated. This reply prompted Philip to ask Him to show them the Father. Again, His answer implies that He is the Father. Implicitly, Jesus Christ wanted His disciples to understand that He was going to the Father, where He came from. The bottom line is that Jesus Christ was talking about His death and resurrection. He was sent for that mission.

The words of Jesus are full of allusions and implicatures through which He conveyed His messages. He came to fulfil this mission as the Saviour to the world. He also made sure to give them the necessary confidence before His departure by promising them the Comforter Who is the Holy Spirit, the third person in the Trinity. The necessary assurance Jesus Christ is transmitting unto them is will help them to find comfort and strength likely to solidify their faith during difficult times. He is indeed preparing the disciples for the difficulties ahead. It is their turn to stand up and defend the faith, the person and the ideology of their Master. He does not want the sufferings to be in vain, so He tells them of the difficulties that await them after His departure.

4. Conclusion

The present study investigates the Conversational Implicatures in two chapters of the gospel according to Saint John from the Holy Bible, King James Version. It focuses on Generalized Conversational Implicatures and Particularized Conversational Implicatures in the chapters 13 and 14 from a pragmatic perspective. The choice of conducting this research work stemmed from the remark made after the reading that many non-explicit pragmatically encoded messages are embedded in these chapters and a simple reading is not sufficient to grasp its real meanings. Through a descriptive qualitative method, the study has not only identified all the generalized and particularized conversational implicatures hidden in the selected chapters, but it has also helped to analyze the pragmatic phenomena of implicatures and interpret in the selected texts.

The study has made some findings such as the demonstration of true love, endurance, faith, humility and the challenges awaiting the disciples after the departure of the Master. 10 Generalized Conversational Implicatures (GCI) versus 29 Particularized Conversational Implicatures (PCI) have been identified, analysed and interpreted to enfold the hidden meanings in the conversations between Jesus Christ and His disciples.

These conversational implicatures (CI) have helped to reveal Jesus Christ's encoded messages of love, faith, humility and endurance from the hand of His enemies. The Generalized Conversational Implicature and Particularized Conversational Implicature have helped to uncover subtle and profound theological and relational truths. The actions and statements of Jesus are, most of the time, coated with meanings that go beyond the literal messages, which can only be deciphered with appropriate theoretical constructs, among which are pragmatic ones. The study of Conversational Implicatures in the selected books from the Holy Bible offers new understanding to readers and require from them the necessity to deeply read these passages to fully comprehend Jesus Christ's mission and His ongoing relationship with His disciples.

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