

Unarticulated Constituents (UCs) and Neo-Gricean Pragmatics

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In recent years, the concept of unarticulated constituents (UCs) has generated heated debates in both the philosophy of language and linguistic semantics and pragmatics (see e.g. Recanati 2002, Stanley 2002, Marti 2006). By UCs is meant a propositional or conceptual constituent of a sentence that is not linguistically explicitly expressed in that sentence. Stock examples include (i) *It's raining* [in where], (ii) *John is ready* [for what] and (iii) *Mary has a brain*. Three important issues are involved in the study of UCs: (i) do UCs exist, (ii) how the semantic content of UCs is recovered, and (iii) what is the pragmatic enrichment involved in the recovery of UCs?

The aim of this paper is twofold. Firstly, given that UCs have never received any formal treatment in neo-Gricean pragmatics, I'll fill the gap by providing a neo-Gricean account of the type of examples like (i) - (iii) in terms of Horn's (2004) R- or Levinson's (2000) I-principle, taking into account the Gricean distinction between generalised conversational implicature (GCI) and particularised conversational implicature (PCI). Secondly, following Huang (2007), I shall defend the neo-Gricean position that the pragmatic enrichment of UCs in these examples is nothing but a conversational implicature. The reasons are threefold. In the first place, the pragmatic enrichment that is required to recover the semantic content of UCs is engendered largely by the same Gricean pragmatic mechanism that yields a standard conversational implicature. Secondly, currently there is no reliable test either in theoretical, or experimental, pragmatics that can be used to distinguish alleged explicature (as in Relevance theory), the pragmatically enriched said (as argued by Recanati) or implicature (as argued by Bach) from conversational implicature. Thirdly, given the metatheoretical principle known as 'Occam's razor', a unified, implicature analysis is methodological preferable, because it postulates fewer theoretical categories or representational levels than its competitors.

My conclusions are (i) there are genuine UCs, (ii) the semantic content of UCs is pragmatically recovered via the R/I-principle in neo-Gricean pragmatics, and (iii) the pragmatic enrichment involved is a pre-semantic conversational implicature

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