

## On the local calculation of manner implicatures

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Evaluativity – the requirement that a degree exceed a contextually-valued standard – arises as a conversational implicature in a variety of constructions. (In (1-a), the implicature is that Ai owns a significantly high number of plants; in (2-a) it's that Ai and Bo are significantly short.) In the sentences in (1), evaluativity arises as a quantity implicature, due to the uninformative degree expressions or constructions; in (2), it arises as a manner implicature, due to the marked degree expressions or constructions (Rett 2015).

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|-----|----|-----------------------------|--|
| (1) | a. | Ai owns a number of plants. | <i>measure indefinite</i>                                |
|     | b. | Ai is tall.                 | <i>positive relative adjective positive construction</i> |
| (2) | a. | Ai is as short as Bo.       | <i>negative relative adjective equative</i>              |
|     | b. | Ai is this short.           | <i>negative relative adjective demonstrative</i>         |
|     | c. | How short is Ai?            | <i>negative relative adjective polar question</i>        |
|     | d. | Ai is taller than Bo is.    | <i>negative relative adjective clausal comparative</i>   |
|     | e. | Ai is more tall than Bo.    | <i>optionally analytic comparative</i>                   |

Like scalar-based quantity implicatures, unformativity-based quantity implicatures and manner implicatures are calculable and reinforceable. They are also cancelable, or sensitive to the Question Under Discussion, although the conditions under which they are cancelable are less common than they are for scalar implicature (van Kuppevelt 1996, Rett 2020). Additional evidence that evaluativity is a conversational implicature comes from the fact that these constructions are evaluative across languages despite no language marking evaluativity overtly (Rett 2015).

While these implicatures have distinct sources, they result in the same meaning, evaluativity, because the implicature is tied to a degree expression, which is associated with a scale (a set of degrees linearly ordered along a dimension). They can thus all be modeled in a game-theoretic RSA framework that takes into account uncertainty about comparison class in the interpretation of gradability (Bumford & Rett 2021).

In this talk, I'll address the implications of the evaluativity of equatives like (2-a) on models of implicature calculation. The fact that equatives like (2-a) are included in the manner-based evaluativity group in (2) suggests that the equatives *Ai is as tall as Bo* and *Ai is as short as Bo* are mutually entailing for the purposes of calculating manner implicatures. This flies in the face of the standard observation that equatives like (2-a) can receive an 'at least' or 'exactly' interpretation, depending on context.

I argue that a complete analysis of the evaluativity of equative constructions requires a model of implicature calculation in which **manner implicatures can be calculated locally**. It is not sufficient, as Rett (2015) suggests, to specify that quantity implicatures are calculated before manner implicatures (which could predict that the manner implicature is only evaluative after it is strengthened to its 'exactly' interpretation), as demonstrated by the overtly modified (3). Additional evidence that manner implicatures can be calculated locally comes from (4) (in which the evaluativity can be embedded under the epistemic verb) and (5-b) (which, in contrast to the ambiguous (5-a), can only mean that Ai is shorter than Bo).

- (3) Ai is at least as short as Bo. → Ai / Bo is not tall.
- (4) Cam thinks Ai is as short as Bo.
- (5) a. Ai is twice/half as tall as Bo.  
b. Ai is twice/half as short as Bo.

## References

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