

Assignment 2 and Paper 1

Chris Potts, Ling 390a: Controlling the Discourse, Fall 2007

Distributed Sep 14; group work on Sep 21; final draft due Sep 28

For in-class work on Friday, Sep 21 [bring three copies!]

- i. Bring in **four** examples of conversational implicatures. You can construct your own examples, but try to find them in natural contexts (in print, radio, television, overheard conversations, etc.).
- ii. For each example, say which Gricean maxim or maxims is/are relevant to determining the implicature, and briefly explain why (one or two sentences).

In class on Friday, Sep 21

You'll discuss your examples with your group members. They will help you further articulate your explanation for each pragmatic meaning that you identified.

Don't shy away from difficult or confusing examples that seem not to be easily explained in terms of the maxims. Your group members might be able to help you work through them. And we'll discuss the most intractable and/or interesting cases as a class.

For Friday, Sep 28

An essay of at least three double-spaced pages. Your essay should have at least the following parts:

- i. A brief introduction that gives the reader some idea of what pragmatics is and, more importantly for this writing, what the Gricean maxims are and (broadly speaking) how they are supposed to work.
- ii. Discussion of **two** of your examples (probably one paragraph for each). Basically, for this, you'll want to flesh out the few sentences you wrote for Friday in the light of the group and full-class discussions.
- iii. An answer to the question, What general pragmatic principles are at work in both your examples? (What general lessons can we learn from the data about pragmatics?)
- iv. Closing remarks: Summarize what you accomplished in the paper, say what we can learn from your paper, and/or tell us what needs to be done to strengthen the ideas.

Notes

- The introductory paragraph is intended to make the work self-contained. Your audience for it should be someone who is interested in topics like this but doesn't yet know about pragmatics.
- Your two examples need to relate to each other, so that a theme emerges, and so that you can pull off the third part.
- Your summary remarks shouldn't just repeat what you already said. They should *synthesize* it.