CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This study seeks to examine language used in the spoken form. It is fitting to explore this area within the domain of pragmatics, since "pragmatics is the study of language use" (Levinson, 1983:4). Language in the spoken form involves the use of utterances rather than sentences. According to Wilson and Sperber (1986:6), the goal of pragmatics is

...to answer a variety of questions about utterance interpretation that cannot be answered by a study of sentence meanings alone.

Therefore, a discourse analyst's approach to linguistic data differs from that of the formal linguist. The discourse analyst is more concerned with the relationship between the speaker and the utterance than with the relationship which exists between one sentence and another.

In pragmatics, we focus on the meaning of utterances. The distinction, therefore, between sentence and utterance meaning is important. According to Levinson (1983: 18), one can say that,

... a sentence is an abstract theoretical entity defined within a theory of grammar, while an utterance is the issuance of a sentence, a sentence-analogue, or sentence fragment in an actual context.
2.2 Pragmatics and language studies

Leech (1983:6) defines pragmatics as "the study of meaning in relation to speech situations." We can describe pragmatics as dealing with utterance meaning as conceived by the speaker and perceived by the listener in relation to contextual information. Someone who knew only the meaning of English sentences would fall far short of understanding quite ordinary utterances in English because utterances are almost invariably ambiguous and vague. Pragmatics also covers the use of ellipses which has been defined by Crystal (1992: 117) as "the omitted element which can be recovered from a scrutiny of context". For example the following utterance:

"My drink is too hot."

is invariably ambiguous or vague since it can mean that the drink is simply too hot for the speaker to drink or that the drink that the speaker actually received was hotter than what he wanted.

While semantics specifies the range of possible senses and referents for every utterance, it is the task of pragmatics to describe the general principles by which the hearer assigns an actual sense and reference to a particular utterance on any given occasion. So, the study of spoken language must necessarily include utterance interpretation.

Wilson and Sperber (1986:3) have provided a comprehensive description of utterance interpretation. First, they say that utterance interpretation is not a matter of discovering what has been explicitly stated but of establishing what has been implicitly conveyed. The implicit meaning may be crucial to the interpretation process.
Second, they note that utterance interpretation must provide some indication of what might be the speaker's attitude to the information conveyed. Again, recovery of the intended attitude is normally crucial to the interpretation process. For example, the interpretation of the utterance below depends on the speaker's attitude when he produced it.

Example:

You're not leaving.

(Wilson and Sperber, 1986:4)

Although the sentence uttered is syntactically declarative, it can be understood in context as expressing a statement, a question or a command, an area which has been investigated in some detail under Speech Act Theory. The implicit indication of attitudes, like the implicit communication of propositional content, falls outside the domain of a theory of sentence meaning and within the domain of pragmatics.

Third, they point out that utterance interpretation must also take into account whether utterances convey literal or non-literal meaning.

Example:

The audience snored throughout the film.

(Wilson and Sperber, 1986:4)

The speaker of this utterance may literally be claiming that the audience was asleep and snoring throughout the film, or she may merely want to suggest that the film was dull. The question here is
whether the speaker wants to commit herself to the truth of the explicit proposition or to the truth of some other implicit proposition.

Fourth, they draw attention to the need to consider the effects of style. The choice of words determines the style the speaker chooses for his or her utterance. The style can also convey the tone of the utterance and thus reinforces the meaning of the utterance.

Example 1:

Woody Allen: Two taxis collided and 30 Scotsmen were taken to hospital.

Example 2:

Scotsmen are very mean. They travel in enormously overcrowded taxis to avoid paying full fare. Once two taxis containing 30 Scotsmen collided. The passengers were taken to hospital.

(Wilson and Sperber, 1986:5)

In terms of style, Example 1 is mildly witty whereas Example 2 is pointless and heavy handed. Assumptions which are left implicit in Example 1 are expressed explicitly in Example 2. There are numerous examples where two utterances express and imply the same set of propositions, but nonetheless differ in their overall effects.

2.3 Utterances as speech acts

When participants engage in conversation, we can see them doing several distinguishable things at the same time. Earlier, it was noted that the utterance "You're not leaving", although
syntactically declarative, could be viewed as expressing a statement, a question or a command. Investigation along these lines is proposed by the speech act theory of Searle and Austin, who formed the basic belief that language is used to perform actions.

According to this theory, there are several speech acts in any one utterance. Austin views conversation in terms of acts (1962: 109). First, the act of 'saying something' which he terms the locutionary act and the second, he terms the illocutionary act or the act of doing something. The locutionary act is the basic act of an utterance. It is produced as a meaningful linguistic expression. The illocutionary act is performed via the communicative force of an utterance. This means we normally form an utterance with some kind of function in mind. Example 1 below involves the act of saying something (Austin's locutionary act) in order to produce a communicative action (Austin's illocutionary act).

Example 1:

B: Are you sure you don't want half?  
   This is huge.
K: No. Thanks. (I've finally) got my apple.

(Craig & Tracy, 1983:304)

"Are you sure you don't want half?" carries the locutionary act or the meaningful linguistic expression. However, the speaker was also making an offer act which Austin calls the illocutionary act.

Apart from the locutionary and illocutionary acts, Austin also suggests that each utterance also carries the perlocutionary effect of the speech act. Example 2 provides evidence of all three.
Example 2:

A: Oh it was beautiful
B: Well thank you uh.. I thought it was quite nice.

(Pomerantz, 1978:95)

The locutionary act in the utterance "Oh it was beautiful" simply says that the performance was beautiful. The illocutionary force here shows A paying a compliment. The perlocutionary act shows that A's compliment seems to have had the effect of pleasing B. So, the utterances of conversational participants may be viewed in terms of speech acts which may have various intended or unintended effects. That is why utterance interpretation is crucial when analysing spoken discourse.

The next question that arises is this: How do recipients of an utterance know what speech act is involved in a particular utterance? There are some general answers to this. First, there is a publicly available system that forms a basis for people's design and interpretation of talk. Second, language users possess a certain amount of pragmatic knowledge about how language and conversation work: what the rules are, the standard ways of producing speech acts, what people's conversational goals might be expected to be, and the like (McLaughlin, 1984:13). These expectations are conventional in the sense that they are shared among the people of the same linguistic and subcultural community.

Searle, the other proponent of Speech Act Theory, argues that certain characteristics must be present in a speaker's utterance, beliefs and intentions (and also communicative situation) for that utterance to work properly as a promise, a request, a statement, a warning or some other speech act. He says one way of looking at
these conventions is to establish what constitutes the speech acts. He terms them the constitutive rules that define or govern particular speech acts. What constitutive rules create an act? For example, what is an act of promise? According to Searle, several constitutive rules that are specific to an act of promise are as follows:

1. propositional content conditions
2. situational conditions
3. sincerity conditions

Participants use these constitutive rules to interpret utterances and identify them in terms of specific speech acts. Thus, the system of convention serves both as an interpretive resource and as a design or production resource for people engaged in everyday conversation.

However, some speech acts appear to be closely related to each other. These include requests and commands. This suggests that it may be useful to view conversation in terms of classes or families of speech acts as opposed to separate, individual ones. Searle presents a detailed argument in support of a classification with five categories of speech acts, namely the commissives, directives, assertives, expressives and declaratives. These are also known as the regulative rules. Other speech act theorists have also proposed category systems. For example, see Austin,(1975); Bach& Harnish, (1979).

When researching spoken discourse, it is often important to refer to speech act theory. However, there are shortcomings to this approach which can often lead to complications and which the researcher needs to be aware of. The main problem with speech act theory is that it tends to overestimate the prevalence of
conventional (rule-defined) meaning in conversation and to underestimate the extent of meaning that goes beyond what has been said. Participants routinely construct meanings that fill in or expand on the meaning of what someone actually has said. Speech Act Theory does not provide sufficient explanation on how the meaning of utterances are derived, especially the implied meaning of utterances. The implied meaning of an utterance is not explicitly conveyed. This implicit meaning is drawn out in relation to the context of the utterance, the background knowledge of participants and their intended attitude. Such considerations are not adequately dealt with under Speech Act Theory. That is why the Gricean framework has been used as the basis of this study. In particular, his work on conversational implicature is especially illuminating in explaining meaning that goes beyond what is said. The following example shows how underlying meaning can be conveyed.

Example:

Child: I'm tired.
Mom: You can stop your homework now.

(Richards et.al.,1992:394)

When the child remarked that he was tired, the mother interpreted as if the child had said, "Can I stop doing my homework now?" This underlying meaning is also known as implicit meaning, implied meaning. Another term that Richards et.al. (1992) use is 'uptake' which is the illocutionary force a hearer interprets from an utterance.

According to Grice, conversation is governed by the Cooperative Principle and its four maxims. He states that
conversational implicature is established when the Cooperative Principle and its maxims are not always overtly observed. In some cases, one violates or flouts a maxim while actually keeping to the spirit of the Cooperative Principle. As a result, two meanings are conveyed: the surface meaning and the underlying meaning; that is the literal and the non-literal meaning.

2.4 The Cooperative Principle

Before any attempt is made to understand Grice’s conversational implicature, we must understand his observations about conversation. He states that conversation is not just a succession of disconnected remarks but a naturally accepted direction between participants (that is the speaker and the listener). This naturally accepted direction shows mutual cooperative effort. The participants of a conversation recognise in themselves, to some extent at least, a mutually accepted direction of the conversation. In other words, there is a mutually accepted set of purposes in a conversation. This mutually accepted direction and set of purposes between participants of a conversation can be termed cooperation in a conversation. Wardhaugh lends support to this idea when he says that “conversation is a social activity...therefore a cooperative endeavour” (1985:35).

Grice formulated a general principle of conversation which participants are expected to observe. This principle is prescriptively stated as:
Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of talk exchange in which you are engaged.

(Grice, 1975: 46)

Grice called this the Cooperative Principle. Participants are expected to observe this principle which subsumes four maxims of conversation: quantity, quality, relation and manner, that support the Cooperative Principle. These maxims are unstated assumptions underlying conversation. These maxims are further explained by Grundy (2000:76-77) as follows:

1. Quantity:
   (i) Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purpose of the exchange).
   (ii) Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

   Thus,

   (a) “My children are doing all right in school,” being all the information that the speaker provides, implies that her children are not doing exceptionally well in school

   and

   (b) “I don’t have a car,”
   can imply that the speaker does not drive.

2. Quality:
   (i) Try to make your contribution one that is true.
   (ii) Do not say what you believe to be false.
   (iii) Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

   Thus,

   (c) “Physics is difficult.”
gives rise to the implicature that the speaker believes or has evidence to say that it is, and

(d) "When will the meeting end?" assuming it is a sincere question, may imply that the speaker does not know, has a reason for wanting to know and thinks the listener or addressee knows.

3. Relation
(i) Be relevant

Thus, when a student asks when an assignment needs too be handed in, a teacher replies,
(e) "Surely not next year."
gives rise to the implicature that it has to be soon.

4. Manner
(i) Be perspicuous.
(ii) Avoid obscurity of expression.
(iii) Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
(iv) Be orderly.

Thus
(f) "They put on their socks and then their shoes", being the natural order of the world, gives rise to the implicature in that order; and in a phone-in sales, in which the speaker says,
(g) "As one of our esteemed clients, we are giving you this special offer",
is obscure because it gives rise to the implicature that the listener is already their customer rather than just the recipient of the telephone call.

Briefly, these maxims may be summarised as follows: be succinct, yet complete; be truthful; be relevant; and be clear and orderly. Typically, Grice assumes that these four maxims and the supraordinate Coperative Principle will be overtly observed in order to preserve coherence and co-operative communication in conversation although he does not suggest that this is an exhaustive list. He notes that a maxim such as 'Be Polite' is also
normally observed. The example below shows how this politeness principle is upheld.

Example:

A: We'll all miss Bill and Agatha, won't we?
B: Well, we'll all miss Bill.

(Leech, 1983:80)

In this example, B apparently fails to observe the maxim of quantity: When A asks B to confirm A's opinion, B merely confirms part of it, and obviously ignores the rest. From this, an implicature is conveyed: B is of the opinion that we will not all miss Agatha. This implicature is derived not solely on the basis of the Cooperative Principle for if it did, B should have added "...but not Agatha" without being untruthful, irrelevant or unclear. Therefore, it can be concluded that B could have been more informative, but only at a cost of being more impolite to a third party. B has withheld the information in order to uphold the Politeness Principle. The Cooperative Principle enables a participant in a conversation to communicate on the assumption that the other participant is being co-operative. In this, the Cooperative Principle regulates the illocutionary goal(s) in a conversation. On the other hand, the Politeness Principle has a higher regulative role:

> to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place

(Leech, 1983:82)

The basic assumption that participants in a conversation always observe the Cooperative Principle is not always adhered to
in conversation. At times, a contribution to a conversation may be clearly uncooperative. People often speak in ways that deviate from the sentence ideal and yet their utterances remain perfectly understandable. The maxims may be blatantly violated or deliberately flouted. In fact, participants may say one thing but mean another. One way of explaining how this happens involves a system of conversational implicature by which participants lead each other to attribute meaning that is different from the conventional meaning of an utterance. When conversational implicature takes place the Cooperative Principle and its maxims are not overtly observed. As a result, a double message is conveyed: a literal or direct message, the meaning of which is conventionally determined and which fails to fulfill at least one of the maxims, and a non-literal or indirect message which still maintains the Cooperative Principle. This is the fascinating feature of conversation where people can say one thing and have some confidence that the other participants will interpret them to mean something more.

2.5 Conversational Implicature

Language is a means of communication. There are many different models of communication, the basic one involving the encoding and decoding of messages. Simply, this means for communication to take place, there must be a message, a set of signals and a medium. Communication then consists of choosing a message, encoding it into the signal which is then physically transmitted, with the original message being recovered at the other end of the corresponding process of decoding. However, an utterance may convey a message other than the conventional meaning of the words, and listeners often interpret a message not
just according to the surface meaning of the words but also according to the underlying or implicit meaning the message contains. Thus, implicit meaning is defined as "an implicature or suggestion deduced from the form of an utterance" (Crystal, 1992: 183).

The implicit meaning deduced from an utterance depends largely on the context of the utterance, the assumptions and beliefs of the speaker and listener, and the background knowledge of both. Therefore, an identical utterance produced by two different speakers may be interpreted quite differently in two separate situations.

To support this idea, Love (1999) in his review of 'Searle on language', concurs that the meaning of an expression does not completely determine what illocutionary act is performed in an utterance of an expression, for a speaker may mean more or other than what he actually says. He adds that the main ways speakers do not say exactly what they mean involve non-literalness, vagueness, ambiguity and incompleteness. Love distinguishes and discusses in detail various kinds of non-literalness among which are metaphor, irony and what Searle calls "indirect speech acts". Other kinds of non-literalness include tautology, overstatement, understatement, and rhetorical question. (Grundy, 2000: 76-77). What all have in common is that a speaker's meaning in some ways may not be perfectly congruent with sentence meaning. In other words, the meaning of an utterance may be conveyed via an implicature. This is precisely what Grice had earlier tried to propose: that there may be meaning beyond what is literally said.

Green (1989) seems to think that "conversational implicature is an absolutely unremarkable and ordinary
conversational strategy”. However, one can hardly agree with her on that issue. Conversational implicature is indeed remarkable because it draws upon the creativity, experience and competence of the speaker. What is more remarkable is the fact that there appears to be a naturally accepted direction between the speaker and the listener in a conversation so much so that what appears to be a succession of disconnected remarks at first glance, turns out not to be so on closer inspection.

According to Kempson (1977:71), there are five striking characteristics of conversational implicature. These are outlined as follows:

1. They are dependent on the recognition of the Cooperative Principle and its maxims.

2. They are not part of the meaning of the lexical items in the sentence since their interpretation depends on a prior understanding of the conventional meaning of the sentence.

3. The implicature of an utterance will characteristically not be the sole interpretation of the utterance. There may well be more than one possible assumption which will reinstate the cooperative principle in the face of an apparent breakdown.

4. The working out of an implicature will depend upon assumptions about the world which the speaker and hearer share. They will therefore not in general be predictable independently of the shared assumptions particular to individual speakers and hearers.

5. They are cancellable. That is, an interpretation which is not part of the conventional meanings of the utterance may be explicitly denied without contradiction.

Therefore, in broad terms, implicature is defined as additional conveyed meaning. One important factor to note is that, it is the
speaker who communicates meaning via implicature while the listener recognizes the meaning that has been communicated in this way by means of inferences. The speaker expects that the listener will be able to work out, on the basis of what is already known (that is the background knowledge and context) the implicature intended in a particular utterance or utterances. Implicatures are primary examples of more meaning being communicated, that is, additional meaning than that which is explicitly communicated.

2.6 The rhetorical strategies

Reflecting once again on metaphor, irony, tautology, overstatement, understatement, ambiguity and rhetorical question, we can say that when implicatures are created, these appear to be the rhetorical strategies that are involved in the utterances. All these involve saying something other than what is explicitly stated.

For example, "Sam is a block of ice" (Love, 1999:12) may mean that Sam is emotionally undemonstrative, not that he is made up of frozen water. This is a metaphor. Likewise, "You are the cream in my coffee," (Grice, 1975:53) conveys the meaning that the person the speaker is speaking to is really special.

In another example, "That was a brilliant thing to do" (Love, 1999:12) may be a way of castigating stupidity. This is irony. It is relatively straightforward and often a matter of stating something explicitly but meaning the opposite.

An overstatement is an exaggeration while an understatement makes something less important than it is, or downplays an issue. Ambiguity has traditionally been identified where "a sentence has two or more competing but distinct meanings attached to it" (Channel, 1994:35).
2.7 Gricean conversational implicature

Grice is best known for his work on the philosophy of language, in particular, for his analysis of speaker's meaning, his conception of conversational implicature and his project of intention-based semantics. Grice's most important ideas may be found in his William James lectures presented at Harvard in 1967. They were finally published in 1989 in a collection of essays *Studies in the Way of Words*. This study concentrates on Grice's conversational implicature.

When he put forward his conception of conversational implicature, his concern was,

to make a distinction between what the speaker has said...and what he has 'implicated' (e.g. implied, indicated, suggested, etc.) taking into account the fact that what he has implicated may be either conventionally implicated (implicated by virtue of the meaning of some word or phrase which he has used) or non-conventionally implicated (in which case these specification of the implicature falls outside the specification of the conventional meaning of the words used).

(Grice, 1968:55)

Earlier on in this chapter, Grice's Cooperative Principle and its maxims were discussed. Participants in a conversation are expected to adhere to this principle and its maxims. It is important to recognize that these maxims are the unstated assumptions we have in conversations. In an article entitled 'Conversational Implicature' (http://www.arts.uwa.edu.au/Ling WWW/LIN 101-102)
NOTES - 101/implicature.html. University of Western Australia, 1999:1), it is noted that the conversational maxims appear to be more appropriate for a manual on etiquette than in a linguistic theory, but they should not be construed as 'handy advice' for the conduct of good conversation. Grice contends that in Anglo-Celtic culture at least, these maxims are either unconsciously learned in the course of social maturation or exploited by speakers and hearers (listeners) in the transfer of communicative intentions. In other words, the expectations that the conversation should proceed smoothly is not always fulfilled and mismatches between intended acts and expectations may result. Grice recognized this potential for non-fulfillment and so suggested four classes of maxim violation (Grice, 1975:49). According to him, one could:

(1) violate a maxim 'quietly and unostentatiously' with an intent to mislead;

(2) opt out of a situation by withdrawing from the interaction when one is unwilling or unable to be cooperative;

(3) be faced with a clash of maxims such that the choice of one maxim violates another; or

(4) flout a maxim by blatantly violating it with the intent of strategic or artful cooperation.

Conversational implicatures come into play when the Cooperative Principle and its maxims are not overtly observed. In such cases, one may be violating or flouting a maxim covertly by giving an indirect meaning or a double message.
2.7.1 Generalized conversational implicatures

A generalized conversational implicature is conveyed when no special knowledge is required in the context to establish the additional meaning conveyed. A common example in English involves any phrase with an indefinite article such a 'a/an'.

Example:

I was sitting in a garden one day. A child looked over the fence.

(Allen, 1974:41)

In the above example, the implicature that the garden and the child mentioned are not the speaker's, is arrived at on the basis that if the speaker had been more informative or more specific (following the quantity maxim) then he would have said 'my garden' or 'my child'.

Other generalized implicatures are normally conveyed on the basis of a scale of values and are consequently called scalar implicatures.

2.7.2 Scalar implicatures

According to Allen (1974), certain information is always communicated by choosing a word which expresses one value from a scale of values. This is especially obvious in terms of expressing quantity - all, most, many, some, few or in terms of expressing frequency - always, often, sometimes. The basis of scalar implicature is that when any form in a scale is asserted, the negative of all forms higher on the scale is implicated. For example, if a speaker says, "I have some of the oranges", given the definition of scalar implicature, it should follow that in saying "some of the
oranges", he is implying that he does not have most of them or he does not have many of them.

2.7.3 Particularized conversational implicatures

Implicatures in the preceding examples have been established without special knowledge of any context. However, most of the time conversation takes place in a specific context. The implicatures established are, in other words, context dependent. The role of context in establishing implicature will be discussed later in this chapter. When context is taken into consideration, inferences to work out the conveyed meaning result in particularized conversational implicatures. Often the implicatures arrived at, are established when the Cooperative Principle and its maxims are not adhered to. To infer the conveyed meaning, the listener often has to draw upon some assumed knowledge. Particularized conversational implicatures are by far the most common, and some of them are quite entertaining and amusing.

This study focuses attention on particularized conversational implicatures in the conversations of deejays and their callers. The data on the conversations of Malaysian radio deejays and their callers collected for this study, are laced with many examples of particularized conversational implicatures.

It must also be mentioned that in contrast to all the conversational implicatures discussed thus far, there are also conventional implicatures which are not based on the Cooperative Principle or the maxims. They do not have to occur in conversation and they do not depend on special contexts for their interpretation. Conventional implicatures will not be discussed in this study at all.
For a fuller discussion of conventional implicature, see Karttunen & Peters (1979).

2.8 How implicature is conveyed.

Generally, the implicatures are conveyed by the speaker when he or she violates the maxims proposed by Grice. According to Sperber and Wilson, (1995:281), the speaker must make "some assumptions about the hearer's cognitive abilities and contextual resources, which will necessarily...reflect what she chooses to make explicit or what she chooses to leave implicit." In other words, the speaker must be quite convinced that if she chooses to convey her meaning implicitly, then, the listener should be able to infer and understand the meaning conveyed.

According to Brown and Yule (1983:32), Grice used the term 'to flout a maxim' to describe situations in which a maxim is deliberately disobeyed with the intention that the listener recognizes that the flout is purposeful. This flouting of a maxim results in a speaker conveying in addition to the literal meaning of his utterance, an additional meaning which is a conversational implicature.

The maxim of quantity states:
1. make your contribution as informative as is required. (for the current purpose of the exchange.)
2. do not make your information more informative than is required.

Consider the following example in which the maxim of quantity is violated.

Example:

Steven: Wilfrid is meeting a woman for dinner tonight.
Susan: Does his wife know about it?
Steven: Of course she does. The woman he is meeting is his wife.

(Clark and Clark, 1977:22)

Susan is justified in assuming that the woman mentioned by Steven is not Wilfrid’s wife. This is because Steven has broken the maxim of quantity in using a relatively uninformed and ambiguous expression (a woman) instead of a more informative one (his wife). Thus, in withholding the information, Steven has allowed Susan to infer that Steven does not have enough knowledge to imply which woman is meant.

The maxim of quality states:
1. try to make your contribution one that is true.
2. do not say what you believe to be false.
3. do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.

According to Leech (1983:84), the maxims of quantity and quality can be considered together since they frequently compete one with another. The amount of information the speaker gives is limited by the speaker's wish to avoid telling an untruth. Harnish has even proposed a combined maxim as follows:

1. The maxim of quantity-quality: make the strongest relevant claim justifiable by your evidence.

(Harnish, 1976:362)

The maxim of relevance states:
1. Be relevant.

This maxim can also often be violated. Grice (1975:51) has the example, "There is a garage round the corner." as a reply to "I am
out of petrol". The reply does not appear to be an appropriate response to the statement. It therefore, violates the maxim of relation. However, it implies that the garage is open and he could get the petrol there.

The maxim of manner states:
1. Be perspicuous.
2. Avoid obscurity of expression.
3. Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity).
4. Be orderly.

Advertisements often flout this maxim. For example, the message in the advertisement of Cadbury's chocolate, "...in a glass and a half of its own." is quite obscure, but it implies that every bar of chocolate is equivalent to the goodness found in a glass and half of milk.

2.9 How implicature is established

Implicature can be said to be established, calculated or recovered by the listeners. This recovery is made when the listeners infer the meaning of utterances based on the context of the utterances and the shared background knowledge between participants of conversations.

2.9.1 Inference

In conversation, how does the listener interpret the utterance of the speaker? Does the listener contemplate what the speaker might have had in mind? And even if the listener does that, he normally cannot discern a speaker's thought process except in so far as the speaker chooses his or her words in such a way that the listener may interpret the meaning of the utterances produced. The
listener may make educated guesses but even so surely he has to make those guesses based on some solid evidence. According to Grice (1975:50), a crucial feature of implicatures is that they must be capable of being 'calculated' by a listener.

Gauker (1998:4) says that the definition of conversational implicature presumes that we can identify what a speaker says independently. However, he adds that it is not easy to define the concept of what is really said but it is necessary for the hearer to "contemplate what the speaker might have had in mind."

Implicature is thus 'calculated' or established by a process of inference. A conversational implicature is an inference, an additional, underlying message that the listener is able to work out from what is said by appealing to the rules governing successful interaction. According to the Centre for Linguistic, University of Western Australia (1999:1), an example of what Grice meant by implicature is the sentence:

1. Do you have any money on you?

   (meaning)

2. I don't have any money, can I borrow some from you.

Grice proposed that to work out a particular implicature as in (2), the listener will need to rely on the following data:

1. the conventional meaning of the words used, together with the identity of any reference that may be involved.

2. the Cooperative Principle and its maxims.

3. the context, the linguistic or otherwise, of the utterance.
4. other items of background knowledge.

5. the fact or the supposed fact that all relevant items falling under the previous headings are available to both participants and both participants know and assume this to be the case.

(Grice, 1975:50)

According to Brown and Yule (1983), the hearer (listener) has no direct access to a speaker's intended meaning when producing an utterance. He often has to rely on a process of inference to arrive at an interpretation of utterances. Such inferences appear to be of different kinds. One, the interpretation is made by deriving a specific conclusion from specific premises via deductive inference but they go on to say that this rarely occurs in everyday discourse. The explanation of the process of deductive inference, provided by Brown and Yule is plausible but not practical because it involves too much time and reasoning. In a conversation, we are seldom able to go through such lengthy reasoning before arriving at an interpretation. Nevertheless, listeners do make inferences.

2.9.2 Context

Linguists have become increasingly aware of the importance of context in the interpretation of sentences. Leech claims that context can be understood as the "relevant aspect of the physical or social setting of an utterance." or "any background knowledge" to be shared by both the listener and the speaker which contributes to the listener's interpretation of what the speaker means by a given utterance (1983:13).
Kempson (1977) claims that the implicature of an utterance may not be the sole interpretation of an utterance. So how do listeners arrive at the intended meaning of the speaker if importance is not given to the context of the utterance? Gauker says that successful linguistic communication can be explained by "supposing that the hearer (listener) makes an inference from what the speaker said and from the external context of the utterance." (1998:1). He concludes that there will be a role for the hearer's (listener's) contemplation of external circumstances. Brown and Yule (1983) support this by emphasizing that implicatures are pragmatic aspects of meaning produced in a specific context which is shared by the speaker and the hearer (listener).

Hymes views the role of context in interpretation as, on the one hand, limiting the range of possible interpretations and, on the other, supporting the intended interpretation:

The use of a linguistic form identifies a range of meanings. A context can support a range of meanings. When a form is used in a context it eliminates the meanings possible to that context other than those the form can signal: the context eliminates from consideration the meaning possible to the form other than those context can support.

(Hymes, 1962: 44)

Implicatures allow us to make use of context for interpretation of the underlying meaning and thus make possible "an immensely more economical language" (Grundy, 2000:115). Without inference, virtually every sentence would need to be formally unique (which is not a practical proposition), that is, there must be a different
grammatical structure for each meaning the speaker wants to convey.

To support the importance of context of an utterance, we can see from the next example how an utterance may be interpreted quite differently when produced by two different speakers in two separate scenarios. Gauker (1998) has provided a detailed explanation.

His explanation focused attention on Grice's own 'petrol' example. A is standing by an obviously immobilized car and is approached by B. The following exchange takes place.

A: I am out of petrol
B: There is a gas station around the corner.

One explanation for A's concluding that he can get petrol at the petrol station around the corner might be Grice's own explanation of this, namely, that A recognizes that this is what B must be supposing if B is conforming to the Cooperative Principle.

To see the relevance of the external circumstances, imagine the circumstances are different. Suppose the exchange takes place on a remote county road in the middle of the night. Nonetheless, there really is a petrol station around the corner, it is open and has petrol to sell. B's ultimate goal is still to see to it that A goes around the corner and gets petrol at the petrol station there. So success in this case would still amount to A's concluding that he can get petrol at the petrol station around the corner. But communication would probably not succeed. A will not conclude that the petrol station is open and has petrol to sell. Gauker concludes that success in communication can be explained as resulting from the hearer's
inference from what the speaker says and the external circumstances. He adds that the external circumstances are indeed relevant in that they enable the hearer to work out the speaker's conversational implicature.

2.10 Critics of Grice's theory of implicature

Kempson (1977) and Gadzar (1977) are of the view that Grice's maxims are not able to differentiate between the intended and implied meaning in an utterance. They say that Grice's maxims are unspecific, unclear and that implicature cannot be specifically determined.

Van Der. Sandt (1988) comments that one may only be able to suggest the implied meaning but that the real intended meaning of an utterance cannot be established with certainty because no one can really read the mind of another. Therefore, he says that an implied meaning need not be the sole interpretation of a given utterance because the real intended meaning of the utterance lies with the speaker.

Another argument is that Grice's theory is not universal because it does not pay attention to language and culture. According to Keenan (1976), Malagasy speakers regularly withhold information from their conversational partners and concludes from this that they must lack the maxim of quantity, and that therefore, the maxims are not universal. Green (1989) supports this by adding that matters pertaining to being cooperative in communication differ or are defined differently in different cultures.

Palmer (1981) says it is difficult to see how Grice's suggestions can actually be put into practice for a description of meaning because they are too vague. He adds that the maxim of
relation, for instance, tells us nothing about what it means for an
utterance to be relevant; and that Grice himself saw this as a
serious problem. He says that Grice did not suggest how to
establish truthfulness, relevance or sufficiency when he proposed
his maxims. Therefore, the validity of the maxims cannot be
determined.

2.11 Support for Grice's theory of implicature

Fasold has commented that Grice's theory has become the
"hub of pragmatics research" (1990:128). At the same time he also
supports Grice's theory by claiming that Grice's conversational
implicature shows us how data can be ordered, classified and
interpreted thus making it useful to the applied linguist.

Levinson (1983) sees conversational implicature as an
outstanding feature in Pragmatics. He claims that conversational
implicature explains hidden, underlying or implied meaning well
enough beyond the surface meaning of words.

Schiffrin (1994) says that Gricean pragmatics provides an
approach to discourse analysis. He adds that Gricean pragmatics
offers to discourse analysis a view of how participants assume that
there is a "cooperative context for communication" and that this
context includes knowledge, text and a situation. This context
contributes to meaning and helps to create "sequential patterns in
talk" (1994:227).

2.12 Studies using the Gricean framework

Jackson (1981), Mura (1983), Verscheuren (1985) and Basso
(1972) examined the contribution of Grice to understand better the
implications of his theory for a communication theory of conversation and to suggest an extension of his theory.

Jackson examined conversation implicature in children's comprehension of reference. In her study, 21 first graders and 19 third graders were presented with referential messages that violated Grice's Cooperative Principle. It was found that students' responses to ambiguous reference were more than simple judgments of the literal meaning of the messages as they actively tried to compute implicature. Erroneous responses to ambiguous messages provided evidence of the students' active cooperative contributions to meaning. She carried out a further study increasing the number of students to 85 and 82 respectively in order to correct the flaws of the first study and to obtain confirmation for her findings.

Mura's study was exploratory in nature. The purpose of her study was to examine the licenses for violations of Grice's maxims of conversation. Licenses for violations allow a communicator to "account for seemingly deviant acts by showing that they are congruent with prevailing norms" (Mura, 1983:104). Violations of maxims while appearing to function uncooperatively in an interaction actually function in a cooperative manner in an interaction even though the utterance may appear to be uncooperative in nature and to be in violation of Grice's maxims. This study indicated that the violations are legitimate because they still provide problem-free interaction in circumstances that otherwise would result in misalignment and possible incoherence.

Her data came from two primary sources. The first came from an earlier study (Mura, 1980) and includes the first minute of an interaction around the topic of 'talking a professor out of an exam' The second set of data came from a series of what she termed the
B-K conversation. The transcripts were analysed by drawing attention to instances of qualifiers, eliminating those that did not address the conversational interaction, and then categorizing them in terms of Grice's maxims. Earlier in her literature review, she stated that one of the more important elements for legitimizing violations of Grice's conversational maxims and thus achieving what she calls licensing violations involves the use of a qualifier (i.e an element that softens, mitigates, excuses or explains statements and often calls for bearance and understanding) (Mura, 1983).

Mura's analysis provides a logical progression through each of the four conversational maxims. Grice (1975) suggested that the maxim of quality is the maxim of primary import. One would expect to find a proliferation of qualifiers in statements that compromise the integrity of this maxim. Such appeared to be the case when Mura analysed her transcripts. She found many qualifiers for this maxim. Likewise, she also discovered the use of many qualifiers in the other maxims of quantity, relation and manner.

From her study, she concluded that licensing exists as markers of deviance away from cooperation in an interaction while at the same time acting to preserve a greater cooperation. She claims that they exist most frequently for the maxim of quality, suggesting the salience of truth as a cooperative variable. Licensing, she says, also exists for potential violations of quantity, relation and manner, particularly in the forms of hedges and disclaimers. This study also provides preliminary evidence that the Cooperative Principle represents a psychologically real construct. She says that if the Cooperative Principle was not a valid construct, there would be no need to provide licensing for violations of it.
For further and future research, she suggested the possibility of empirically verifying the claim that licensing of quality violations occur more frequently than other types of licensing. Also, the correspondence between the types of violations and the contexts in which they occur need to be explored to determine the salience of specific types of violations in various contexts. In addition, she suggested that it would be desirable to look at the conventional use of such violation licensing with regard to such things as story-telling and comedy or as it is affected by social variables such as status or gender.

Verscheuren (1985) who pointed out that absence of speech has rarely been studied, has suggested that there is meaning in silence. Silence, he says, is usually not praised and may be viewed with suspicion. For example, Americans and other Westerners such as the Dutch are talkative by nature while the Japanese are the opposite.

Basso (1972) discussed the phenomenon of silence among the Western Apache. To the Apaches, certain situations call for silence rather than words. These include the following: meeting a stranger (a person who talks too much must want something), courting (talkative girls have had previous experience with men), children returning from boarding school (too much talking would indicate that the children had become like whites while they were away), and being with people who are sad (intense grief makes it difficult to talk). These same situations would generally generate spontaneous talk among white Americans, who are uncomfortable in the presence of silence.
According to Saville-Troike (1982), the Japanese have a term *haragei* which means something like wordless communication. In Japanese society, silence is valued over eloquence.

These studies indicate that scholars have used Grice's theory of conversational implicature and especially how and when the maxims are flouted or purposely violated as the basis of their research. This shows that Grice's theory is quite universal and versatile enough for it to be used as a basis for further studies on implicature in spoken language. Most of the studies carried out used not only English Language speakers but speakers of other languages as well. However, the studies used native speakers of English when the data obtained was in the English Language.

In Malaysia, there are also a few studies carried our by Jariah (1999), Zuraidah (1996), Jamaliah (1995), Morais (1994), and Asmah (1987) which have all been very useful as a preface for understanding the spoken discourse of Malaysian ESL speakers.

Jariah's study noted that Grice's conversational maxims make a system of rules for the production and interpretation of utterances. She also noted that maxims are either adhered to or violated based on the conversational styles of the three major ethnic groups, namely, Malay, Chinese and Indian. Her study has drawn attention to the following: the tendency to be vocal for the Indians, the pre-occupation with face-saving for the Chinese and the seemingly polite and non-assertiveness in manner of the Malays.

Jamaliah (1995: 57) has noted that "values reflect the beliefs of certain groups of people" and that these values are "manifested in Malaysian discourse ...(among others), as indirectness".

These findings helped the researcher of this study to understand the conversational styles of Malaysians.
2.13 Rationale for using Grice's theory

Participants in a conversation communicate literal and non-literal messages. The communicative intent of a speaker may be conveyed via an implicature and interpreted via an inference by the listener. Grice's explanation of this theory of implicature provides insight into the deeper messages intended by the speaker and which are inferred by the listener. Although the argument still holds that conversational implicature involves trying to infer what the intended meaning of the speaker might be, one must understand that the true purpose of common language is the expression of what is on the mind of the users. This calls for a more flexible and less precise interpretation than the rigidity externally imposed by many other language philosophers.

Implied meaning is interpreted via a process of inference on the part of the listener. This is an accepted explanation because the process of inference depends largely upon the context of the utterance, and the background knowledge of both the speaker and the listener about the topic of conversation. This suggests why utterances may call forth more than one interpretation, and possibly, multiple interpretations based on the different experiences of the speaker and the listener. To actually penetrate into the actual meaning deep in the mind of the speaker may be almost impossible. Grice's theory does not attempt to do so. His theory suggests that much more emphasis ought to be given to utterance interpretation because in communication one cannot deny that the meaning in utterances are not only explicitly stated but implicitly conveyed as well.

Utterances rich in conversational implicature provide ample evidence of cues and indicators that are strategically employed by
speakers to convey implicatures. Some of these indicators or strategies that have been identified include metaphor, irony, tautology, understatement, overstatement, ambiguity and rhetorical questions.

Most of the studies reviewed in this chapter show that Grice's theory of conversational implicature does exist in real communication. Traditional Speech Act Theory does not provide an adequate framework for the analysis of naturally occurring conversations. The investigation of conversational implicature in this study, therefore, uses the Gricean framework for the analysis of data from a radio chat programme.

2.14 The framework for this study

The following framework is the basis for the analysis of this study which aims to examine how conversational implicatures are established in the spoken discourse of Malaysian ESL speakers.

2. The violations of the conversational maxims of quantity, quality, relation and manner.
3. The classes of maxim violations.
4. The context of the conversational situation.
5. The background knowledge of the participants.
6. The rhetorical strategies used.