

Some further exercises for practising entailment, presupposition and implicature:

1. Which entailments can you see in the sentence *The painters broke the window?*
2. Here are three different stress patterns for *Annie ruined the sweater*. Choose from the three possible entailments the right one for each utterance:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| A/ Annie RUINED the sweater. | 1. Someone ruined the sweater. |
| B/ Annie ruined the SWEATER. | 2. Annie did something to the sweater. |
| C/ ANNIE ruined the sweater. | 3. Annie ruined something. |

3. For each of the following utterances decide whether the sentence being uttered is declarative, imperative or interrogative and whether the accompanying inference seems valid. (Note the difference between direct assertion and presupposition!)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| A/ <i>Where has Jane looked for the keys?</i> | 'Jane has looked for the keys.' |
| B/ <i>Did you buy this awful wine?</i> | 'This wine is awful.' |
| C/ <i>Don't sit on Annie's sofa.</i> | 'Annie has a sofa.' |
| D/ <i>Stop being lazy.</i> | 'You are being lazy.' |
| E/ <i>Lucy knows that George is a crook.</i> | 'George is a crook.' |

4. Decide which utterances contain the presupposition that at the time the utterance was made 'There was a chocolate cake.'

- 1a/ *Mike might find the chocolate cake in the kitchen.*
- 1b/ *Mike might find a chocolate cake in the kitchen.*
- 2a/ *Is Mike giving Annie that chocolate cake?*
- 2b/ *Is Mike giving Annie a chocolate cake?*
- 3a/ *Did Mike hide Annie's chocolate cake?*
- 3b/ *Did Mike hide a chocolate cake?*

5. For each of the following utterances, decide which ones contain the presupposition that 'Mike smashed the television.'

- | | |
|--|---|
| A/ <i>Did Mike smash the television?</i> | B/ <i>When did Mike smash the television?</i> |
| C/ <i>I was eating popcorn when Mike smashed the television.</i> | D/ <i>Why did Mike smash the television?</i> |
| E/ <i>I don't understand why Mike smashed the television.</i> | |
| F/ <i>I wonder if Mike smashed the television.</i> | |
| G/ <i>I wonder how Mike smashed the T.V.</i> | |

6. In each case assume that the judge has sustained an objection to the question. What presupposition(s) might have been objected to?

- A/ *How did you know that the defendant had bought a knife?*
- B/ *How long have you been selling cocaine?*
- C/ *When was your bracelet stolen?*
- D/ *Did you see the murdered woman before she left the office?*
- E/ *At what time did you telephone your lover?*
- F/ *Have you stopped being an active gang member?*

7. What might the second speaker 'mean' in each of the dialogues on the left?

- a/ **Jane:** *Do you like my new hat?* // **Jane:** *Try the roast pork.*
Mary: *It's pink!* // **Mary:** *It's pink!*
- b/ **Phil:** *Are you going to Steve's barbecue?* // **Phil:** *His garden looks awful.*
Terry: *Well, Steve's got those dogs now.* // **Terry:** *Well, Steve's got those dogs.*
- c/ **Annie:** *Was the dessert any good?* // **Annie:** *I thought the pie could cheer you up.*
Mike: *Annie, cherry pie is cherry pie.* // **Mike:** *Annie, cherry pie is cherry pie.*
- d/ **Maggie:** *Have you finished the student evaluation forms and the reading lists?*
James: *I've done the reading lists.* // **Maggie:** *You look very pleased with yourself.*
// **James:** *I've done the reading lists.*

8. Let's look at Mary's, James's, Terry's and Mike's answers again, this time with a different utterance from the first speaker. The content of the second speaker's utterance remains the same, but does the meaning remain the same?

The context and the situation

Hymes (1972) established seven different criteria that affect discourse and are to be taken into consideration when analysing discourse:

- **channel**
- **setting** (when and where)
- **participants** (who)
- **purpose** (why)
- **key** (the atmosphere of a communicative event)
- **message content** (what)
- **message form** (how)

Task 5

In pairs think of different ways and contexts in which **someone tells another person to sit down**. For each different expression think of all criteria established by Hymes listed above.

Task 6

In pairs think of different ways and contexts in which **someone thanks another person**. For each different expression think of all criteria established by Hymes listed above.

Can you find equivalents in your mother tongue for each of them? Remember to take into account the context in which the phrases are used.

Task 7

Catching a train

Imagine a crowded railway station in London at 10 one morning. The following message comes over the public announcement system: *The train at Platform 5 is the 10.30 to Edinburgh.* The message is the same for everyone at the station but it is interpreted in many different ways. For many listening to this announcement will be of no importance and they will give it little attention; their travel plans do not involve Edinburgh or Platform 5. Among those who attend more carefully are three individuals. Here is what they say to themselves when they hear the announcement:

Passenger A: *Ah, so it's Platform 5 I need.*

Passenger B: *So this is the Edinburgh train. Where does mine go from then?*

Passenger C: *Right. So I've got half an hour then. Time to get off and buy some coffee.*

From their interpretations, what do you know about each passenger? What do you think they do and do not know before the announcement is made? What piece of information in the same message is important for each passenger?

Passenger A:

Passenger B:

Passenger C: