IMPLICATURE Suppose that A and B arc talking about a mutual friend, C, who is now working in a bank. A asks B how C is getting on in his job, and B replies, Oh quite well, I think; he likes his colleagues, and he hasn't been to prison yet. At this point, A might well inquire what B was implying, what he was suggesting, or even what he meant by saying that C had not yet been to prison. The answer mi ~~ht be any one of such things aS that C is the sort of person likely to) ield to the temptation provided by his occupation, that C' s colleague' are really very unpleasant and treacherous people, and so forth. It might, of course, be quite unnecessary for A to make such an inquiry of B, the answer to it being, in the context, clear in advance. I think it is clear that whatever B implied, suggested, meant, etc., in this example, is distinct from what B said, which was simply that C had not been to prison yet. I wish to introduce, as terms of art, the verl implicate and the related nouns implicature (cf. implying) and implicatum (cf. what is implied). The point of this maneuver is to avoid having, on each occasion, to choose between this or that member of the family of verbs for which implicate is to do general duty. I shall, for the time being at least, have to assume to a considerable extent an intuitive understanding of the meaning of say in such contexts, and an ability to recognize particular verbs as members of the family with which implicate is associated. I can, however, make one or two remarks that may help to clarify the more problematic of these assumptions, namely, that connected with the meaning of the word sa[/. In the sense in which I am using the word say, I intend what someone has said to be closely related to the conventional meaning of the words (the sentence) he has uttered. Suppose someone to have uttered the sentence He is in the grip of a vice. Given a knowledge of the English language, but no knowledge of the circumstances of the utterance, one would know something about what the speaker had said, on the assumption that he was speaking standard English, and speaking literally. One would know that he had said, about some particular male person or animal x, that at the time of the utterance (whatever that was), either (1) x was unable to rid himself of a certain kind of bad character trait or (2) some part of x' s person was caught in a certain kind of tool or instrument (approximate account, of course). But for a full identification of what the speaker had said, one would need to know (a) the identity of x, (b) the time of utterance, and (c) the meaning, on the particular occasion of utterance, of the phrase in the grip of a vice [a decision between (1) and (2)]. This brief indication of my use of say leaves it open whether a man who says (today) Harold Wilson is a great man and another who says (also today) The British Prime Minister is a great man would, if each knew that the two singular terms had the same reference, have said the same thing. But whatever decision is made about this· question, the apparatus that I am about to provide will be capable of accounting for any implicatures that might depend on the presence of one rather than another of these singular terms in the sentence uttered. Such implicatures would merely be related to different maxims. In some cases the conventional meaning of the words used will determine what is implicated, besides helping to determine what is said. If I say (smugly), He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave, I have certainly committed myself, by virtue of the meaning of my words, to its being the case that his being brave is a consequence of (follows from) his being an Englishman. But while I have said that he is an Englishman, and said that he is brave, I do not want to say that I have SAID (in the favored sense) that it follows from his being an Englishman that he is brave, though I have certainly indicated, and so implicated, that this is so. I do not want to say that my

utterance of this sentence would be, STIUCTL Y SPEAKING, false should the consequence in question fail to hold. So SOME implicatures are conventional, unlike the one with which I introduced this discussion of implicature. I wish to represent a certain subclass of no11conventional implicaturcs, which I shall call CONVJ The following may provide a first approximation to a general principle. Our talk exchanges do not normally consist of a succession of disconnected remarks, and would not be rational if they did. They are characteristically, to some degree at least, cooperative efforts; and each participant recognizes in them, to some extent, a common purpose or set of purposes, or at least a mutually accepted direction. This purpose or direction may be fixed from the start (e.g., by an initial proposal of a question for discussion), or it may evolve during the exchange; it may be fairly definite, or it may be so indefinite as to leave very considerable latitude to the participants (as in a casual conversation). But at each stage, SOME possible conversational moves would be excluded as conversationally unsuitable. We might then formulate a rough general principle which participants will be expected (ceteris paribus) to observe, namely: Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged. One might label this the COOPEHATIVE PIUNCIPLE. On the assumption that some such general principle as this is acceptable, one may perhaps distinguish four categories under one or another of which will fall certain more specific maxims and submaxims, the following of which will, in general, yield results in accordance with the Cooperative Principle. Echoing Kant, I call these categories Quantity, Quillity, Relation, and Manner. The category of QUANTITY relates to the quantity of information to be provided, and under it fall the following maxims: 1. Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange). 2. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required. ●