

## Implicature in Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* and *The House of Mirth*

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### Abstract

From a pragmatic perspective, this study investigates Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* and *The House of Mirth* by employing implicature. A theoretical survey is given and followed by an application on the two mentioned novels. Implicature is associated with the implicit meaning. It refers to the act of suggesting or implying one thing by saying something else. Violating the maxims of conversations demonstrates the intended meanings Wharton tries to communicate with her readers.

**Key Words:** *pragmatics, implicature, The Age of Innocence, The House of Mirth, maxim, politeness.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

One of the notions that are studied in pragmatics is implicature, coined by H.P. Grice. It refers to what is suggested in an utterance, even though it is neither expressed nor strictly implied by the utterance. Implicature points to what is said and what is not said. That is, it helps us to make connections between what is said and what is communicated. Implicature has affected substantial simplifications in both the content and the structure of semantic description. In English, some words as *by the way*, *well*, and *anyway* refer to implicature. Implicature can be seen as part of the sentence meaning depending on conversational context, conventional or unconventional (Levinson, 1983, P. 114). Moreover, implicature helps describe different situations in which what a speaker means is not the same as he actually says. For instance:

I went to the grocery store and saw my grandmother. (p.115)

In this example, the speaker does not mean that he saw his grandmother at the grocery store, but there is an implicature that his grandmother was seen at the grocery store. Implicature can be more subtle in the following example:

A: Are you going to the party?

B: I have to go to wedding. (Grice, 1975, p. 49)

The speaker (B) gives an indirect answer. He means that he is not going to the party, but he implies it. Implicatures also can have teeth as in this example, "some powerful companies are not environmentally insensitive." This sentence has an implicature which is most of the companies are insensitive. Of course, politicians are masters of this kind of implicature.

Pragmatics is associated with the speaker's intentions. It concerns what speakers intend to say and what hearers think the speakers intend to implicate. What is implied should be available to the hearer in order to enable him understand the intended meaning. An implicature occurs when what the speakers imply and what the hearers understand are co-constituted, considering the viewpoints of both the speakers and the hearers (Haugh, 2013, p. 42).

## 2. Types of Implicatures

There are two main types of implicature. They are as follows:

### (a) Conventional Implicatures

Conventional implicatures are characterized by Grice as instances that the conventional meanings of the words determine what is said and what is implicated (Grice, 1975, p. 25). To Horn (2006, p. 392), conventional implicatures are the implicatures which arise through non-truth conditional and non-logical inferences, which

are neither constitutive of what is said nor calculable in any general way from what is said, but they are rather attached by convention to particular lexical items and expressions. According to Yule (1996, p.45), conventional implicatures do not rely on the cooperative principle or the maxims. Neither do they have to occur in conversations, nor do they depend on particular contexts for their interpretations. Some examples of conventional implicatures include the implication of contrast such as *but*, the implications that the present situation is expected to be different or opposite as *yet*, and the implications of something being contrary to expectations as *even*.

To Bach (2005, p.22), there are some examples that are thought to produce conventional implicatures. They are called alleged conventional implicature devices (ACIDs):

- 1) Implicative verbs: manage, stop, bother, continue, condescend.
- 2) Adverbs: barely, already, only, still, yet, scarcely, either.
- 3) Connectives: so, therefore, but, nevertheless, yet.
- 4) Subordinate conjunctions: although, despite, even though.

The conventional implicatures are called conventional for they depend on the conventional meaning of a sentence. They have some characteristic features that distinguish them from conversational implicatures. They are detachable. That is, an alternative expression with the same truth-conditional meaning does not carry the same implication. The conventional implicatures are non-calculable. This means that one's understanding of the meaning of the words is necessary and sufficient to get the speaker's view of the content. They are also non-cancellable since there is no cancellation without anomaly. In other words, one cannot cancel what he said when this leads to an incoherent meaning (Valle'e, 2008, pp. 413-414). Some examples are illustrated below:

- i. He is rich yet honest.
- ii. He is rich and honest.
- iii. He is rich and yet honest; but I'm not meaning to imply by saying that we might expect rich people to be less than honest. (Thomas, 1995, p. 57).

Though the utterances (i) and (ii) have the same truth-conditional content, they do not carry the same implicature. In example (iii), the attempt to cancel the implicature is unsuccessful since it does not make sense given the implicature carried by saying *yet* in this utterance. To Thomas (1995, p. 43), the non-cancellability of conventional implicature is always conveyed without the necessity of context.

#### (b) Conversational Implicature

To Levinson (1983, p.199), conversational implicature is a significant notion in pragmatics. It offers important explanations of linguistic facts. It also provides an explicit account of how it is possible to mean more than what is said. Therefore, this term covers the gap between what is literally said and what is actually conveyed. According to the Gricean theory, an utterance makes sense no matter whether there are missing elements or incomplete

ones. An interlocutor derives meanings from what is implicated by drawing related inferences to particular utterances. What is implicated is what Grice calls implicatures or conversational implicatures. Meaning can be inferred from the use of an utterance in context. Grice's theory of implicature has been concerned with the ways in which meaning is communicated not only by what is said, but also by how it is said (Levinson, 1983, p.199).

Keckes and Horn (2007, p. 55) state that the notion of conversational implicature emphasizes the indirectness phenomenon in communication. This phenomenon means that the interactants must be prepared to interpret utterances further than the level of surface meaning. The focus here is the motivation and contextual conditions for producing and interpreting indirectness.

Grice's idea about conversational implicatures has been concerned with the implications which arise from the utterances that are produced by someone when saying something but not the sentence used. In other words, Grice is concerned with the sentence meaning not the grammatical structure of the sentence since some sentences are grammatically well-formed but do not convey useful meaning. He distinguishes between what a speaker says and what he implies when the speaker uses the normal conversational rules. These rules can be used in many ways. For example, the speaker should be perspicuous, relevant, and he should say that which he believes to be true (Helgeson, 2002, p. 37).

Conversational implicatures can be characterized in the light of the following five aspects. Firstly, implicatures are defeasible. That is, they are weak inferences that the speaker can deny. For example:

- A: Has John got a girlfriend?  
B: He's been making a lot of trips to Paphos lately. (Cruse, 2006, p. 38)

In the above example, the speaker (B) means that John is on the pull, so he does not suppose that John has a girlfriend.

Secondly, implicatures are non-detachable. In a particular context, the same preposition that is expressed in different words will create the same implicature. In other words, implicatures are not tied to particular forms of words. Thirdly, implicatures are calculable. That is, by using them, one can use general principles rather than specific knowledge. Fourthly, implicatures are non-conventional. They do not follow logically what has been said. They are not part of the conventional meaning. For instance:

- A: Can I speak to Peter?  
B: Peter is in the shower. (p. 38)

In the example above, the inference from B's answer is that Peter is not able to have a phone call.

Finally, implicatures are context dependent. That is, the same proposition that is used in different contexts may lead to different implicatures. For example:

- A: I think I'll take a shower.  
B: Peter is in the shower. (p. 39)

The speaker (B) intends to say, "You can't take a shower yet."

**(c) Standard Implicature**

Standard implicature is a conversational implicature that is based upon the assumption that the speaker is being cooperative by observing the maxims of conversations (Levinson, 1983, p. 204). For instance:

- A: I've just run out of petrol.
- B: Really, there's a petrol station just around the corner. (p.204)

In this example, it is assumed that B's utterance may be taken that A can obtain petrol there. But he would be less than fully cooperative if he knows that the petrol station is either closed or sold out of petrol.

To Levinson (1983, p. 205), if the speaker is observing the maxims, the addressee makes a standard implicature. But if the speaker is flouting the maxims, then the addressee makes a non-standard implicature.

**3. Generalized and Particularized Conversational Implicature**

There are two types of conversational implicature: generalized and particularized. Generalized conversational implicatures arise without the necessity of any particular context. They can be called context-free. And they are associated with the use of words as "some" in this example, "Some people believe in God." This gives rise to the same generalized implicature in "Not all people believe in God" by adding to it "in fact everyone does". On the other hand, particularized conversational implicatures are those that don't arise without a specific context. Thus the last sentence may implicate that "You believe in God", "I believe in God", "My friends don't believe in God". All these implicatures and more are context-bound. Particularized conversational implicatures are also defined as the reference we draw in a context when we recognize that an utterance is relevant (Grundy, 2000, p.103).

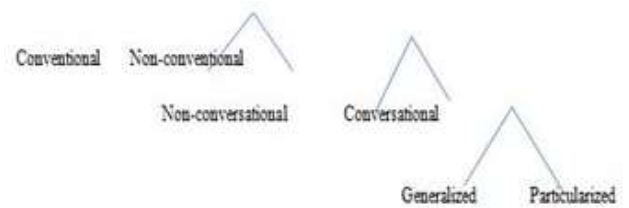
The distinction between generalized and particularized implicature is important because if all implicatures are particularized, the single maxim of Relevance will be sufficient to account to all implied meanings. But generalized conversational implicature does nothing with the most contextually relevant understanding of an utterance because it drives entirely from the maxim of Quantity. This maxim helps the hearer to infer that the reason of using the quantifier *some* by the speaker is that they are not in position to use the quantifier *all*, and are therefore taken to be implied (not all) (p. 104).

Carston (2006, p.649) suggests that generalized conversational implicatures contribute to those meaning that are distinct from linguistic types and speakers' meanings. On the other hand, particularized implicatures require specific contexts as in the following example:

- The dog is looking very happy.
- Perhaps the dog has eaten the roast beef. (Levinson, 1983, p. 205)

Levinson (1983, p. 205-6) presents his theory of default interpretation in much further detail. He goes through the three

heuristics (I, M, Q) which lead to the generalized implicature. He states that these heuristics are based upon Grice's maxims of manner and quantity. In other words, his Q heuristic is based on Grice's first sub-maxim of quantity; his I heuristic on Grice's sub-maxim of quantity; and his M heuristic on the first and third sub-maxim of manner. In the case of I- implicature, the hearer should realize that the speaker uses expressions that notice to the hearer to use the available information in the context in order to enrich the content of the speaker's utterance. In contrast, M-implicature occurs when the speaker uses a marked or prolix form of expressions. In both the case of I-implicature and M-implicature, speakers and hearers should be aware that there are marked and unmarked ways of saying the same thing. Implicature



Types of Gricean implicature (Levinson, 1983, p.)

**4. Grice's Theory of Co-operative Principle**

According to Grice, utterances make sense even if there are missing or incomplete elements. Interlocutors can derive meaning from what is said depending upon drawing related inferences to a particular utterance. Grice calls what is implicated *implicatures* or *conversational implicatures*. According to his theory of implicature, meaning is inferred from the use of some utterances in contexts. The Gricean theory is concerned with the ways in which meaning can be communicated not only by what is said but also by how it is said (Levinson, 2000, p.120).

According to the Grice's theory of implicature, there are four basic maxims. They are called maxims of conversations that model the effective use of language. These maxims are maxim of quality, maxim of quantity, maxim of relation, and maxim of manner. They have certain significance for logic and semantic because they extend the principles of inference and deduction (p. 123).

Grundy (2000, p. 74) states that when speakers talk, they try to be cooperative by elevating what is called The Co-operative Principle. Grice's cooperative Principles are: one should make his conversational contributions such as are required, at the stage at which they occur, by the accepted purposes or directions of the talk exchange where he is engaged.

**5. Maxims of Conversations**

**(a) Maxim of Quantity**

The speaker should make his contribution as informative as required for the current purpose of the exchange. Also, he has to make his contribution more informative than is required. For example:

- I don't drink. (Grundy, 2000, p. 74)

The implicature in this example is that the speaker does not drink alcohol.

**(b) Maxim of Quality**

The speaker tries to make his contribution one that is true. That is, he does not say what he believes to be false, and he does not say for which he lacks adequate evidence. For instance:

- Does your farm contain 400 acres? (Levinson, 1983, p.127)

This example is assumed to be a sincere question. It gives rise to the implicature that the speaker does not know, wants to know, and thinks the addressee knows.

**(c) Maxim of Relevance**

The speaker makes his contribution relevant as in this example: the notice outside a pup which specializes in Sunday lunches: Don't forget Mum on Mother's Day. (Grundy, 2000, p.74). The implied meaning in this example is 'Bring your mother here for Sunday lunches on Mother's Day'.

**(d) Maxim of Manner**

The speaker has to be perspicuous, brief, and orderly. He should avoid obscurity of expression and ambiguity. For example:

- As one of our policy holders, I hope you'll already know that creating products which provide excellent value is our aim at Scottish Widows. (Grundy, 2000, p. 75)

Here, the implication is that the recipient of the letter rather than its writer is the policy holder.

According to Levinson (1983, pp. 127-8), these maxims lead to inferences that can be defined as "Conversational Implicature". Implicature is used to contrast with other terms such as Logical Implication, entailment, and logical consequences that are used to refer to inferences which are derived from logical or semantic content. The term Implicature is not semantic reference, but instead it is based upon the content of what the speaker has said and on some assumptions about the co-operative nature of some normal verbal interaction. Levinson(1983, p. 131) adds that these inferences depend upon the relation between the speaker and the maxims. These inferences can be generated by two different ways, either by observing the maxims in a direct way or by flouting the maxims. By observing the maxims, the speaker may depend on the hearer to describe what he has said in a straight forward way that clarifies that the speaker is following the maxims. For example:

- A: (To a passerby) I've just run out of petrol.
- B: Oh, there's a garage just round the corner (p. 131)

The other way by which we can generate inferences is flouting these maxims. It will be explained in details.

Grice (1975, pp. 41-48) states that these maxims are not in fact conventional rules, but they are rational means for conducting co-operative exchanges. In this sense, we expect that these maxims are also used to govern aspects of non-linguistic behavior.

**6. Flouting the Maxims**

According to Grice (1975, P.51), there are four reasons in which the speaker fails to fulfill a maxim. The first reason is that the speaker may violate a maxim unostentatiously where he will be liable to mislead. This may occur by either lying or speaking ambiguously with an intention to misinform. The second reason of flouting the maxims is that the speaker may opt-out from the operation of the maxim and the Co-operative Principle (CP). He may say or indicate that he is not willing to cooperate in the way the maxim requires. The third reason is that maxims may clash where speakers are not able to fulfill the maxim of Quantity without violating the maxim of Quality. The fourth reason is that the speaker can fulfill the maxim without violation another maxim. That is, he is not opting out and is not trying to mislead. When the implicature is generated in this way, we say that the maxim is flouted.

**(a) Flouting the Maxim of Quantity**

Maxim of Quantity violation characteristics are:

- a. Longer than normal.
- b. Briefer than normal.

For example:

Charlene: I hope you brought the bread and cheese.  
Dexter: Ah, I brought the bread. (Yule, 1996, p. 48)

In the example above, Charlene infers that Dexter does not bring the cheese, since he does not mention it. In this case, Dexter wants Charlene to infer that what is not mentioned is not brought.

**(b) Flouting the Maxim of Quality**

Maxim of quality violation characteristics are:

- a. Briefer than usual
- b. Less relevant
- c. Less direct
- d. More vague than usual.

Certain cases of flouting the maxim of quality include ironies, metaphors, and jokes. In each case, the speaker says what he does not literally believe. Consider the following examples which illustrate the use of metaphor and irony, respectively:

- 1) The leaves danced in the breeze.
- 2) John Major spoke in his usual forceful fashion. (Levinson, 1983, p. 139)

In the above examples, the speaker does not commit himself to the truth of the propositions stated.

Irony is a figure of speech in which words are used in such a way that their intended meanings are different from the actual meaning of the words. Simply, it is a difference between appearance and reality. Irony is intentionally used by the speaker in the form of untruthfulness to generate conversational implicatures (Wilson and Sperber, 2012, p.64). Using irony, the speaker flouts the quality maxim and says what he believes to be untrue in order to implicate a meaning to the one the utterance seems to convey (Dynel, 2011, p. 145).

**(c) Flouting the maxim of Relevance**

Maxim of Relevance violation characteristics are:

- a. Less relevant

- b. Less direct (going round the bush).
- c. Having no relation to the context.

This maxim produces a great range of standard implicatures. For instance:

- A: Can you tell me the time?  
B: Well, the milkman has come. (Levinson, 1983, p.141)

To violate the relevance maxim, one's answer has to be completely irrelevant as in B's answer in the previous example. But, this utterance can be considered relevant, if we understand that A may infer that B intends to convey that the time is at least after the milkman comes.

#### (d) Flouting the maxim of Manner

Maxim of manner violation characteristics are the following:

- a. More vague/ obscure.
- b. Less clear than in normal style.

It is violated by avoiding simple expressions and using some complex ones instead. For example:

- a. Miss Singer produced a series of sounds corresponding closely to the score of an aria from Rigoletto.
- b. Miss Singer sang an aria from Rigoletto. (Levinson, 1983, p. 142)

By stating (a) instead of (d), the speaker violates the sub-maxim 'to be brief'.

Finally, according to Grice (1975, p. 56), there are five pieces of information on which one must rely in order to work out implicatures. They are the conventional meaning of the words used, the Cooperative Principle and its maxims, the content of an utterance, and the fact that all relevant items are available to both participants who know or assume this to be the case.

## 7. Implicit Meaning versus Explicit Meaning

Implicature refers either to the act of meaning implying one thing by saying something else or the act of object. It can be part of a sentence meaning or dependent on conversational content. Implicature is used to deal with examples in communication in which what a speaker means goes beyond the literal meaning expressed by a particular utterance. Grice makes a distinction between what is said by the speaker and what is implicated. According to the standard interpretation of the Grecian account, what is said is related to the conventional meaning of the sentence. Consider the following examples:

- i. Mary didn't pass enough university course units to qualify for admission to second-year study and, as a result, she can't continue with university study.
- ii. Mary is not feeling very happy. (Sperber & Wilson, 1995, p.182)

It is noticed, here, that (i) is an explicature since it is taken to be the development of a propositional form. The utterance (ii) is an implicature. It is an independent assumption. It is inferred from (i) besides a further premise concerning the relation between her failure at university and her current state of mind.

A clear distinction is made between explicit meaning and implicit meaning that is "left unsaid." But, there can be a fully explicit thought if the word explicit means "linguistically explicit" as propositional content of an utterance is always made explicit to some degree. Thus, the implicature which is understood from a specific proposition is understood on the basis of contextual information, not as a development of a semantic representation of its grammar (Blakemore, 1992, p. 35).

Similarly, Carston (2006, p. 639) has expressed the same idea about *explicature* and *implicature*. An explicature is a propositional form which is communicated by an utterance that is grammatically constructed according to the propositional or logical form which that utterance encodes. Its content is an amalgam of linguistically decoded material and also pragmatically inferred material. An implicature can be defined as any other propositional form that is communicated by an utterance where its content consists of wholly pragmatically inferred matter. Thus, the distinction between explicature and implicature is a derivational one, and it arises in only verbal ostensive communication.

## 8. Politeness and impoliteness Implicatures

It has been known that either implying something or leaving something unsaid is regarded as "polite". Consider the following example where Neal does his best effort to avoid any extended interaction with his friend:

Neal: Eh, look, I don't want to be rude, but I'm not much of a conversationalist, and I really want to finish this article, a friend of mine wrote it, so.... (Haugh, 2015, p. 1)

In this example, Neal is attempting to end the conversation with his friend, and he wants to get back to reading the article. He has two reasons to break off the conversation: "I'm not much of a conversationalist", and "I really want to finish this article". This is followed by a turn-final "so" that not only explicitly means the prior assertions are reasons, but also marks that some upshot is left unsaid. In pragmatics, unsaid upshot has been known as *implicature*. In the previous example, the upshot is that Neal wants to end the conversation. What is interesting to note here is that he makes an explicit reference to the unstated upshot (he wants to end the conversation) being perceived as rude. However, his turn has been formulated to mean exactly the opposite that he is trying to be polite despite of the offensive nature of drawing the conversation to a close. He does that by implying rather than demanding or asking. This kind of interactional practice is called "Politeness Implicature" (Haugh, 2015, p.2).

Implicature does not always give rise to politeness. Someone can imply something that may be considered as rude or offensive (impolite). For instance:

Mark: '[...] I think you might want to be a little more supportive. If I get in I'll taking you to the events, and the gatherings and you'll be meeting a lot of people you wouldn't normally get to meet. (p. 2)

Here, it is apparent that Erica is offended where Mark implies something by saying that she will meet a lot of people she does not normally meet. That is, she is not as good as the kinds of people who are members of the final clubs at Harvard University. Also, Mark implies that Erica is occupying a lower social status than them. This kind of interactional practice where one implies something and occasions impoliteness is known as "Impoliteness Implicature" (Haugh, 2015, p. 3).

### 9. Wharton's Use of Implicature in *The Age of Innocence* and *The House of Mirth*

*The Age of Innocence* is a novel filled with irony about innocence. The title of the novel is ironic in itself. One of the central premises of the novel is that Newland Archer has been sent to talk to Ellen to stop thinking of divorce, but instead, he falls in love with her and begs her to get on divorce. Irony is a contrast feature of this novel, and it appears in many of the major themes and many elements of the plot of the novel. For example, one of the important themes of *The Age of Innocence* is individual versus group (society).

[T]he individual ... is nearly always sacrificed to what is supposed to be the collective interest: people cling to any convention that keeps the family together (AI, 99).

There is an implicature here where its intended meaning is that any individual person cannot survive in upper-class society in New York without the support of the family. That is, going against the family is not possible. Everyone should follow the society's rules and conventions; otherwise, he will not be accepted in that society. Here, Archer tries to convince Ellen that personal happiness is not the most important thing in life. Both Archer and Ellen are the victims of the society's conventions. Though he loves Ellen, he marries May. Ellen wants to divorce her husband and live free, but she does not achieve what she wishes because of the social customs and conventions of New York's community. Thus, both of them suffer and live unhappily.

May is naive and kind. However, she is not as innocent as her husband, Newland Archer, thinks. She feels that their relationship changes a little because he is in love with her cousin, Ellen. It is her own sake to keep her husband. When she says "you must be sure to go and see Ellen ... I wish you to do so with my full and explicit approval" (AI, 234) to her husband, she intends to say that for different reasons. The first reason might be that 'forbidden fruit tastes better', and if May does not allow her husband to see Ellen, he will be tempted and who know where it will lead to. Another implicature is that May wants Archer to find out that living with Ellen will not be the right way for him. May mentions the name of Ellen several times to Newland to show him that she knows about them. However, he does not perceive that his wife may know that. She sometimes seems cruel to him, "What a pity, that you and Ellen will cross each other on the way" (AI, 280). Actually, May is happy that her husband will not see Ellen. She pretends to feel pity for them, and she is scornful.

Archer: Why did she write this?

May: I suppose because we talked things over yesterday. (AI, 286)

In the above extract, the maxim of manner is flouted. May, as a wife, wants to keep her husband, and she wants his mistress to go far away. Without her husband knowledge, May tells Ellen that she is pregnant though in fact, she is not. She would like to hide her desire for Ellen to leave to Europe, and she wants to hide that in front of her husband to get him think that she likes her. May successfully manages to keep her husband and save her marriage. Edith Wharton makes May do it by intrigues instead of persuading her husband or at least talking to him.

Janey: You are marrying into her family.

Archer: Oh, family, family he jeered. (AI, 75)

Here Archer flouts the maxim of quality intentionally and ironically. He supports Ellen's decision to divorce her husband. He still does not see the importance of the family matter. However, he agrees to attempt to persuade Ellen not to divorce. In fact, it is against his will since he wants to see Ellen free.

I want to wipe out all the past. (AI, 96)

In the above example, there is a metaphor. The intended implied meaning of the above utterance is that Ellen suffers and struggles a lot with her husband. Thus, she wants to divorce her husband and to free herself from the constraints that the marriage brought. So, she comes back to New York thinking that the people there will welcome and accept her, and she will find her lost freedom. However, New York society is not open-minded to such opinions where divorce and leaving a husband is unacceptable at all. Members of the society look at her as stranger who wants to steal part of their privacy, though she is originally New Yorker.

If I return to Europe I must live by myself. (AI, 285)

In the above example, what Ellen implies is that she will rely on herself; not on others who around her. That is, she will neither live with Archer nor with her husband who has been waiting for her to return. Ellen has chosen a life in Paris where she will have the opportunity to meet musicians, writers as well as artists; a life, for her, means freedom.

He honoured his own past and mourned for it. After All, there was good in the old ways. (AI, 305)

The above passage reveals Archer's shifting perception of marriage. Though his marriage was dull and his life was controlled by the rules and conventions of old New York society, he at least keeps his respect and honour for his own past. Archer intends to assert the superiority of the old ways meaning May and conventions over Ellen and freedom from the constraints of New York's convention.

The look of representing a type rather than a person; as if She might have been chosen to pose for a Civic Virtue or a Greek goddess. (AI, 165)

There is an implicature in the passage above. It implies that May is seen as a model of what her culture expects and requires of her. It is perfectly certain that May always does and will do the 'right thing' and understands Newland. Newland is so eager to embark on

what he believes as long years of matrimonial spirit with May. After marriage, she remains as a simple girl as she was. She is always girlish and cool since she has been sheltered from experience and knowledge which may connect to sexuality.

In *The Age of Innocence*, Wharton depicts the social constraints and the unnecessary norms of the elite society in America. Traveling to Europe for several times and then living in France, she is an author who manages to compare the societies and women living in Europe and America. In her novel, *The Age of Innocence*, there is a strong connection between America and Europe. It can be observed that America is more conservative and stricter than Europe, especially for women (Kalay, 2012, p. 124). In the novel, there are two important women figure, May Welland who represents America, and Ellen Olenska who symbolizes Europe. Wharton dramatizes these two women, who "they're not alike" (AI, 135), in order to reflect the feminine situation in both continents. May represents the pure product of American society whereas Ellen is Wharton's brilliant portrait of the expatriate woman. May is carefully trained not to possess the versatility, the experience, and the freedom of judgment that will allow for a marriage of equals. On the other hand, though Ellen was born in New York, she is brought up and unhappily married in Europe. She is unconventional and sophisticated character who possesses intellectual independence and imaginations. She returns to New York with the intention of settling there. However, her experiences and tastes have confined her to the margins of the traditional society that regards her as a stranger and questions her morals. Ellen never fits in with that tribe anymore, and she will have to go back to Paris, to live as an expatriate in the same area where Wharton lived.

Throughout the novel, Archer often experiences feelings of coldness for his wife, May. For example, before revealing to her husband that Ellen will soon be going back to Europe, May goes to him and takes one of his "cold hands pressed quietly against her cheeks" (AI, 286). Later, after she has informed Newland about her pregnancy, he holds "her to him while his cold hand stroked her hair" (AI, 300). And even when he kisses her, he notes that her kiss is "like drinking at a cold spring" (AI, 126). All these cold sensations suggest an underlying lack of passion. It is a result of the fact that their marriage is just a façade of innocence and duty.

This report, the result of **discreet enquiries** . . . I don't say it's **conclusive**, you observe; far from it. But **straws** show . . . and on the whole, it's **eminently** satisfactory for all parties that this **dignified** solution has been reached. (AI, 290)

Mr. Letterblair, a prominent lawyer, has discussed Ellen's divorce with Archer. Ellen has been ostracized from society because of the rumors of affair with her husband's secretary (impoliteness implicature). These rumors promote the perception of Ellen as a sexual being. They serve to position Ellen in opposite to May. Archer sees May as innocent, but he regards Ellen as May's foil. Within these designations, the concept of sexual liberation is implicit. When he learns of Ellen's visit with Regine Beaufort after her husband's indiscretions are revealed, "[a] mean desire not to have Madame Olenska seen at the Beauforts' door vanished as he

felt the penetrating warmth of her hand" (AI, 270). According to Archer, not only the word "warmth" places Ellen in contrast to May but also the word "penetrating" provides an allusion to sexual intercourse.

Archer: My idea of success [...] is personal freedom.  
May Freedom? Freedom from worries?

Archer: From everything--from money, from poverty, from ease and anxiety, from all the material accidents [...] that's what I call success. (HM, 47-48)

This passage is one of Lily's frank talking with Selden. Wharton includes two different definitions of success from the perspectives of each. Selden thinks that he is the only one who is successful and happy for simply he frees himself from all the social convictions. He does not ask Lily about what success is to know her answer, but he intends to ask her to stress that, unlike Lily, he does not have to put on a mask to satisfy others. Besides, he wants to show her that there is value "within", rather than a conspicuous display where she sees herself in the eyes of others.

She began to cut the pages of a novel, tranquilly studying her prey through downcast lashes while she organized a method of attack. (HM, 15)

Lily has a plan. She wants to live comfortably for the rest of her life, and a wealthy man is the means for reaching that end. Carol Miller states: "In Lily's cosmology, happiness depends upon wealth" (85). Lily realizes that she should marry a rich man in an effort to live up to what others in the wealthy set are doing. There is a metaphor in the above message. Its implied meaning is that Lily gets her first chance to win over a suitor when she boards a train to visit her friends. She notices that Percy is aboard too. He is precisely what she is looking for because he is rich, young as well as popular with the right people. Thus, it makes a great deal of sense that she will choose him for a possible husband.

I think it's just flightiness-and sometimes I think it's because ... she despises the things she's trying for. And it's the difficulty of deciding that makes her such an interesting study. (HM, 124)

For Carry Fisher, some part of Lily is determined that she must not waste both her life and time with someone she does not love, and it competes with the other part of her that she needs money. Intentionally, Wharton, in the above extract, wants to show her readers that humans are not two-dimensional things. There are many facets to human nature; it just depends on the situation which side will win out. Lily knows well that she will not be happy settling with a man for his wealth, but she is still driven towards it since she knows that she will be unhappy without money. She has risked everything to get a wealthy husband; however, she ends up throwing opportunities away for a momentary realization that what she is doing is not the right thing for her. Her indecisiveness is a pure manifestation of the true qualities of human nature.

[Lily] was so evidently the victim of civilization which had produced her, that the links of her bracelet seemed like manacles chaining her to her fate. (HM, 8)

In the above extract, Wharton's ominous comment on the sapphire bracelet that Lily wears stands in opposition to her description to her hand, establishing a striking contrast between the sense of freedom and that of confinement that Lily experiences in her society. Though Lily is free from any allegiance to any specific social class, this freedom is all the more confining. Her lack of wealth deprives her of any true claim to membership in the leisure class. Lily has been forced to conduct herself in accordance to the rigid social dictates of the upper class, embodied by the regular links of her bracelet in effort to gain acceptance.

Moreover, the bracelet provides insight into Lily's relationship with Selden. Wharton's characterization of the bracelet as "chaining Lily to her death" echoes Selden thoughts of the Greek mythology later in the novel. He has linked himself and Lily to the mythical figures of Perseus and Andromeda where Perseus rescues Andromeda from the monster by freeing her from the mass of the rocks to which she has been chained.

[Selden] knew that Perseus' task is not done when he has loosened Andromeda's chains, for her limbs are numb with bondage, and she cannot rise and walk, but clings to him with dragging arms as he beats back to land with his burden (HM, 107).

Selden positions himself in the dominant role as the one who will free Lily from the "bondage" that is associated with the strict regulations of that society. However, ironically, Perseus marries Andromeda after he

When Lily's father has been ruined financially, they become poor. After the death of her husband, Mrs. Bart says to her daughter: But you'll get it back—you'll get it back, with your face. (HM, 22)

In this example, the maxim of quantity is violated by repetition. The implied meaning is that Lily's beauty can bring future happiness. If they were denied wealth, beauty would lead her daughter to a rich man who can get her back to the leisure class. her face had been pale and altered, and the diminution of her beauty had lent her a poignant charm. **That is how she looks when she is alone!** (HM, 48)

The intended implied meaning here is that Selden is different from the average bachelor in that he enjoys Lily the most when she is not playing the role of sexual object. It is with her mask off that Selden sees her the most charming and can perhaps even be said to love her art these moments. He can experience her true sensibility when she seems disheveled to both herself and others.

"Do you want to marry me?" she asked. He broke into a laugh. "No, I don't to- but perhaps I should if you did" (HM, 51)

Lily feels that Selden is the proper man with whom she enjoys spending time and imagining herself marrying him if he only has a large amount of money. However, she has removed herself from this chance since the man she loves, and who is willing to love her too will never be able to take care of her debts as well as her material needs. Selden does not have any great funds of his own, yet he is involved in the wealthy society. In the above extract, Selden is flouting the maxim of quality intentionally. Though he has feeling for Lily, he does not want to marry her since he is not

capable of giving her everything she needs. He is not going to propose to her until he makes sure that she accepts him as he is. And he will not say that he loves her until he knows that she loves him too.

Selden: The only way that I can help you is by loving you.

Lily: Ah, love me love me-but don't tell me so"(HM, 92)

Here Selden makes it clear that he wishes to marry Lily. This is mainly what he intentionally intends to say to her. Lily is receptive to Selden's desire to be with her, and she feels comfortable when she is with him. However, she tells him "Ah, love me love me-but don't tell me so." Here, she flouts the maxim of quality. The flouting is intentional to stress that she refuses him in spite of her obvious attraction to him. Lily thinks that love is not enough to reach her goal as much as money can. Thus, she has thrown away her chance at possibly being happy to continue her search for a rich husband.

According to Sapora (1993, p. 378), Lily has two parts: the public part and the private part. He thinks that Lily feels that Selden is the only one who can welcome her inner self, and who is not afraid of telling her disagreeable things that her real self needs to hear." She has acted the part of her public self so long that she fears she has no other self left". Lily is in need to Selden to prove the reality of her inner self and to verify her existence. Wharton shows us that though her protagonist is ready to give up happiness during her search for wealth, she is not able to sacrifice both wealth and status while she still believes that she may have a chance to get it. two figures were seen silhouetted against the hall-light.(HM, 108)

There is an impoliteness implicature. A very significant moment in the novel is one when Selden sees Mr. Trenor and Lily together, illustrating the duplicity of his nature. In the beginning of the novel, Selden was romantically involved with Mrs. Trenor, but later he has ended the relationship with her. He thinks that the materialistic people are only fine for sexual encounters, but they are unable to be truly part of his life. His previous relationship with Mr. Trenor creates a hypocritical situation making him arrives at incorrect conclusion as he sees Lily going out of Mr. Trenor's house. He has been informed by Carrie Fisher that Lily has left for the Trenors, so he goes to check the situation for himself. He cannot decipher the actual identities of the persons since it is too dark. Selden is sure that it is Lily with whom Trenor could have been meeting altogether concluding that there must be possible adulterous acts between them.

I thought you were so fond of Bertha.

Mrs. Trenor: Oh, I am- it's much safer to be fond of dangerous people" (HM, 32)

In the above example, the maxim of quality is flouted. What Mrs. Trenor intends to say that Bertha is a very strong woman. Due to her position of power as the wealthy social ringleader, she is dangerous in making people miserable. Whoever upsets her directly or indirectly, she ruins him.

Mrs. Dorset (Bertha) becomes enraged when she knows that Selden spends his time with Lily rather than with her. She starts to



think of a trick to ruin her. Once, she invites Lily to join her on the yacht. Bertha has devoted the trip in order to flirt with other men. She is not only content with getting away of her husband for having a good time with Ned Silverton, but she is also jealous of Lily's beauty as well as her ability to garner the attention of others. She is overstrung whether to keep Lily on board to distract her husband, or to throw her off the boat to remove any competition. She has a chance to destroy Lily and says:

Miss Bart is not going back to the yacht. (HM, 143)

In the above example, there is an impoliteness implicature. Bertha has the chance to ruin Lily. She tells the others, incorrectly, that Lily is having an affair with her husband, George Dorset. No one dares to listen to Lily's side of the story over Bertha's false accusations for Bertha has the upper hand. As a result, Lily's reputation has been polluted, and she is banished from the high society.

Grace Stepney has her eyes on the money that Lily will inherit from her aunt, Mrs. Peniston. In the beginning, Mrs. Stepney seems as though she is only helping her cousin, Mrs. Peniston (Julia) as being an old woman, and taking care of her in the absence of Lily. But after she knows that Lily is the only heir to her aunt, she starts to alienate her cousin from her niece, Lily, saying: oh, cousin Julia... of course I don't mean...

I don't know what you DO mean," said Mrs. Peniston. (HM, 84)

In the extract above, Mrs. Stepney is flouting the maxim of manner intentionally to mention that there are some rumors spread about Lily and Gus Trenor. This makes Mrs. Peniston very angry asking her:

That he means to get a divorce and marry her?  
[...] no! He would hardly do that. It-it's a flirtation – nothing more.  
(HM, 84)

Here there is an impoliteness implicature. By saying "filtration", Mrs. Stepney implies that there is sexual relation between Lily and Mr. Trenor.

Let us always be friends. Then I shall feel safe, whatever happens.  
(HM, 205)

The maxim of manner, here, is flouted. The intended meaning is that Lily is hinting to Selden that she wants to clear everything up between them before she dies. She does not only give up thinking of marriage but also of life. She wants to succumb to the eternal sleep by taking extra sleeping drops.

In the beginning of the novel, Lily is struggling to have everything she wishes, but at the end, she wants nothing. Wharton wants her readers to understand that a person is not just one thing or another. A person who focuses on one aspect of life too much, he really complicates everything for himself. Life is all a matter of creating balance, and one should realize that the fact that the most convenient things may not make him the happiest.

Lily: Oh, Mr. Rosedale- how are you?

Mr. Rosedale: Been up to town for a little shopping, I suppose?  
(HM, 13)

Mr. Rosedale is flouting the maxim of relevance where he does not give Lily an answer, but instead, he asks her a question. He intentionally does that because it is strange to see Lily in 'The Benedick', and he wants in a hurry to know the reason behind being there.

## Conclusion

This study conducts a pragmatic study by applying implicature on Wharton's *The Age of Innocence* and *The House of Mirth*. Implicature is investigated in the two novels to reveal the author's intended meaning. The notion of implicature is associated with the speaker's intention. It is defined in terms of what the speaker intends to say or what the hearer thinks the speaker intends to say. To Grice, both 'what is implicated' and 'what is said' are part of speaker meaning. 'What is said' is that part of meaning that is determined by truth-conditional semantics, while 'what is implicated' is that part of meaning that cannot be captured by truth conditions and therefore belongs to pragmatics. *The Age of Innocence* is a realistic novel. In her novels, Wharton employs indirect discourse which confines readers to her protagonist's ways of seeing and perceiving. Wharton uses irony in order to cast serious doubts on the validity of moral values of her tragic stories.

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