Strategic Avoidance of Explicitness in Newspaper Articles

Azhar Hussain Ubied

College of Arts/University of Kufa
azhar.abbas@uokufa.edu.iq

الخلاصة

تتقصى الدراسة الحالية استراتيجيات التجنب الاستراتيجي للوضوح الكلامي التي تم توظيفها في مقالات الصحف وتهدف الى التعرف على تلك الاستراتيجيات كطرق فاعلة للأساليب غير المباشرة في الكلام .وقد وجدت الدراسة ثلاث استراتيجيات هي : الاقحام اللغوي والتلطيف الكلامي و ممهدات الكلام ولكن كثّاب المقالات يوظفونها بدرجات متفاوتة فغالبا ما يوظفون الاقحام بالدرجة الاولى وهو الاكثر تفضيلا بين الاستراتيجيات. ثم تأتي بعد ذلك استراتيجية التلطيف الكلامي ومن ثم ممهدات الكلام وهذا يعكس نوايا كثّاب المقالات لتجنب الزام انفسهم المباشر بالفكرة التي يطرحونها. وهناك اسباب اخرى منطقية وراء ذلك كالتأدب الكلامي واعتبارات المقاييس البرجماتية و تجنب الفرض الكلامي و الحقوق والواجبات اللغوية .

الكلمات الدالة: استراتيجيات تجنب الوضوح, الاقحام, الايضاح, ممهدات الكلام, التلطيف الكلامي, مبدا التأدب, مقالات الصحف.

Abstract

The current paper investigates strategic avoidance of explicitness employed in newspaper articles. It aims at attaining knowledge of strategies of avoiding explicitness as effective way of indirectness. The study finds three major strategies: (implicatures, hedges and presequences) that carry communicative significance; yet, the writers show various degrees of implementations. Mostly, implicature employment comes first as a highly preferrable strategy, before "Hedges", and "presequences". This reflects writers' intention to use such strategies in their writing to avoid direct commitment of the proposition they present. There are rationales behind that like politeness, considerations of pragmatics parameters, imposition avoidance and rights of obligations.

Keywords: strategies of avoiding explicitness,implicature, explicature, presequences, hedges, politeness principle, newspaper articles.

\.Introduction

Unsurprisingly, people have various linguistic options and choices. Even being explicit or implicit includes various ranges or degrees. When a relevant communicative distinction is not clearly marked or not marked at all, it is likely to be interpreted in a different way. As such, the problem is to catalog or categorize the ways that achieve such a thing. It is generally recognized that linguistic meaning may not exactly determine speaker's meaning due to the

need for disambiguation because people prefer, for one reason or another, to speak implicitly or indirectly. Hence there is an urgent need to determine strategies as well as rationales of explicitness avoidance. Thus, the current paper tries to answer the following questions: a)How can strategic avoidance of explicitness be achieved? b)What are rationales behind strategic avoidance strategies? c)What are the most employed strategies in newspaper articles?

The study aims at investigating explicitness avoidance strategies, specifying their employment in newspaper articles, and showing most employed types of those strategies.

Y. Implicitness and Explicitness

Commonly, when the speaker makes mutually clarification that he intends to communicate the exact proposition, the proposition is then called explicature (Carston, 1994: £V1). Thus, the proposition expressed should not be considered identical to the explicature of the utterance: the proposition expressed may or may not be actually(ostensively) communi-cated (ibid). Theories of explicitness such as the extensionalist theory(Gibbs, 1995:7) are considered of minimal cognitive operation as opposed to implicit meaning that "goes beyond what is given by language form and what is literally said"(Verschueren, \99A: Yo-7). The proposition expressed by a metaphorical, ironical or some other kind of non-literal utterance is not communicated in this sense, rather it serves as an effective and efficient way of giving the hearer access to those assumptions which are communicated. Occasionally, speech indirectness is used even when there is little uncertainty in the speaker's intention or the hearer's values concerning the relationship shift. The same idea can be employed to communicate explicit and implicit information, the recovery is always guided by expectations of relevance(Carston, 1994: 77). Interpretations can thus be arranged on a scale of explicitness implicitness and, according to implicitly conveyed information which is context-dependent. The intended interpretation is proportional to the interpretive process that results in some sort of speaker-hearer misunderstanding i.e., the more hearer-dependent and the less speaker-mastered interpretation is, the greater the danger of accidental misunderstanding. In fact, a speaker is supposed to take account of the addressees at once accessible assumptions and the inferences he can readily draw through interpreting an utterance, but the speaker goes wrong in predicting the addressees ability to recover this information (ibid). Indirectness is of two sorts(Blum-Kulka, ۱۹۸۹: ٤٢):

- \cdot -Conventional indirectness using language conventions including propositional content and pragmalinguistic form signaling an illocutionary force.
- Y-Nonconventional indirectness relies on context and open ended concerning propositional content, linguistic form and pragmatic force (ibid).

The link between indirectness and politeness is maintained and elaborated by Searle's (\\9\\0.000): V7) observation that it is the most important "incentive or motivation for indirectness in requests, and certain forms tend to become the conventionally polite ways of making indirect what is communicated indirectly as: Cancelability, the heuristic of the pragmatic process of interpretation, and the defeasible character of pragmatic interpretation. To sum up, "strategies of language use are ways of exploiting interplay between the explicitness and implicitness in generation of meaning" (Verschueren, 1994: 107-V). Thus, participants have to choose.Explicatures the propositions explicitly communiare that are cated(Crystal, 1940: 1774). They are "an ostensively communicated assum-ption that is inferentially developed from one of the incomplete conceptual representations encoded by the utterance", while implicature is "an ostensively communicated assumption" i.e., derived solely via processes of pragmatic inference"(Carston, Y···Y: \\Y\)). Here are some points:

- \.Surely, "explicature" is a cognate of "explicate," not "explicit"(Carston, \(\cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \). It is the thing the speaker means literally that is very closely related to the semantic content of the sentence the speaker utters. Implicit meaning is "the situation where the identity of an item can be retrieved from either within or outside the text"(Paltridge, \(\cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \).
- *.Grice(1907:75-0) systematically distinguishes speaker meaning from sentence meaning using *implicature* as "the act of meaning or implying something by saying something else. By saying, Grice does not mean the mere locutionary act of uttering specific words. Rather, Grice focuses on the illocutionary act of saying that something is the case.
- ".Scholars mention "higher-level" explicatures(Carston, Y.Y: 19) as things speakers mean, not inferable from their saying.
- **4.** Austin (cited in Bach and Harnish $^{9}99:07$) distinguishes between what a speaker says (locutionary act), means (illocutionary act(s), and acts of (intentionally) producing (perlocutionary act). Larson ($^{9}99:77$) adds that the "implicit meaning is a meaning that is not shown but it is the part of the conversation or intention to convey the speaker".

~. Strategic Avoidance of Explicitness

Actually, avoiding explicitness can be achieved via some strategies and for some rationales.

۳٫۱. Pragmatic Strategies to Avoid Explicit Language

Normally, language used by is either explicit or implicit. For Lakoff(19 VY: 19 °) it is important to study words with meaning implicitly involves fuzziness i.e., avoiding explicit expressions. However, there are possibilities to avoid explicitness, these are mentioned (Chen, 1 VY: 19):

- 1. Conversational Implicature CI:CI is implicit meaning that can be read between the lines .Grice in (1940) distinguishes it from the conventional implicature(" implications which can be deduced from the form of an utterance, on the basis of certain co-operative principles which govern the efficiency and normal acceptability of conversations, as when the sentence")(Crystal, 1940: 1774). Conversational maxims: Quality ,contributes only what you know to be true, Quantity Make contributions as informative as is required, Relation i.e., making one's contributions relevant. Finally, Manner (a) Avoid obscurity; (b) avoid ambiguity; (c) be brief; (d) be orderly(ibid). Any violation in such maxims leads to implicature. CI is "a nonconventional implicature based on an addressee's assumption that the speaker is following the conversational maxims or at least the cooperative principle" (Levinson, ١٩٨٣: 1.1-2). CI is not handled by semantics rather it is context-specific in pragmatic study(Xiaolong, Y., Y: YYY). It is "utterance meaning". When the two meanings are different(explicit and implicit), conversational implicature occurs(ibid). Carston (۲۰۰۲:۱۷۱) considers such type of implicature as broadly accepted sort. It appears in two ways: generalized GCI and particularized PCI (Levinson (Y···: \\7-\Y).
- **Y. Presequences:**Following the Speech Act Theory, presequences (henceforth Ps) mean presequences before an action (Sacks,cited in Coulthard, 1994: 140). This means, before a speaker

acts with(i.e., utters) words, he first proves the facts by making inquiry so as to confirm whether he should conduct a certain speech act to the other party. The Ps contingently precede and foreshadow actions that a core or base sequence starts with. Sacks(ibid) shows that in conversation they appear when speakers "avoiding potentially embarrassing or annoying situations." When a speaker makes a request, an invitation, an offer, he is exposing himself to a possible rejection. Hence "speakers typically avoid the possible rejection by producing them . When the addresser faces words too embarrassing to utter, he can also resort to the use of Ps to indirectly provide a hint to the other party that he avoids speaking these words in a straightforward way. Thus, some researchers consider Ps as quite similar to indirect speech act (Clayman, Y··Y: YY9) as they are both significant tools for avoidance of explicit language. Ps minimize the discordant responses in the basic sequence. In addition, they also provide total avoidance of the base sequence(ibid).

T, Y. Rationales behind Avoidance of Explicitness

Obviously, rationales for presenting specific communicative plan is a more significant means for understanding the way communication is going on. Searching for the degrees of intentional explicitness appears relevant and significant to at least two different levels(Strohmaier et al., Y··V:7V):

Strategic Avoidance of Explicitness in Newspaper Articles

Azhar Hussain Ubied

- **\'**-The theoretical level: better understanding of degrees of deliberate explicitness increases knowledge about the levels of abstractions that participants employ, and provides distinctions and means for studying, for instance, the way participants refine or generalize aims during search.
- Υ The practical level: this knowledge enhances the ability of searching better results treatment and linking queries to levels of explicitness. Indirect speech has considerable practical importance(Pinker et.al., $\Upsilon \cdot \cdot \vee : \vee \wedge$). Reasons behind explicit language avoidance are(Chen, $\Upsilon \cdot \vee : \vee \in \P$):
- Yeliteness Principle PP: One question may arise whenever there is an implicit use of strategy which is for what reason? or why? Generally ,human beings do not directly address others to do things .They convey their messages in an indirect way.Politeness Theory proposes that language serves two aims: to convey a proposition(e.g., request) and to negotiate and maintain a relationship(greeting). People achieve these dual ends by using language at two levels:the literal form of a sentence is consistent with the close relationship between participants. At the same time, by implicating a meaning between the lines,the speaker counts on the listener to infer its real intention, which may start a different relationship e.g., in a polite request,"If you could pass the salt, that would be awesome" the literal content violates Grice's maxims, but in a polite way.

Hansen(Y··A:\9) suggests that "for both speakers and hearers to cancel or question unintended or unwarranted meanings in an interactionally neutral way, following which the context will be updated with the information thus conveyed." Then, "cancelation will be interactionally highly marked, "as it shows the preceding speech as misleading, and consequently it will "be avoided for reasons of politeness" (Brown & Levinson, \9 \AV:\0000co). Zhaoxiong(Y···:Y\Y) claims that politeness Principle PP has an adjuster result with a higher level, as it ensures the equal status of the two interactants engaged in the conversation and their close relationship. Thus, when contradiction occurs between the Cooperative Principle CC and PP, normally for competing aims, then people may even leave abidance by the CP to adhere to the PP(Brown & Levinson, \9 \AV:\1\\\\0000co).

Y. Considerations of Pragmatic Parameters: There are "factors that affect what sorts of utterance strategies people adopt for communication" (Thomas, 1990:175). They are four(Lee and Pinker, Y.1:YA9):

c- Rights and Obligations: a speaker may have the right to require the addressee to do^A something and the addressee also has the obligation to do something, then the strategy would be almost direct (Chen, Y·): YoY). Conversely, when he has no right to do so ,the act would be implicit.

d-Other Considerations: The key advantage of explicit communication is clarity. The significance is that it is slower than implicit communication when message actualization is better.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

Actually, data analysis involves analyzing the analysis of the three articles according to the Chen's('\\:\'\:\'\'). model . The analysis of texts extracted from the selected articles is presented first, then, statistical analysis is carried out to show the percentages of strategies in the articles.

٤, ۱. Part . ۱ Article . ۱

\. CI: Importance of CI employment is so evident in their percentage which is \circ \? . This indicates the writers' preference for implicature over other strategies. This preference can be

attributed to the fact that implicit meaning can be read between the lines and this helps achieving linguistic act indirectly(see table \) below \).

Webster's Dictionary defines a lie as: "To make a statement that one knows is false." "A false statement with the intention to deceive. The example given is, "lying his way into office." Daniel Webster knew that in politics it is common practice to make numerous promises that one cannot keep. Yet we the public hang on to every word and sincerely hope that what we hear is "the truth."

In the above mentioned example, the writer condemns telling lies indirectly by citing their definition from a dictionary. Then, she mentions that the dictionary compiler knows that lying is a common practice in politics since promises are always broken. In spite of this, people hope that they hear some truth. The writer attributes the opinion to a third party (dictionary compiler) instead of presenting the idea as her own. Thus, she flouts the maxim of relevance. The intent to criticize telling lies is employed by implicature rather than explicit use of words such as "I criticize people who lie specially politicians." Another kind of condemning is related to the public who despite their knowledge that politicians are liars, people hope to find truth in what they say. The writer uses the word "politics" to refer to all polititians. The use of nominals such as "lying" and "politics" is so revealing. Such generalization refers to participants (liars and politicians)indirectly.

"When the media shares all the rumors about the candidates, it turns out to be one of the greatest "legitimate gossip sessions" imaginable"

The writer reflects a significant idea of people which is related to rumors on media. When these rumors are posted on media they are going to be "the greatest legitimate gossip sessions". In addition to flouting the maxim of relevance (since rumors on media seem to be less directly related to lies), the writer flouts the maxim of quantity by not being orderly adhered to the cooperative conversational principle. Though rumors are not true they are taken as legitimate by people and they believe such lies.

7. Presequences: they are important strategies of avoiding explicitness, though they are the least employed. Their percentage of appearance in the first article is 1.7. They come next to

implicatures. Their importance comes from their main function which is paving the way for new items to be presented in a less dangerous way(see table 7).

"How does God feel about lying, one may ask?"

In this extract the writer motivates the readers' thinking by asking a question about God's stance to lies. This presequence precedes what she wants to tell about lies that they are condemned by God . Hence, the mind of the reader is prepared for the coming message and its attention is activated. The notable thing here is that the writer combines both presequence with hedges that appear at the end of the question" one may ask" .Therefore , the extract joins two strategies the second and the third. Combining them helps ensuring effective indirectness .

In this column we'll look at the ninth Commandment given to Moses on Mt.Sinai Tyou years ago"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor".

In this part, the writer uses citation as a presequence for what she wants to present "... we'll look at the ninth Commandment given to Moses on Mt.Sinai ", ", " years ago." To cite other persons' speech is to direct the attention towards some idea and this is an indirect way of avoiding explicitness and thus, presenting persuasive ideas through attributing what the writer has in his mind, to a third party. The long lasting date suggests that the idea of telling lies denunciation is not new and hence, taken for granted. Religious views have special impact on people's behavior, and that is why they are cited here. The word "we" denotes inclusion i.e., the writer implicates that "look at ...". Here imposition is softened.

 \mathbf{r} . **Hedges:**Hedges form crucial parts of the strategies of explicitness avoidance . the percentage of their appearance in the first article is \mathbf{r} 9%. They come next to implicatures (see table 1 below).

"I think one of the reasons an adult gossipsor gives false evidence against another, is that she or he is modeling after a parent who spent a lot of time on the phone or with friends criticizing others."

The writer presents one reason for telling lies which is following parents' style. She starts with "I think" .The extract is full of indirect expressions. Thus, "an adult gossip" and "gives false evidence" both mean" lies" and the words " she or he is modeling after a parent who spent a lot of time on the phone or with friends criticizing others..." refer to parents false way of gossiping and passing such bad habits to children. Thus, both adults' and their parents' lies are condemned. The word "adults suggests that those people are conscious of what they do as opposed to children, they deliberately lie (see Table 1).

Strategic Avoidance of Explicitness in Newspaper Articles

Azhar Hussain Ubied

Strategy	Percentage
Implicature	01%
Presequence	1 • %
Hedge	٣ ٩%
Total	1 %

Table(\(\))Percentages of strategies in article \(\)

۶٫۲. Part ۲. Article ۲

**CI:in article **, again implicature employ-ments are the most significant strategies of explicitness avoidance. This is obvious in their percentage of £A%. There is no doubt that writers normally successfully communicate a ideas or proposition implicitly by employing a linguistic expression that falls short of direct mentioning.

"All this is well and good, but a little late for someone appointed 'A months ago to reform the system."

The writer presents the period of assigning responsibility of reform to a person in charge. An NA- month span is a long period and being without reform shows failure. Relevance maxim is flouted here since the reform is related to people themselves not periods but since people are the ones responsible for reform, taking long time indicates lack of competitiveness. As a kind of hedge the writer uses the expression "little late" to strengthen implicature. A person who intends to reform and given such span of time may achieve more than what is done. The writer avoids saying directly that people in charge are doing nothing.

"Financial Data Protection Act of ۲۰۰٦, will deliver a new level of protection all right, but it is protection for the financial institutions whose security failures put us at risk for identity theft."

The writer says that law acts for protection may lead to protection of institution but the security of people identity depends on that of the financial institutions which may put people at risk for identity theft. The implicature that neither law acts nor financial institution formed a well-designed ways to be out of this problem.

Y-Presequences: These are important strategies of explicitness avoidance. This is clear in their percentage of YY%. They come next to hedges. The pre-sequence contingently precedes and foreshadows actions. The speaker avoids potentially directing ostensible criticism.

While it appears unlikely our Congress is going to do anything about immigration, gas prices, or the deficit anytime soon, as early as this week it might very well take action on another sore point for many Americans: privacy and identity theft.

The writer points out that the policy followed by the government involves the indifference towards many troubles in the country "immigration, gas prices...". In addition, he adds other problems that need solutions. This background information of multi problematic situations presented earlier in speech, provides a doorstep for other problems. Thus, the presequence helps to open the door for other sequences. The employment is depicted by the use of ("unlikely"," is going to do anything about", "anytime soon", "as it might very well take action on another sore point for many Americans". This strategy is surely(presequence), but it combines the expressions to others to reach a conclusion that problems are many. The use of the word "sore" suggests the worst of the problems. Evidently the extract includes more than one strategy of avoiding explicitness. The opening words "likely" is, for instance (hedge), but all in all such combination serves the presentation of implicature forming.

Don't you feel better now? Neither do we. There is nothing reass-uring about the way the VA handles sensitive information or the way it has responded to this security breach. The laptop in question was taken May *from a house in suburban Maryland.. The writer starts his statement by a question to attract the attention. Such a question is prelude that prepares speaker's mind presequence to what is yet-to-come. Knowing that what is previously stated is far from being satisfactory deed for both hearer and speaker, the writer exploits that to provide a presequence to what follows. Then, he says what is worse which is there is nothing that guarantees information security protection.

 $\ref{r-Hedges}$: Writers prefer hedges that are important for explicitness avoidance. This is evident in their percentage of $\ref{r-1}$. They come next to implicatures. Providing safe indirect way of message conveyance, hedges are adhered to avoid explicitness.

"It still wouldn't be right, but it would at least suggest an appreciation of Americans' worries about identity theft."

The writer shows that the policy is still unsatisfactory, yet "at least" it denotes that some attention is given to the problem of identity theft. The expression "at least" involves hedging. The writer avoids saying that this is totally right or categorically correct, but still an indicator of an appreciation of Americans' worries about the crime identity theft. This use helps presenting ides safely.

"In truth, Nicholson is yet another example of Bush giving important government jobs to unqualified political cronies."

The author avoids saying that Nicholson and Bush are failure in choosing suitable men in suitable places. Rather, he says that they "give important government jobs to people who are unqualified political cronies." The employment of the expression "an example of" as an effective hedge satisfies the writer's need in conveying indirect message(see Table 7).

Strategy	Percentage
Implicature	٤ ٨٪.
Presequence	Y Y %
Hedge	۳۰%
Total	1 %

Table([↑])Percentages of strategies in newspaper article [↑]

۶٫۳. Part .۳ Article .۳

\'. CI: CI employments are important strategies of explicitness avoidance . This is so evident in their percentage of appearance which is $\xi \forall \%$. This indicates the writers' preference for implicature over other strategies. This preference is attributed to the fact that implicit meaning can be read between the lines to achieve linguistic act indirectly(see table % below). As president, Barack Obama was too cool for the special relationship. The romantic bond between the United States and Great Britain, which always makes Churchill fans go all soggy-eyed, left him cold .

The writer criticizes president Obama for the former thinks that the latter is "cool for special relationships". This implies that he (Obama) is not keen on establishing relationships since the adjective here is understood negatively as it figuratively means not warm or cozy.

Y-Presequences:Trump may or may not know the name of the British Prime Minister but, as he told Michael Gove this week,he is deter-mined to strike a free trade agreement with Britain 'very quickly'.

Obviously, the writer tries to imply the idea that Trump does not care about the British Prime Minister. Whether he knows the minister or not, he insists on striking a free trade agreement with Britain. The author avoids saying directly that he agrees with president's opinion, but he

r- Hedges:....he seems to have torn up decades of US State Department policy.He doesn't see much of a future in the whole EU project, effectively predicting its demise. The writer presents his ideas about president Trump showing that the latter changes decades of policy. Using the expressions "seem to have..." and "doesn't see much...", the writer alleviates his commitments to the proposition he presents.However, hedges occupy ".'.' of the strategies(See table ").

Strategy	Percentage		
Implicature	£ V %.		
Presequence	44%		
Hedge	۳٠%		
Total	1 %		

Table () Percentages of strategies in newspaper article

•.Results

It has been shown that all strategies are important, yet the writers show various implementations. What is unexpected is that in both articles implicature form the most employed strategies. Hedges occupy the second part, while presequences come last in percentages. This reflects writer's intention to use more implicature and hedges in their articles. Evidently, the rational for application of these implicit strategies is for avoiding explicitness. Such types of strategies are various and seen in many contexts, and this is helpful to realize subtle communicative effect. The crucial feature of such strategies is the idea that, a user indirectly expresses his /her belief, attitude, opinion, ...etc. Writers tend to employ the strategies on the hope of achieving safe and successful communication.

7. Conclusion

It is so necessary and fruitful to know some strategies that are helpful to avoid using explicit language specially when in need to show politeness or achieve safe communication. However, the degree to which goals are explicitly conveyed in interaction can be suspected to exhibit considerable variety. This puts some of hindrances or challenges for interactants who are to choose between being explicit and avoiding and less polite imposition of directness. There are also quite a lot of important strategies, and knowledge about their

implementation is more significant. Among the main options available for the speakers to avoid ostensible speech are conversational implicature, presequences, and hedging. There are various reasons behind adopting such a way in interaction among which are politeness consider-ations, pragmatics parameters (power, distance, etc.), imposition avoidance and rights and scope of obligations of participants. Despite the fact that studies provide significant insights about presenting implicit and effective communication, there is an insistent need for further studies to sustain previous ones and yield more illustrative consequences.

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Articles Appendix

ARTICLE TITLE	WRITER	DATE	JOURNAL
Why Donald Trump looks like just the friend	Freddy Gray	7.17	The Spectator
Britain needs.			
Congress Moves Toward Weaker Identity	Ed Foster	۲۰۰٦	(INFOWORLD)
Theft Laws			
Hurtful Lies Define Those Who Tell Them.	Rita Bennett	۲۸	Edmonds Beacon