A Pragmatic Analysis of Impliciture in the First 2024 U.S Republican Presidential Debate

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Abstract:

The current study targets the Republican politicians' utterances, in their first 2024 republican presidential debate, to be analysed pragmatically in order to find out the implicit meaning hidden in them. There are relatively few studies that tackle impliciture and no previous study that investigates pragmatically the implicit meaning in the data under study. Therefore, this study aims to examine the linguistic concept of impliciture, in accordance with Bach's (1994) Pragmatic Theory of Conversational Impliciture, in the chosen data. The method employed is a descriptive qualitative method. The data are five extracts selected from five Republican nominees who participated in the first 2024 Republican presidential debate. It was the first one out of five Republican debates held from 2023 to 2024 to choose the next U.S president from the Republican Party. This study comes up with the conclusion that the politicians, in their language, are not fully explicit as they attempt to let their audience find by themselves the implicit meanings in their utterances, and that the information left implicit can be mutually known to them and the audience. Additionally, they stressed some of the words, so as to emphasize the explicit and implicit messages they deliver to the American audience.

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تحليل تداولي للضمنية في المناظرة الرئاسية الجمهورية الأمريكية الأولى لعام ٢٠٢٤

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الملخص:

تستهدف الدراسة الحالية أقوال السياسيين الجمهوريين في أول مناظرة رئاسية جمهورية لهم لعام ٢٠٢٤ ليتم تحليلها بشكل تداولي من أجل معرفة المعنى الضمني المخفي فيها. هناك عدد قليل نسبيا من الدراسات التي تتناول المعنى الضمني وفقا لباخ (١٩٩٤) ولا توجد دراسة سابقة تبحث بشكل تداولي في المعنى الضمني في البيانات قيد الدراسة , لذلك تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى دراسة المفهوم اللغوي للضمنية وفقا لنظرية باخ (١٩٩٤) التداولية للضمنية التحادثية في البيانات المختارة. الطريقة البحثية المستخدمة هي طريقة وصفية نوعية. البيانات عبارة عن خمسة مقتطفات تم اختيارها من خمسة مرشحين جمهوريين شاركوا في أول مناظرة رئاسية للحزب الجمهوري لعام ٢٠٢٤. كانت هذه المناظرة الأولى من بين خمس مناظرات جمهورية عقدت من عام ٢٠٢٣ إلى عام ٢٠٢٤ لاختيار الرئيس الأمريكي القادم من الحزب الجمهوري. توصلت هذه الدراسة إلى استنتاج مفاده أن السياسيين ليسوا صريحين تماما بلغتهم و ذلك لأنهم يحاولون السماح لجمهورهم بالعثور بأنفسهم على المعاني الضمنية في أقوالهم وممكن أن تكون المعلومات التي تم تركها ضمنيا معروفة بشكل متبادل لهم وللجمهور. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، لقد قامو بتشديد بعض كلماتهم لفظيا وذلك للتأكيد على الرسائل الصريحة والضمنية التي ينقلونها إلى الجمهور الأمريكي.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الضمنية (وفقا لكرايس ١٩٧٥) ، تفسيرالمعنى ، الضمنية (وفقا لباخ ١٩٩٤)، النقص الدلالي ، اللاحرفية للجملة.

1.Introduction

Having a type of meaning that represents a midway between two types: what is said and what is implicated is a controversial issue among the neo-Gricean and post-Gricean scholars. Though each scholar has his/her own different viewpoint on this type of meaning, still they share certain ideas and opinions with each other. The current study aims to highlight this level or (type) of meaning by adopting Bach's (1994) viewpoints on impliciture to find out the politicians' implicit meanings in their debate. Therefore, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What is the implicit meaning in the politicians' utterances?

2. How are the impliciture processes of completion and expansion employed in the utterance?

3. How do politicians emphasize their implicit messages to be uncovered by the audience?

1.1 What is Implicature , Explicature, and Impliciture ?

1.1.1 Implicature

In pragmatics, there are different ways to communicate speaker's meaning which is different from sentence meaning expressed linguistically (Bach, 1994, p.1). The first way is done by means of implicature. The theory of Conversational Implicature and the Cooperative Principle are proposed by the linguist Paul Grice (1975). He presents the Cooperative Principle with its four maxims of conversations: the quantity, quality, relation, and manner maxims, in which a participant's contribution in a conversation is required to be informative, truthful, relevant, and clear (Grice, 1975, p. 47). When the participant intentionally flouts a maxim, the conversational implicature is raised. However, though the speaker violates the maxim at the level of what is said to convey a particular implied meaning, it is supposed (by the hearer) that he/she preserves it at the implicated level (Grice, 1989, pp.30-31).

In the following example, a speaker A is writing a letter in which he is talking about his student who is nominated for a philosophical job. His letter is as follows: "Dear Sir, Mr. X's command of English is excellent, and his attendance at tutorials has been regular. Yours, etc". At the level of what is said, speaker A does not provide enough information about his student, whether he is qualified to get this job or not. Consequently, he appears to violate the maxim of Quantity. His violation of this maxim shows his reluctance to talk a lot about his student and this implicates that Mr.X is not appropriate to be nominated for this type of job (Grice, 1975, p.52).

It is important to mention that, for Grice (1989, p.25), what is said and what is communicated or implicated by the speaker are two distinct things. What is said is linked to what the sentence or words conventionally mean; and it is correlated with "the particular meanings of the elements of [the sentence], their order, and their syntactical character" (p.87). Besides that, there is

the speaker's communicated meaning that represents, as Recanati (1989, p. 299) states, "the utterance's overall meaning" which gathers what is said with everything communicated by the utterance that goes away from sentence meaning. The communicated meaning includes implicatures that are classified by Grice (1989) into conventional and non-conventional implicatures. Conventional implicatures are decoded ones and they are associated with the meaning of particular linguistic expressions as the connectives (Grice, 1989, pp.25-26), while the non-conventional or the conversational implicatures are the inferred ones (Dandan, 2022, p.18).

Futhermorem, Grice (1989) divides conversational implicatures into particularized and generalized conversational implicatures. Particularized conversational implicature arises in special circumstances with the need for specific features of context and background knowledge as illustrated in the example (about Mr.X) above, while generalized conversational implicature is conveyed through particular forms of expressions without the need for a specific context. For example: if someone says "X is meeting a woman this evening", he generally implicates that X is going to meet a woman that is not his mother, wife, or sister (p.37). Grice's classification of implicatures is shown in figure (1) below:

Figure 1

The Gricean Levels of Meaning (adopted from Levinson, 2000, p.13)
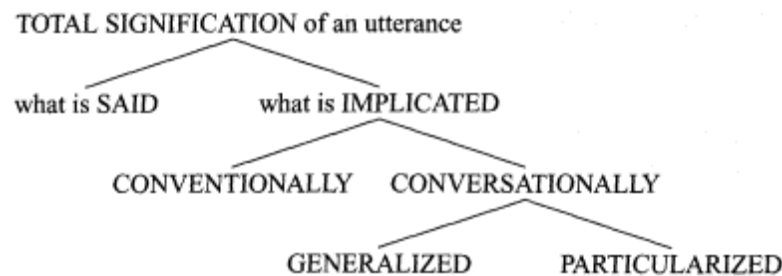
Levinson (2000) builds upon Gricean Implicature with the focus on the Generalized Conversational Implicature. He differentiates between three types of Generalized Coversational Implicatures (GCIs): Q-Implicature, I-Implicature, and M-Implicature which are derived from the Gricean four maxims of conversation. In addition to the following two levels of meaning: "sentence-meaning" and "speaker-meaning" (or "utterance-token-meaning"), he presents a third intermediate level of meaning that is called "utterance-type-meaning". It is "a level of systematic pragmatic inference based not on direct computations about speaker-intentions but rather on general expectations about how language is normally used". These expectations bring about default inferences, presumptions, and "generalized conversational implicatures" (Levinson, 2000, pp.22-23). For Levinson (2000), GCIs represent a midway between "grammar and semantics" (sentence meaning), and pragmatics (speaker's meaning) (p.25).

1.1.2 Explicature

The second way of revealing the speaker's meaning can be done through identifying the explicature (the explicit meaning of the sentence). Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995) introduce the concept of explicature in their Relevance Theory. They define explicature as an assumption that is communicated explicitly and that it "is a development of a logical form encoded by [an utterance]" (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p.182). Explicatures combine features that are encoded linguistically and those that are inferred contextually: that is they provide contextually richer elaboration of the proposition that is expressed by the utterance than Grice's notion of what is said. For them, the implicit (implied) meaning is figured through the conversational implicature, while the explicit meaning is figured through the explicature (Sperber & Wilson, 1995, p.182). It is noticed that Sperber and Wilson call the meaning communicated by means of implicature as implicit meaning not implied one.

In fact, Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995) depart from Grice's Cooperative Principle and its maxims, as they replace it with the Principle of Relevance that conducts the interpretation of utterances. They claim that "[e]very act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance" (p.260). Therefore, to identify the appropriate "propositional form of an utterance" and its explicatures, one should provide an interpretation that follows the relevance principle (p.184). The procedures or processes used to identify explicatures are disambiguation, fixing the reference, and enrichment (which includes specifying the vague terms and enriching the incomplete "semantic representations" of the utterance) (pp.184, 189).

Similarly, Recanati (1989) enriches the Gricean distinction between the two levels of meaning: the level of what is said and the level of what is implicated, by proposing three levels of meaning which are sentence meaning, what is said, and what is implicated. For him, the communicated meaning is composed of what is said (which includes a pragmatically enriched meaning) and what is conversationally implicated (pp.311-312) More importantly is that sentence meaning does not alone determine what is said and that what is said includes extra pragmatic aspects identified in a context (which is analogous to Sperber and Wilson's (1995) notion of Explicature). Moreover, he distinguishes between the pragmatic elements of what is said and genuine implicatures by proposing four criteria: "the Minimalist Principle", "the Availability Principle", "the Independenence Principle", and "the Scope Principle" (p.302). However, the current study focuses on the implicit meaning that is revealed by means of Bach's (1994) processes of impliciture, not Gricean implied meaning.

1.1.3 Impliciture

The third way of communicating speaker's meaning is done when revealing the Conversational Impliciture. The concept of impliciture or implicit meaning (which is different from Grice's implied meaning) is recognized by the linguist Kent Bach in 1994 in suggesting a middle

ground between semantics and pragmatics. It is more like a level (or type) of meaning that takes place "between what is said and what is implicated" (Bach, 1994, p.1).

For Bach (1994), impliciture is known as saying something by the speaker but communicating another thing which is closely relevant to what the speaker said (Gricean sense of what is said). In impliciture, the communicated meaning is partly implicit in what is said. It arises in two cases: firstly, when having a semantically underdeterminate utterance that requires a completion, and secondly when the complete proposition (the thing that is identified for being true or false) expressed by the utterance is nonliteral (not fully explicit) and, therefore, it requires an expansion. In both situations, the speaker is not completely explicit because he/she intends to let the hearer to understand himself/herself the expression that is left implicit (p.2). As a result, he regards impliciture as a completion or expansion of semantic contents (Bach, 2010, p.126).

So, completion and expansion are two types of impliciture. In the former, the hearer is required to conceptually fill in an incomplete proposition of the utterance; while the latter is concerned with fleshing out of a complete but non-literal proposition in order to reveal the speaker's implicit meaning. It is worth noting that impliciture is exposed independently of any ambiguous or indexical words that are used in the sentence. In other words, even after disambiguating expressions and fixing references in an utterance, it needs a completion if it expresses an incomplete proposition (Bach, 1994, pp.2, 13). Besides that, Bach's (1994) impliciture can be cancelled as Grice's (1975) conversational implicature, and it "can be vague or indeterminate" (Bach, 1994, p.13).

However, before uncovering the impliciture, what is said by the speaker should be identified first. With keeping the Gricean aspects of what is said (mentioned in section 1.1.1 above), Bach (1994) relates what is said to the explicit meaning expressed by the uttered sentence (with "allowing for indexicality or ambiguity") which gives the linguistic source for the hearer to deduce the speaker's impliciture or implicature. Furthermore, it is not necessary for what is said to be a complete proposition, and that what is said can either be completed by filling in "a propositional radical" (incomplete proposition) or expanded by fleshing out "[a] minimal proposition" (semantically complete but nonliteral proposition) (p.17)

The pragmatic theory that is used to analyse the data under study is Kent Bach's (1994) Theory of Conversational Impliciture. The researcher adopts this theory because it provides a kind of clear dividing line (as opposed to other perspectives about this middle level of meaning) between the meaning that one gets from what the speaker says and from what the speaker conversationally implicates. What is implicit is identified by means of only two processes: completion and expansion, while what is said is related to the sentence linguistic meaning with including reference fixation and disambiguation. To clearly identify and enhance the impliciture, the researcher finds that it is useful to incorporate the aspect of stress, in the analysis of the data, by adopting Sperber and Wilson's (1995) viewpoint on this aspect (mentioned in the following section).

1.2 Pragmatic Effect of Stress

The relation between the linguistic form of the utterance and its contextual effects is identified by means of different linguistic and paralinguistic features. Stress is one of the paralinguistic features of utterances. When a particular constituent in an utterance is pronounced with stress by the speaker, it is likely intended to highlight a piece of information. For example: "Susan went off to see the FOOTBALL match", the 'football' is the word that receives the focal stress and it is more prominent than the other words (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p.203).

Stressing different elements in the sentence gives different presuppositions and consequently different messages. In sentence (11) below, when stressing the word 'John', the speaker presupposes that there is someone (who is John) eats caviare in his breakfast, while in sentence (12), when stressing 'caviare', he/she presupposes that John eats something in his breakfast and this thing is caviar:

(11) "JOHN eats caviare for breakfast".

(12) "John eats CAVIARE for breakfast" (Cutler and Foss.1977, P.9).

1.3 The Pragmatic Processes of Impliciture

To uncover the speaker's implicit meaning, the following two pragmatic processes of completion and expansion are used:

1.3.1 Process of Completion

In talking about the process of completion, there are two varieties of semantic underdetermination (or propositional incompleteness). They are **constituent underdetermination** and **structural underdetermination**. In the former, there is a need to add a constituent (word or a phrase) to the incomplete proposition to complete it. For example,

(1). "Steel isn't strong enough".

Sentence (1) is conceptually or semantically incomplete, though it is syntactically well-formed. It needs an addition to be completed, because it is not known for what thing Steel is not strong enough. Moreover, the conventional meaning of the sentence is not enough to determine its full proposition (something that can be true or false). In reference to the context of the utterance, the uttered sentence (1) can be completed (in accordance with a certain context) by adding the phrase (for example: for building a 500-story building), in square brackets, at the end of the sentence as follows:

(1.a) "Steel is not strong enough [for building a 500-story building]" (Bach, 1994, p.3).

The added constituents may refer to an implicit action, location, situation, some reference class, or other constituents as the following examples in which the possible completions are given in square brackets respectively:

(2).The senators have finished [speaking].

(3).The king and the queen have arrived [at the palace].

(4). Helen is late [for the graduation party].

(5). Jack will also study philosophy [in addition to other academic subjects] (Bach, 1994, pp.4-5).

In **structural underdetermination**, there is a need to elucidate the structural relation established among existing elements. It is often induced by adverbs as 'too' and 'almost' as shown in example (6) in which there is a contextual contrast that is identified by the use of "almost":

(6). "Willie almost robbed a bank."

In example (6), what is implicitly communicated by the utterance could be that Willie tried to rob a bank and he closely succeeded at doing so, or "he did something else to the bank" or he robbed another place (Bach, 1994, p.3).

1.3.2 Process of Expansion

In expansion, the communicated proposition is conceptually enriched or it is an elaborated version of an already completed proposition that is conveyed by the uttered sentence (Bach, 1994, p.8). As a result what is implicitly meant (the enriched proposition) is not identical to what is said (p.10). This process is considered as a "conceptual strengthening" in the sense that, to make the proposition communicated fully explicit, an additional lexical element can be inserted (p.9). The following example (7) represents a complete proposition (or it is already completed by the process of completion) which needs to be expanded, because it departs from the linguistic meaning denoted by the sentence:

(7). "Everybody is coming to my party"

In sentence (7), the speaker cannot mean that everybody (in the world) is coming to the party. Here, s/he is not literal in using the expression "everybody", rather, in a certain context, the sentence could be used to indicate that a specific group of people (the speaker's colleagues in the class) will attend the party. So, the generic word 'everybody' in the above example is specified. When it is expanded, the adverbial phrase (in my class) is inserted, in curly brackets, after the indefinite subject 'everybody' as follows:

(7.a). "Everybody {in my class} is coming to my party".

Another example is the following one which is about a mother telling her son, who is crying about his cut finger, that

(8). "You're not going to die."

She says so nonliterally, that is she does not mean that her son is never going to die or he is immortal, but she means that he is not going to die from a cut finger. So, the lexical material (from this cut) that is written inside curly brackets is added to elaborate sentence (8) as follows:

(8.a). "You're not going to die {from this cut}."

So, by the addition of the lexical material "from this cut", what the mother is communicating is made explicit (Bach, 1994, pp.8-9).

The above utterances are instances of **sentence nonliterality**. Sentence nonliterality does not mean that the sentence is taken literally or as what it linguistically means, but it is taken as meaning or communicating something else (Bach, 1987, p.70). It is worth noting that nonliterality of sentence (8) above, for Bach (1994), does not include any words or phrases used figuratively (p.10).

Additionally, Bach (1994, p.10) considers the omission of words in utterances to be a type of sentence nonliterality. For example:

(9). "I have nothing to wear".

This sentence cannot mean what it literally states, but it could mean that the speaker has nothing suitable to wear for a certain event. So, the expanded version, after the insertion of the additional elements, would be:

(9.a). I have nothing {appropriate} to wear {to the wedding party}.

The fore mentioned examples are cases of **sentence "S-Non-Literality"**. There are other two types of non-literality: **constituent "C-Non-Literality"** and **constituent and sentence non-literality**. In constituent non-literality, a particular word or phrase is used non-literally in the sentence. For example, when saying "My grandmother was a saint", the word 'saint' is used metaphorically to mean that the speaker's grandmother was a selfless and kind person (Bach, 1987, p.71). As far as the third type of non-literality is concerned, it gathers the aspects of the fore mentioned types in which the speaker's meaning is recovered through replacing a certain expression with another one and then expanding the resulted proposition. For example: If the speaker says that:

(10). "<u>Zsa Zsa doesn't like rocks</u>. She loves them",

The underlined sentence can be expanded and understood as:

(10.a). "Zsa Zsa doesn't {merely} like diamonds. …",

where the metaphorical word 'rocks' is replaced by 'diamond' (in a context in which there is a talk about jewelry), and then the complete proposition is expanded by inserting the word 'merely' after 'doesn't' to make what the speaker means fully explicit (Bach, 1987, p.72). The theory of impliciture is illustrated in figure (2) below. It is worth noting that **sentence nonliterality** and **constituent and sentence nonliterality** are the only two types used in the analysis of impliciture in the data under study, since revealing the implicit meaning in utterances includes the whole uttered sentence, not merely an element of it. In addition, the effect of stress (adopted from Sperber and Wilson, 1995) is highlighted in the analysis of some implicit utterances in the chosen data to infer the non-verbal patterns, though it is not mentioned in the proposed pragmatic model.

Bach (1994, pp.9-10) hints for the reason behind figuring the implicit meaning. It is that speakers are not always explicit in their talk: that is they do not add extra words to their utterances to make them fully explicit. Consequently, listeners are allowed to get the implicit meaning from what speakers say. Moreover, the implicit material might not be the exact one in speaker's mind, but it contributes to enrich what is said by the speaker.

After adopting Bach's (1994) processes of impliciture and Bach's (1987) viewpoints on nonliterality, the researcher proposes the following pragmatic model (shown in Figure 2) to analyse the data under study:

Figure 2

The Pragmatic Model of the Processes of Impliciture
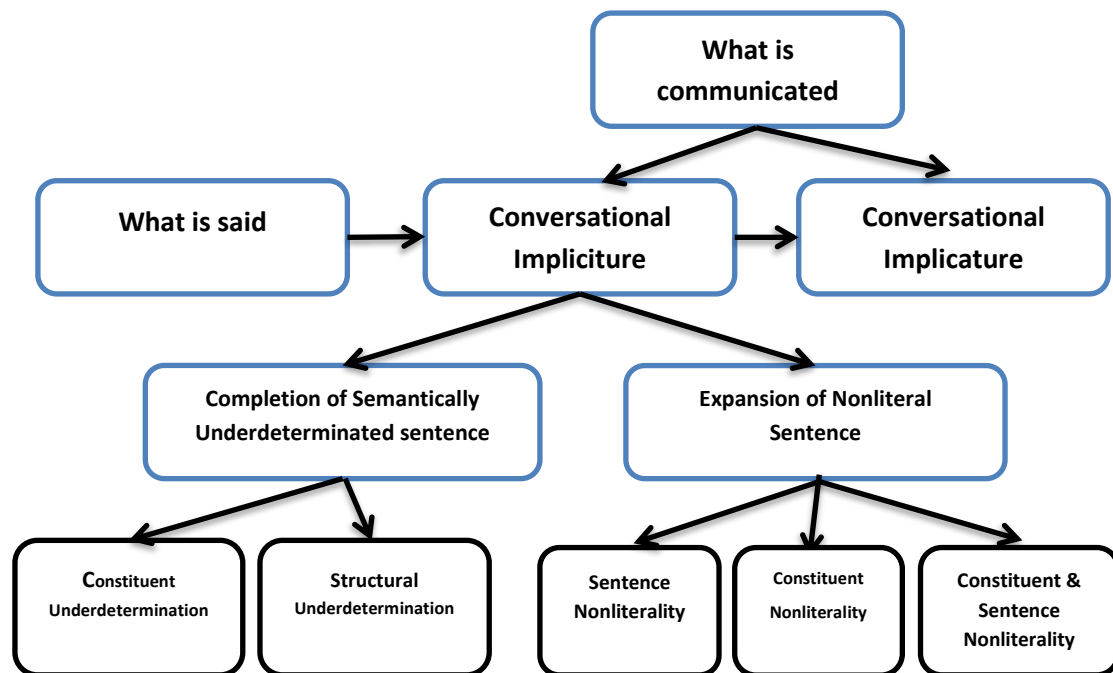
1.4 Previous Studies on Impliciture

Various studies discussed Bach's theory of impliciture. One of them was written by Bird (1997, p.72-86) in which he reviewed the three types of meanings communicated beyond what is said: Explicature, Impliciture and Implicature with mentioning the differences between them. Moreover, he commented on the basis of that classification in relation to the gaps found in utterances. Another study is made by Zhu (2009) who discussed impliciture from the perspective of relevance theory depending on Gestalt theory to present a cognitive basis to comprehend impliciture. She also highlighted the role of the context in understanding and inferring optimal implicitures in accordance with the relevance principle (Zhu, 2009, as cited in Dandan, 2022, pp.21-22).

Bach and Harnish (1979), and Bach (1995) proposed the standardization thesis which is known as the regular use of particular linguistic forms to perform indirect illocutionary acts (Bach, 1995, p.685). In standardization, the hearer can infer the speaker's illocutionary intended meaning immediately depending on what he/she uttered and the mutual contextual beliefs without a need for a lengthy analysis of an utterance (Bach and Harnish, 1979, pp.192-193). For Bach (1998, as cited in Dandan, 2022, p. 21), the standardization is also applicable to impliciture in the sense that some

nonliterally used forms of sentences were standardized through use over time and were understood without a detailed analysis of the literal meanings of utterances. As far as the data under study is concerned, it was not previously analyzed pragmatically to uncover the American politicians' implicit meanings in their first 2024 U.S presidential debate.

So, after reviewing the literature about the concept of impliciture and the other related pragmatically communicated meanings beyond what is said, it was found that the theory of impliciture was not widely discussed in the domain of research as the theories of Explicature and Implicature. Therefore, the current study attempts to enlarge the research about this level of speaker's meaning in a political context through analyzing the current data pragmatically in accordance with Bach's (1994) Theory of Conversational Impliciture.

2. Methodology and Analysis

1.2 Data and Method

The data of the current study were five extracts that were taken from five politicians' responses they presented in their first 2024 U.S (Republican) presidential debate that was held for nominating the next president of America in 2024. It took place at Fiserv Forum, in the city of Milwaukee, in Wisconsin state on August 23 in 2023 and it was televised by Fox News. It was the first one out of five Republican debates held from 2023 to 2024. Martha Maccallum and Bret Baier were the moderators of this debate. The data were taken from YouTube in a video form that was downloaded by Governor Nikki Haley in her YouTube channel, because a full video was not available in Fox News Channel. The transcript of the data was also consulted from the Website "Rev" to save time and effort in gathering the data.

Both of the video and the transcript were used in the analysis to recognise the politicians' verbal and non-verbal language especially their stressed words produced when talking. It was notable that the five extracts chosen were of various lengths depending on the answers the politicians provided to the moderators' or other nominees' questions during the discussion, and also because of their possible implicit meanings. Furthermore, out of eight politicians, only five were chosen to analyze their speeches, while the remaining three extracts for the other three politicians participated in the debate were mentioned in the appendix to avoid repeating the analysis of similar patterns of impliciture.

The research method employed to analyse the data under study was a descriptive qualitative method so as to have an exploration and understanding of the concept of impliciture or the implicit meaning uncovered in the politicians' utterances in their debate. The qualitative research provides "narrative or textual descriptions" about the notions and the main themes related to the study (Vanderstoep and Johnston, 2009, pp.7-8). The data were analysed pragmatically depending on Kent Bach's (1994) Theory of Conversational Impliciture (explained in details in sections 1.1.3 and 1.3 with the diagram (Figure 2) that illustrates the proposed pragmatic model of analysis).

In this qualitative study, the researcher follows the following procedures: examining the context or the occasion of each extract. Then, she examines their verbal language to identify what is said by the politicians and the possible conceptual gaps in their utterances to be filled in or the nonliteral sentences to be fleshed out by means of Bach's (1994) Processes of Completion and

Expansion. Besides that, the participants' behavior and their stressed words were also checked. In doing so, she attempted to get a holistic picture on the topic under study and explicate the politicians' implicit messages to the audience.

2.2 Data Analysis

The following five extracts are analyzed according to Bach's (1994) Theory of Conversational Impliciture as follows:

Extract 1:

Ron DeSantis said:

Our country is in decline. <u>This decline is not inevitable, it's a CHOICE</u>. We need to send Joe Biden back to his basement and reverse American decline. And it starts with understanding we must reverse Bidenomics <u>so that middle class families have a chance to SUCCEED again</u>. We cannot succeed as a country if you are working hard and you can't afford groceries, a car or a new home while <u>Hunter Biden can make HUNDREDS of thousands of dollars on lousy PAINTINGS</u>. That is wrong. We also cannot succeed when the Congress spends trillions and trillions of dollars. Those rich men north of Richmond have put us in this situation. And finally, we need to lower your gas prices. <u>We're going to open up ALL energy production</u>. We will be energy dominant again in this country. I showed it could be done in the state of Florida. I pledge to you as your president, we will get the job done and I will not let you down. (Haley, 2023)

Analysis:

The current extract is said by Ron DeSantis who is Florida Governor. It is a reply to Martha Maccallum's question who asks DeSantis about his opinion concerning a known lyrics people listening to in America which speaks of the American people's deep frustration with the state of the country and its government. In his answer, he talks about the economic decline that America suffers from and his suggestions to reverse this decline.

The uttered sentences by DeSantis, "[t]his decline is not inevitable, it's a choice" are semantically incomplete, because it is not known what is the type of decline and whose choice is it. There are conceptual gaps in the propositions of DeSantis's utterances that make them not fully explicit. In other words, there is a constituent underdetermination in them. To fill them, the implicit lexical constituent (economic) can be added before the word 'decline' and (of American People who elected Joe Biden as their president) can be added after the word 'choice' inside square brackets. The reference is assigned inside brackets for the third singular pronoun 'it'. The

completed propositions by applying Bach's (1994) process of completion will be as follows: "This [economic] decline is not inevitable, (the economic decline) is a CHOICE [of American people who elected Joe Biden as their president]".

It is worth mentioning that in the second utterance, "it's a CHOICE…", the word 'choice' is stressed by DeSantis, that is, it is pronounced with greater prominence than the other words to convey significant information to the audience (Sperber and Wilson, 1995, p.203). So, clearly DeSantis emphasizes that this economic decline is the choice of American people and it can be reversed if they choose the next president of US appropriately. He even said so by pointing to the audience. Such focal stress can assist in choosing the appropriate implicit meaning and enhance the implicit message that is mutually recognized by the politician and the audience. This shows how politicians emphasize their utterances to help their audience to recognize their implicit as well as explicit messages communicated to them.

Another proposition that needs to be completed (because it is semantically underdeterminate in terms of its constituents) to express the governor's implicit meaning is in the uttered sentence "…so that middle class families have a chance to succeed again". It is noticed that the verb 'succeed' is ambiguous. It may have the sense of 'to achieve something' or 'to take the next place or position of someone or something'. In relation to the context, the first sense is likely to be the one intended by DeSantis. Besides that, his utterance is not fully explicit and it needs to be elaborated more by the process of completion. So, his implicit meaning can be revealed by adding the adverbial phrase (in their life) at the end of the uttered sentence as follows: "…so that middle class families have a chance to SUCCEED again [in their life]". In this proposition, the word 'succeed' is stressed. Here, DeSantis intends to highlight this word to deliver a positive implicit message to the audience, that is, the middle class families have an opportunity to prosper in their life by reversing Biden's economic strategies.

Another incomplete proposition is expressed by DeSantis' sentence "… Hunter Biden can make hundreds of thousands of dollars on lousy paintings." In relation to the occasion of the utterance, the action of 'selling' the paintings (painted by Hunter Biden) is left implicit. Besides that, the verb 'make' is ambiguous one and it has the sense of 'earn' or 'get' in the current context. So, the proposition can be semantically completed by inserting the constituent (selling) before "lousy painting" in the following way: "… Hunter Biden can make HUNDREDS of thousands of

dollars on [selling] lousy PAINTINGS." It is noticed that the words 'hundreds' and 'paintings' are pronounced with focal stress to deliver prominent information to the audience about the huge amount of money that Hunter Biden gets from selling his unworthy paintings.

The proposition, "We're going to open up all energy production", is semantically incomplete, because the place in which DeSantis is going to open up energy production is left implicit, that is, there is a conceptual gap to be filled in. Hence, there is a need for the process of completion. Besides, by having the generic term 'all', it is not possible that 'Ron DeSantis is going to open up all energy production in the world. Rather, what he means, after assigning referring expressions to the first person plural pronoun "we", must be a completed and enriched proposition that can be completed and expanded in accordance with Bach's (1994) two processes of completion and expansion by adding the adverbial phrase (in America) in converted brackets at the end of the sentence as follows: "(Ron DeSantis and the other politicians and people who are going to work with him when he becomes a president) are going to open up ALL energy production [in America]".

It is worth noting that this proposition is completed and expanded at the same time by the same constituent which is the adverbial phrase 'in America'. In other words, the same conceptual gap is filled by a constituent that serves two purposes: to complete and expand the same proposition. Furthermore, the word 'all' in the above proposition is pronounced with stress to indicate that Governor DeSantis' future plan is to open up all (not some) energy sources of production found in America. This stress helps to identify and enhance the resulted implicit meaning.

However, the inserted material 'in America' (which indicates a location) in the above completed and expanded proposition can be cancelled, because it is no longer implicit in what is said, since DeSantis reveals it by the phrase "in this country" in the next utterance, "We will be energy dominant again in this country", in an attempt to make his intention more explicit and clear to the audience. So, one of the aspects of impliciture, as Grice's implicature, is cancellability (Bach, 1994, p.13). The researcher intends to analyze the implicit meaning in the former utterance, though she knows it can be cancelled, to prove that the same implicit constituent can fill in the same gap, so it serves the purposes of completion and expansion at the same time.

Extract 2:

Nikki Haley said:

Well, I don't care about polls. What I care about<u>, the fact is that no one is telling the American people the TRUTH. The TRUTH is that Biden didn't do this to us, our REPUBLICANS did this to us TOO</u>. When they passed that $2.2 trillion COVID stimulus bill, they left us with 90 million people on Medicaid, 42 million people on food stamps. <u>No ONE has told you how to fix it</u>. I'll tell you how to fix it. They need to stop the spending. They need to stop the borrowing. They need to eliminate the earmarks that Republicans brought back in. And they need to make sure they understand, these are taxpayer dollars, it's not their dollars. (Haley, 2023)

Analysis:

Extract two is said by Nikki Haley who was the former governor of South Carolina in which she replies to Maccallum's question about the reasons for which she is considered a good politician to turn around the economy in this country.

Haley, in her semantically complete sentence "… the fact is that no one is telling the American people the truth…", speaks nonliterally when using the indefinite expression "no one" in the sense that she does not mean that no one from people in the whole world is telling the Americans the truth. Rather, she attempts, in the current context, to communicate some other expanded proposition with specific meaning. In accordance with Bach's (1994) process of expansion, her nonliteral uttered sentence can be enriched by the addition of the implicit lexical material (from the American politicians) after the expression "no one" to make it specific as follows: "…the fact is that no one {from the American politicians} is telling the American people the TRUTH". With putting a focus or stress on the word 'truth', Haley attracts the audience's attention towards the untold truth by the politicians that will be clarified in the next utterance.

Haley also uses the following underlined sentence, "[t]he truth is that Biden didn't do this to us, our Republicans did this to us too" nonliterally. Her nonliteral sentence can be expanded, as "[t]he TRUTH is that Biden didn't {only} do this to us (the Americans), our REPUBLICANS did this to us TOO", by the insertion of the lexical element 'only' in a converted brackets after 'didn't'.

The enriched proposition makes Haley's meaning explicit, that is, the Americans faced economic problems not only because of Biden's administration but also because of the Republicans'. This uttered sentence is enriched by means of the process of expansion. Additionally, the words 'truth', 'Republicans', and 'too' are stressed to shift people's attention to the truth (that both Biden and the Republicans contribute to harming the Americans and the economy of the country). Furthermore, the word 'too', in the second uttered sentence, "our Republicans did this to us too", makes it structurally underdeterminate (Bach, 1994) in the sense that there is an implicit comparison that needs to be revealed by the process of completion. After fixing the references and applying the processes of expansion and completion, at the structural level, to the original propositions, the implicit comparison in the uttered sentences could be understood as the Republicans' passing of "$2.2 trillion COVID stimulus bill" is comparable to what Biden's administration did (of harming the Americans) and that both of the Democrats and Republicans share the responsibility of affecting people and economy.

Another nonliteral utterance said by Haley is "[n]o one has told you how to fix it" denoted by the use of the generic expression 'no one'. It can be expanded by inserting the lexical material (of the previous politicians) inside curly brackets after the indefinite subject "no one" as follows: "No ONE {of the previous politicians} has told you (the Americans) how to fix (the economic issue related to passing $2.2 trillion COVID stimulus bill with leaving 90 million people on Medicaid, 42 million people on food stamps)".The word 'one' in 'no one' is stressed by Haley to highlight this piece of information and to attract the audience's attention to the message presented in the expanded uttered sentence.

Extract 3:

Doug Burgum said:

> **We can't just talk about the Biden economy because the economy, energy, and national security are all tied together. Of course, <u>we're paying too much for energy in our COUNTRY right now</u>. <u>But part of the reason why is because the Biden POLICIES on energy.</u> We've got a plan right now. The $1.2 trillion of Green New Deal spending buried in the inflation creation act is something that is just subsidizing China. If we're going to stop buying oil from the Middle East and start buying batteries from China, we're just trading**

OPEC for Sinopec and then belatedly, the Biden administration says, "No, we're going to put sanctions on Russian oil." Well, we put sanctions on Russian oil. Well then it's 20% off. Who's buying it? China. So if you buy a battery in this country, you buy a solar panel, it's being produced in a plant in China powered by coal, or it's being powered by oil and gas at 20% off. And every farmer in this country would like to buy diesel at 20% off just like they're buying it in China. (Haley, 2023)

Analysis:

This speech is delivered by North Dakota governor, Doug Burgum as a response to Maccallum's question about economy. He claims that policies of energy management and production in Biden administration affect the economy and national security, partly because of their extensive spending and the benefits they provide for China instead of America in terms of energy independence.

Burgum, in saying "…, we're paying too much for energy in our country right now", is implicit on the thing that America is paying too much. Besides, the sense of word "energy" needs to be clarified. To make his uttered sentence more explicit, the constituent (money) should be added after the phrase "…too much" and the constituent (sources) after "energy". This can be achieved by Bach's (1994) process of completion in which the semantically underterminate sentence in terms of its constituents should be completed by inserting the fore mentioned implicit elements in it. This is done in terms of their relevance to the context (of buying energy sources from China and other countries) as follows: "…, we (he and the other Americans)'re paying too much [money] for energy [sources] in our COUNTRY right now".

Another implicit utterance said by Burgum is "…part of the reason why is because the Biden policies on energy", because it is not explicit what the Biden policies on energy are related to. From the context, it is clear that Burgum is talking about Biden policies related to producing and handling energy in the United States. So, in Burgum's utterance, the impliciture can be uncovered by applying Bach's (1994) Process of Completion in which the lexical elements (production and managing) are added after the phrase 'on energy' as follows: "…part of the reason WHY is because the Biden POLICIES on energy [production and managing]". This utterance is linked to the previous one in the sense that it illustrates the reason for paying high prices to buy energy sources

from other countries and the reason is related to Biden's policies on producing and managing energy in America. The word 'policies' is stressed by Burgum to attract the audience's attention to Biden's ineffective policies of handling the issue of energy. Furthermore, the stressed element 'policies' contribute to reveal the relevant implicit elements in the utterance, because the focus here is on the word 'policies' to refer to policies of energy production and managing rather than energy sources.

Extract 4:

Vivek Ramaswamy said:

Let us be honest as Republicans, I'm the only person on the stage who isn't bought and paid for, so I can say this, the climate change agenda is a HOAX. The climate change agenda is a HOAX and we have to declare independence. And the reality is the anti-carbon agenda is the wet blanket on our economy. And so the reality is more people are dying of bad climate change policies than they are of actual climate change. (Haley, 2023)

Analysis:

This extract represents the entrepreneur Vivek Ramasway's opinion concerning the climate change and specially the climate change policies in America that he is a skeptic about as he describes them as a hoax and that they burden the economic growth, and they affect people's lives badly.

Saying that "I'm the only person on the stage who isn't bought and paid for", Ramaswamy provides incomplete proposition because of the implicit comparison found in his utterance. In fact, he is comparing himself with the other nominees on the stage. This implicit comparison represents the gap in his proposition that can be filled in with the constituents (in contrast to the other nominees on the stage) added at the end of the uttered sentence to make it explicit and complete as follows, in which Bach's (1994) process of completion is employed: "I'm the only person on the stage who isn't bought and paid for [in contrast to the other nominees on the stage]". He implicitly means that the other nominees on the stage tonight are "bought and paid for" while he is unlike them. He even said so by pointing to the other nominees.

In his uttered sentence, "… the climate change agenda is a hoax", Ramaswamy also provides incomplete proposition about which country this climate change agenda belongs to. It absolutely belongs to America. Besides that, he describes only this agenda as a hoax in comparison to other classes of agenda in this country. So, his incomplete comparison can be completed and made explicit by adding the lexical expressions (in comparison to other types of agenda in America), inside square brackets, to the current proposition in accordance with Bach's (1994) process of completion as follows: "… the climate change agenda is a HOAX [in comparison to other types of agenda in America]". He stresses the word 'hoax' in this uttered sentence and the next sentence "[t]he climate change…" to show his skepticism about this agenda and to emphasize its failure in comparison to other types of agenda.

In the next uttered sentence, "…[t]he climate change agenda is a hoax and we have to declare independence", Ramaswamy is not being fully explicit. He uses this sentence nonliterally when he says "…we have to declare independence" in the sense that he does not mean the independence of America from the interference of other countries, but to implicitly mean that the liberation of this country from such damaging climate change agenda that burdens the economy. So, to be fully explicit, Ramaswamy's nonliteral sentence will be expanded by applying the process of expansion (Bach, 1994) in the which the lexical material (of our country from this agenda) is added inside converted brackets after the word 'independence' as follows: "…[t]he climate change agenda is a HOAX [in America] and we (Americans) have to declare [the] independence {of our country from this agenda}".

Extract 5:

Chris Christie said:

I've had enough. I've had enough already tonight of a guy who sounds like ChatGPT standing up here. And the last person in one of these debates, Brett, who stood in the middle of the stage and said, "What's a skinny guy with an odd last name doing up here" was Barack Obama. And I'm afraid we're dealing with the same TYPE of AMATEUR standing stage tonight. (Haley, 2023)

Analysis:

This extract is said by the former New Jersey Governor Chris Christe who criticizes and humiliates Vivek Ramaswamy by describing him as a Chat GPT and as an amateur person like Barack Obama (who was the U.S previous president from 2009-2017, when he also participated in his first presidential debate to run for the U.S presidency). In fact, this criticism comes as a reaction to Ramasways' former talk when saying that "[he] isn't bought and paid for" as the other political nominees do in relation to the issue of Climate Change agenda.

Chris Christie presents implicit comparison between the nominee Vivek Ramaswamy and the former US president Barack Obama in his utterance "…I'm afraid we're dealing with the same type of amateur standing stage tonight". To make the comparison fully explicit, the proposition is in need to be completed by the addition of the lexical material (as we already dealt with the amateur Barack Obama) inside square brackets in accordance with Bach's (1994) process of completion. Of course, the completion will be preceded by fixing the references as follows: "*I (Christie) am afraid we (he and the American people) are "dealing with the same TYPE of AMATEUR (who is Vivek Ramaswamy) standing stage tonight [as we previously dealt with the amateur Barack Obama]*".

Revealing the implicit comparison shows Christee's verbal attack at Ramaswamy and Obama who both are from origins that are not American, since Obama is an African American and Ramaswamy is an Indian who lived in America. Both of them are being criticized and described as non-skillful or amateur. He emphasizes his verbal attack and comparison by stressing the word 'amateur' that he used to describe Ramaswamy and Obama. He later repeated the phrase "the same TYPE of AMATEUR" three times, in his interaction with Ramaswamy, to emphasize his criticism.

3. Findings and Discussion

After exploring different perspectives about different levels of meaning with concentrating on the level of implicit meaning and its identification in the data under study, it is found that the same implicit constituent added to the utterance fills in (completes) and fleshes out (expands) the incomplete proposition conveyed by the same utterance as it is shown in the analysis of extract (1), when DeSantis said: "[w]e're going to open up all energy production [in America]". It is noticed that this proposition is completed and expanded by the same constituent which is the adverbial phrase 'in America', because it contains a conceptual gap; moreover, it cannot mean what it literally

expresses unless the generic term 'all' is specified. So, it is suggested to merge the two processes of impliciture into one process to deal with such exceptions. Finding the politician's implicit meaning (by means of the processes of Completion or/and Expansion) in the chosen extracts is an answer to the first question raised earlier in the introduction of the study; besides that, having both of the processes to fill in the same gap is an answer to the study's second question.

In addition to that, the stressed expressions in the politicians' utterances have a contextual effect on the audience in the sense that they can assist in understanding and identifying what is left implicit by the speakers and they can enhance the explicit and implicit messages the politicians intend to communicate to their audience as it is shown previously in the analysis of the five extracts. For example, in extract 4, Ramaswamy said that "… the climate change agenda is a HOAX [in comparison to other types of agenda in America]". His stressed word highlights and emphasizes the failure of the climate change agenda in comparison to other types of agenda. Furthermore, in extract (3), Burgum emphasized the word 'policies' in his inexplicit utterance and such focal stress helped to identify the appropriate implicit element which was the reference to policies of energy production and managing rather than energy sources.

4. Conclusions

This study comes up with the following conclusions:

1. Many scholars talk about the middle level of meaning by using different terminologies and processes (as mentioned in the literature review) to be identified in speakers' utterances. However, the shared aspect among their different viewpoints is that it is a meaning that combines elements that are encoded linguistically and those that are inferred contextually to some extent.
2. The Republican politicians, in some of their utterances, are not fully explicit, because they attempt to let their audience find by themselves the implicit meanings in their utterances, since they believe that the information left implicit is mutually known to them and the audience.
3. Both of the impliciture processes of completion and expansion can be used respectively to complete and then to enrich the proposition conveyed by the uttered sentence, that is, by filling in and fleshing out different gaps in the same proposition. However, sometimes they are used to fill in (complete) and flesh out (expand) the same gap in the incomplete

proposition. So, there is a possibility of merging the two processes together in one process to modify Bach's (1994) Theory of Impliciture.

4. The politicians also stressed some of the words, so as to emphasize the explicit and implicit messages they deliver to the American audience. The stressed elements have a contextual effect on their audience in the sense that they can assist in understanding and identifying what is left implicit.

5. For further future research about the topic of impliciture, it is suggested to create a unified theory that gathers the fore mentioned perspectives (mentioned in the review of literature) with some others to provide certain processes to be used to identify this type of meaning that stands between the linguistic one and the implicated one.

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Appendix :

Other Extracts Said by the Other Republicans

Tim Scott said: Absolutely he did the right thing, number one. Number two, we should be asking ourselves a bigger question about the weaponization of the Department of Justice. When I'm president, the first thing I'll do is fire Merrick Garland, second thing I'll do fire Christopher Ray because we need Lady Justice to wear a blindfold. Without that, no one has confidence in our justice system. 17% of Republicans have confidence in our Department of justice. Here's why. We keep seeing not only the weaponization of the Department of Justice against political opponents, but also against parents who show up at school board meetings. Under this deal, Jay, they're called domestic terrorists. (Haley, 2023)

Mike Pence said: "I'm sorry if I insulted him by calling him a communist. He's a dictator and a murderer and the United States of America needs to stand against authoritarianism". (Haley, 2023)

Asa Hutchinson: On education, first of all, look at Arkansas. We have to compete with China. I built computer science education. We led the nation in computer science education going from 1100 students to 23,000 students taking it. This is how you compete with China. As President of the United States, I will make sure we go from 51% of our schools offering computer science to every school in rural areas and urban areas offering computer science for the benefit of our kids and we can compete wit

h China in terms of technology. (Haley, 2023)