

Implicatures and Naturalness

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Pragmatics postulates a rich typology of implicatures to explain how true assertions can nevertheless be misleading. This typology has been mainly defended on the basis of a priori considerations. We consider the question of whether the typology corresponds to an independent reality, specifically whether the various types of implicatures constitute natural concepts. To answer this question, we rely on the conceptual spaces framework, which represents concepts geometrically, and which provides a formally precise criterion for naturalness. Using data from a previous study, a space for the representation of implicatures is constructed. Examination of the properties of various types of implicatures as represented in that space then gives some reason to believe that most or even all types of implicatures do correspond to natural concepts.