

IMPLICATURES IN NAPOLEON BONAPARTE'S LOVE LETTERS TO JOSÉPHINE: A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

Rheka Humanis Degawan¹, Ida Zuraida Supri²

^{1 2} English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Widyatama,
Bandung, Indonesia

degawanr@gmail.com, ida.zuraida@widyatama.ac.id

Corresponding author: Rheka Humanis Degawan, Universitas Widyatama

E-mail: degawanr@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study investigates the types of implicatures and the contextual factors that influence their emergence in Napoleon Bonaparte's love letters to Joséphine de Beauharnais. Situated within pragmatics, the research applies a descriptive qualitative method and draws on Grice's theory of implicature (1975) alongside Yule's (2006) and Barbulet's (2013) approaches to context. The data comprise thirty purposively selected excerpts from Napoleon's Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812. Research procedures included systematic extraction of excerpts from the source text, classification of implicatures according to established typologies, and contextual analysis informed by the selected theoretical frameworks. Results show that generalized conversational implicature predominates, appearing in 70% of the excerpts; particularized conversational implicature accounts for 16.6%, and conventional implicature for 13.3%. Concerning context, social context is the most prominent, occurring in 24 out of 30 excerpts (80%), while physical context appears in 6 excerpts (20%). No instances of linguistic context or shared knowledge context were identified. These patterns indicate that the interpretation of implicatures in Napoleon's correspondence is primarily shaped by the social dynamics of his relationship with Joséphine, with physical circumstances playing a secondary role. This study contributes to pragmatic and historical-linguistic scholarship by demonstrating how intimate epistolary texts operate as sites of nuanced implicature deployment. In addition to their historical and biographical significance, Napoleon's letters therefore offer valuable pragmatic evidence of interpersonal communicative strategies saturated with implied meanings. The findings also have pedagogical implications for teaching pragmatics and for methodological approaches to historical discourse analysis, suggesting avenues for further comparative research and broader inquiry.



Keyword: *implicature; pragmatics; love letters; context*

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INTRODUCTION

Language is not merely a tool for transmitting information; it is also a medium through which hidden meanings, emotions, and intentions are expressed. In pragmatics, these hidden dimensions are often explored through the concept of implicature, as introduced by Grice (1975). Implicature refers to what is suggested or implied in an utterance without being directly stated, requiring the hearer or reader to rely on inference and contextual interpretation. This perspective highlights the fact that communication rarely functions at the level of words alone. Speakers often convey more than they say, trusting that the interlocutor will supply the missing meaning. Thus, implicature becomes a key concept for understanding how language conveys nuance, subtlety, and relational depth. As expressed by Supri (2020), this is what often happens in everyday conversations, both in formal and informal situations, including in personal relationships such as friendships, family, and even romantic relationships.

The importance of implicature cannot be separated from the role of context. Meaning is always situated, and without context even the simplest utterance may become ambiguous. Yule (2006) distinguishes between linguistic and physical context, while Barbulet (2013) extends the framework to include social and shared knowledge context. Linguistic context refers to the surrounding text or discourse, physical context relates to time and place, social context encompasses the relationship between participants, and shared knowledge context involves mutual background assumptions. The connection refers to a relation between social roles and linguistics, as Wulandari and Sari (2024) demonstrate in their sociolinguistic study of women's language in *Enola Holmes 2*, showing how social positioning and roles directly influence linguistic choices and interpretations. These dimensions demonstrate that communication is inseparable from its environment. In face-to-face interaction, misunderstandings can be clarified immediately, but in written communication—where feedback is delayed or absent—context becomes indispensable. Letters, in particular, require the reader to rely heavily on inference and shared understanding, making them fertile ground for the study of implicature.

As a genre of communication, letters occupy a unique position (Wierzbicka, 1991). They are written deliberately yet retain the spontaneity of personal expression. Historically, letters have served as both practical tools for maintaining contact and as enduring records of private lives. Love letters are especially rich for pragmatic analysis, as they communicate emotions such as affection, longing, jealousy, or disappointment often through indirect and implied means. Because they lack direct verbal exchange, love letters must rely on implication and contextual cues to convey unspoken feelings. In this way, they exemplify how language is used not only to transfer information but also to construct intimacy, negotiate conflict, and maintain relationships across distance (Egins & Slade, 1997).

This study focuses on love letters written by Napoleon Bonaparte to Joséphine de Beauharnais, compiled in *Napoleon's Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812* (Hall, 1901). Beyond their historical and biographical value, these letters offer a rare glimpse into the private communication of a figure better known for military and political achievements. Written across different stages of their marriage—ranging from the fervor of early affection to the tensions of later estrangement—they reveal the complex interplay of passion, power, and vulnerability. In these letters, Napoleon often employed language not only to express devotion but also to persuade, admonish, or reproach. Such complexity makes them particularly well-suited for analysis through

the lens of pragmatics, where implicature and context work together to construct layered meanings.

Previous research in pragmatics has widely applied Grice's theory of implicature to various domains, such as everyday conversation, political speech, advertisements, and literary texts (Yule, 2006; Levinson, 1983; Cummings, 2010). More recently, studies have begun to expand into new areas of written discourse. For instance, Harsa (2024) analyzed conversational implicatures in short stories published in newspapers, showing how implied meanings enrich the narrative and invite readers to engage beyond the literal text. Similarly, Hussain and Shah (2024) conducted a pragma-discourse analysis of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* and *Purple Hibiscus*, demonstrating how conversational implicatures shape subtle forms of social critique and reveal complex relational dynamics. These studies highlight the versatility of implicature in both media and literature, proving its relevance across genres.

Despite the richness of this material, previous scholarship has rarely applied pragmatic theories to historical correspondence. Existing studies of implicature have focused largely on everyday conversation (Yule, 2006), political discourse (Levinson, 1983), advertisements, or literary texts (Cummings, 2010). Research on letters, meanwhile, has tended to highlight rhetorical style, emotional tone, or historical significance. Even when Napoleon and Joséphine's correspondence has been studied, the emphasis has been on biographical interpretation or psychological analysis rather than on linguistic mechanisms of meaning. This gap leaves room for a pragmatic approach that can illuminate how implicature and context operate within personal, historically situated communication.

This study seeks to address that gap by offering a pragmatic analysis of Napoleon's love letters to Joséphine. It pursues two primary objectives: first, to identify the types of implicature present in the letters, distinguishing between conventional implicature, generalized conversational implicature, and particularized conversational implicature; and second, to examine how different forms of context—particularly social and physical context—shape the interpretation of these implicatures. Together, these objectives highlight the interdependence of language and situation in the creation of meaning.

The significance of this inquiry lies in its contribution to both pragmatics and historical studies. For pragmatics, it extends the application of Grice's implicature framework and Barbule's contextual model to an underexplored domain: historical love letters. For history, it reframes Napoleon's letters not merely as personal or romantic artifacts but as pragmatic texts through which intimacy, persuasion, and conflict were negotiated. By situating the letters at the intersection of language, relationship, and context, the study demonstrates how communication in the past can still be analyzed with contemporary linguistic tools.

In sum, the analysis of implicature and context in Napoleon's letters to Joséphine opens a window onto both the mechanics of language and the realities of human relationships. By tracing how meaning is implied rather than explicitly stated, and how it is anchored in relational and situational contexts, this research underscores the enduring value of pragmatics for interpreting intimate communication. The sections that follow elaborate the theoretical foundations, outline the methodology, and present the findings of this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section attempts to elaborate the theories employed in this research. It consists of the theory of pragmatics, implicature (conventional and conversational), and the role of context in interpreting meaning. These theoretical foundations provide the framework for analyzing how implicatures emerge and how contextual factors shape their interpretation in Napoleon's letters to Joséphine.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that examines meaning in relation to language use and context. It goes beyond the formal structure of sentences to consider how meaning is produced, negotiated, and interpreted in actual communication. Leech (2014) defines pragmatics as the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker or writer and interpreted by a listener or reader, underscoring the interactive process of conveying and understanding intentions. Similarly, Levinson (1983) emphasizes that pragmatics explores the relationship between language and context, showing how meaning is shaped by social and situational frameworks.

Unlike semantics, which focuses on literal meaning and truth conditions, pragmatics is concerned with how utterances achieve meaning beyond their grammatical form. This includes phenomena such as indirectness, presupposition, deixis, and implicature. In daily communication, speakers often rely on shared knowledge, social roles, and cooperative principles to convey meaning effectively, while listeners interpret these signals to reconstruct intended messages. Pragmatics therefore provides the theoretical tools to explain how communication often succeeds despite ambiguity, vagueness, or incomplete information.

The importance of pragmatics lies in its ability to account for meaning that is not explicitly stated but understood through inference. By examining how people use language in specific contexts—whether in conversation, media, or personal correspondence—pragmatics reveals how language functions as a dynamic resource for expressing intentions, managing relationships, and negotiating social realities.

Implicature

One of the most influential concepts in pragmatics is implicature, first introduced by Grice (1975). Implicature refers to meaning that is implied rather than explicitly stated, emphasizing that communication often extends beyond the literal interpretation of words. This phenomenon requires hearers or readers to draw inferences from context, background knowledge, and assumptions about cooperative interaction. As Crystal (2008) observes, implicature enriches communication by allowing speakers to convey additional meanings indirectly, thereby adding subtlety and depth to discourse.

Grice distinguishes between two principal types of implicature. Conventional implicature arises from particular linguistic expressions, such as connectives or adverbs, whose additional meanings are fixed and do not depend on contextual variation. Conversational implicature, in contrast, derives from the cooperative principle and the maxims of conversation, requiring interlocutors to interpret meaning on the basis of relevance, sufficiency, clarity, and truthfulness. Conversational implicature may be generalized, where interpretation does not rely on special contextual factors, or particularized, where meaning depends heavily on the immediate situation.

The study of implicature is crucial because it accounts for how speakers communicate intentions that remain unstated yet intelligible. It demonstrates that human interaction is layered, inferential, and often strategically indirect, highlighting the complex relationship between linguistic form and pragmatic meaning.

Conventional Implicature

Conventional implicature arises from specific linguistic forms that inherently carry additional meaning independent of context. Words such as *but*, *therefore*, *still*, and *even* trigger fixed interpretations (Abbott, 2016). For example, in the sentence “He is an Englishman; he is, therefore, brave,” the word *therefore* adds a causal relation between nationality and bravery, regardless of the context in which the sentence appears. Similarly, in “Sam managed to finish the novel,” the verb *managed* implies that completing the task was difficult, even though the propositional content merely states that Sam finished the novel.

Conversational Implicature

Conversational implicature occurs when speakers convey additional meaning beyond what is explicitly stated, based on the assumption of cooperation in communication (Grice, 1975). It is generally classified into two types: (1) Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) refers to a type of implicature that can be inferred without requiring specific context. For instance, scalar implicatures often arise when using expressions like *some*, which is typically interpreted as “not all” (Horn, 2006; Yule, 2006); and (2) Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI) refers to a type of implicature that strongly depends on specific contexts. For example, the utterance “I have \$100 to last me till the end of the month” may imply different intentions depending on the situation, such as signaling financial struggle or hinting at borrowing money (Meibauer, 2009).

Numerous studies have delved into the analysis of conversational implicatures in diverse contexts, ranging from public advertisements and social criticism to linguistic examinations of novels, movies, TV shows, daily conversations, and various forms of written texts. Researchers such as Ariani et al. (2016) have explored the intricacies of implicature in different communication settings. Some studies have specifically focused on short stories, such as the works of Dewiyana (2019) and Sari et al. (2019), which highlight the role of conversational implicatures in shaping narrative dynamics.

In addition, Isyra and Supri (2024) highlight how pragmatic approaches can reveal deeper layers of meaning in film dialogues, demonstrating that pragmatic analysis is not confined to spoken interaction but extends effectively to scripted communication as well. Similarly, Akmal and Yana (2020) analyzed conversational implicatures in the *Kingdom of Heaven* movie script, showing how characters’ utterances convey implied meanings that go beyond the literal dialogue, while Martini (2018) investigated conversational implicatures in the daily conversations of Indonesian students, demonstrating how pragmatic inferences shape everyday interactions and maintain social relationships. These studies confirm that implicature plays a vital role not only in natural conversation but also in scripted communication, where implicit meaning contributes to character development and narrative tension.

Context in Pragmatics

Context is central to the interpretation of implicature because meaning is rarely derived from linguistic form alone. Words and sentences often take on significance only when interpreted in relation to surrounding circumstances. In written communication such as letters, context becomes even more crucial since immediate clarification is absent. Unlike spoken interaction, where misunderstandings can be corrected on the spot, written texts require readers to reconstruct the writer's intended meaning without the benefit of real-time feedback. This dependence on inference makes context an indispensable element in understanding implied meaning.

As Yule (2006) emphasizes, speakers and writers often rely on far more than the literal form of words, while Barbulete (2013) underlines that context provides the interpretive framework through which implicature is generated and understood. In other words, pragmatic meaning cannot be separated from the situation in which language is produced and interpreted. Context connects the utterance to broader elements such as the setting, the relationship between participants, and the assumptions they share. Without this connection, much of the intended meaning would remain hidden or ambiguous. Thus, context not only facilitates comprehension but also shapes the very process of meaning-making in communication. By situating implicatures within their contextual frames, researchers can uncover how language operates to convey subtleties, emotions, and relational dynamics that go beyond literal expression.

Linguistic Context

Linguistic context, or co-text, refers to the words surrounding an expression that help determine its meaning. For instance, the sentence "He went to the bank" can mean going to a riverbank or to a financial institution. However, when extended to "He went to the bank to deposit some money", the meaning of bank clearly refers to a financial institution. Another example is "She is cold", which in isolation suggests that she feels chilly. Yet, in the sentence "She is cold to strangers", the meaning of cold shifts from a physical state to an emotional disposition. Thus, linguistic context serves as the immediate frame that guides interpretation.

Physical Context

Physical context involves the situational environment, including location, time, and objects present when communication takes place. For example, when someone says "Let's sit over there", the interpretation of "there" depends entirely on identifying the physical location the speaker is pointing to. Similarly, the utterance "The meeting will be postponed until tomorrow" requires knowledge of the moment the sentence is spoken, since the meaning of tomorrow is relative to the time of utterance. Physical context therefore anchors language to concrete aspects of the environment.

Social Context

Social context reflects the roles, relationships, and power dynamics between interlocutors. A sentence like "Would you mind taking a seat, sir?" reflects politeness and social distance, commonly used in interactions between a subordinate and a superior or between a service provider and a customer. In contrast, the expression "Hey bro, grab a seat!" signals closeness and informality, typical among friends or peers. The choice of words and tone is shaped by the social context, which influences how messages are interpreted.

Shared Knowledge Context

Shared knowledge relies on background information assumed to be mutually known by the speaker and the hearer. For example, the utterance “Let’s meet at the usual place” only makes sense if both participants share prior knowledge of what the usual place refers to. Another case is “Don’t forget what happened last time”, which does not explicitly mention the event but can still be understood because it draws on a shared experience from the past. Shared knowledge context thus allows speakers to communicate meaning economically, relying on common ground rather than explicit detail.

METHODS

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method. According to Moleong (2017), qualitative descriptive research is designed to describe and interpret phenomena as they occur, with emphasis on meaning rather than numerical data. Similarly, Sugiyono (2021) explains that qualitative research is exploratory, interpretive, interactive, and constructive, making it suitable for uncovering implied meanings in texts and contexts. In this study, the qualitative approach enables the researcher to examine the implicit messages in Napoleon Bonaparte’s letters to Joséphine without manipulation of the data, focusing instead on interpretation.

The primary data of this study are taken from *Napoleon’s Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812* compiled by Henry Foljambe Hall (1901). Out of 228 letters, the researcher purposively selected 30 excerpts containing strong pragmatic features, particularly implicatures and contextual references. The letters are divided into three relational phases—pre-marriage, post-marriage, and post-divorce—to observe how the use of implicature developed alongside the dynamics of their relationship. The data selection was based on their richness in implied meaning and their relevance to the research objectives.

To analyze the data, the researcher employs Grice’s theory of implicature (1975), which distinguishes between conventional implicature and conversational implicature (generalized and particularized), and Barbulet’s (2013) framework of context, which includes linguistic, physical, social, and shared knowledge contexts. These theories provide the foundation for identifying the types of implicature in the letters and understanding how context influences their interpretation.

Regarding the research procedures, the researcher uses documentation techniques by carefully reading the letters, identifying utterances containing implicatures, and taking notes on their contextual background. The steps of the research are as follows:

1. Selecting a research topic.
2. Gathering relevant references on pragmatics, implicature, and context.
3. Formulating the research problems.
4. Determining the research method.
5. Identifying the data sources (Napoleon’s letters).
6. Collecting data by reading the entire compilation and selecting 30 relevant excerpts.
7. Categorizing the data according to types of implicature and contextual dimensions.
8. Analyzing the data using Grice’s implicature theory and Barbulet’s context framework.
9. Formulating conclusions based on the findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After conducting the analysis, the researcher identified a total of 30 instances of implicature in Napoleon Bonaparte's letters to Joséphine. These consist of three types: Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI), Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI), and Conventional Implicature (CI). Among them, GCI was the most dominant, showing that many of Napoleon's implied meanings could be understood without requiring highly specific contextual information.

The presentation of the data in this section will begin with a contextual description of the utterance, followed by the excerpt itself, and then an analysis explaining the type of implicature and how context contributes to its interpretation. The table below provides a summary of the overall findings:

Table 1. The frequency of implicature types in Napoleon's letters.

No	Types of Implicature	Data	Percentage
1	Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI)	21	70%
2	Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI)	5	16,6%
3	Conventional Implicature (CI)	4	13,3%
Total		30	100%

The results indicate that Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) is the most frequently occurring type with 21 instances (70%), followed by Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI) with 5 instances (16.6%), and Conventional Implicature (CI) with 4 instances (13.3%). This suggests that Napoleon's letters often conveyed implied meanings that could be inferred more generally, though he also employed more context-specific and conventional forms of implicature.

Table 2. The frequency of context types in Napoleon's letters.

No	Types of Context	Data	Percentage
1	Social Context	24	80%
2	Physical Context	6	20%
3	Linguistics Context	0	0%
4	Shared Knowledge Context	0	0%
Total		30	100%

The findings further demonstrate that social context played the most dominant role (80%), highlighting the centrality of Napoleon and Joséphine's relational dynamics in shaping the interpretation of implicatures. Physical context appeared in 20% of the data, particularly when references to time and place influenced meaning. By contrast, linguistic context and shared knowledge context were not significantly present in the data.

Furthermore, the analysis shows that each type of implicature appeared with different functions in the letters. Generalized conversational implicatures dominated, often used in Napoleon's expressions of affection and loyalty that could be interpreted without requiring special context. Particularized conversational implicatures, though fewer, revealed more personal and situational meanings, especially in moments of jealousy or

conflict. Conventional implicatures, while least frequent, added contrast or emphasis through specific linguistic forms.

In terms of context, the findings highlight that social context played the most significant role, while physical context appeared occasionally in references to time and place. Linguistic and shared knowledge contexts were absent, suggesting that relational and situational aspects were more crucial in shaping implicit meaning in Napoleon's letters to Joséphine.

The following section presents selected examples from the data, illustrating how each type of implicature functions within the letters and how context contributes to their interpretation.

Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI)

Context Data 1:

This quotation is taken from Letter No. 1, Series A in *Napoleon's Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812*, compiled by Henry Forjambé. The letter was written in early March 1796, on the morning after Napoleon and Joséphine first met at a party the previous evening, thus belonging to the pre-marital period. The dominant context in this data is the **physical context**, as the time and situation of writing—the morning after their first encounter—explain why Napoleon emphasized that upon waking, his thoughts were directed solely toward Joséphine.

Data 1

“My waking thoughts are **all** of them.”

In this data, there is a generalized conversational implicature that can be identified through the trigger word ‘all.’ This word belongs to the quantity scale (all – most – some – few), and its use implies that all of Napoleon's thoughts upon waking were entirely directed toward Joséphine, leaving no room for anything else. This implicature does not require a specific context to be understood, as it can generally be interpreted that the statement conveys the intensity of Napoleon's feelings and the emotional dominance of Joséphine in his mind. Thus, the implicature of love and deep attachment can be inferred solely from the form of the utterance itself, in line with the characteristics of generalized implicature.

Context Data 2:

This quotation comes from Letter No. 7, Series A in *Napoleon's Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812*, compiled by Henry Forjambé. The letter was written on June 15, 1796, from Tortona, during the post-marriage period of Napoleon and Joséphine. Although Napoleon was at the height of his early Italian campaign—where his military victories over Austria were consolidating his reputation—the content of this letter reveals his emotional vulnerability. Instead of emphasizing his wartime successes, Napoleon discloses that his entire mind was absorbed by Joséphine, particularly her private space, her bed, and her heart. The dominant context in this data is the **physical context**, as Napoleon expresses his longing for both physical intimacy and emotional closeness.

Data 2

“**All** my thoughts are concentrated in thy boudoir, in thy bed, on thy heart.”

This utterance contains a generalized conversational implicature triggered by the use of the universal quantifier ‘all,’ which belongs to the quantity scale (all – most – some – few) as described in the theories of Grice and Horn. The choice of the word ‘all’ implies that none of Napoleon’s thoughts were directed toward anything other than Joséphine, particularly in relation to the intimate aspects he mentioned: his private space, his bed, and his heart. Although Napoleon does not explicitly state that he longed for Joséphine physically and emotionally, such meaning can be inferred from the linguistic form. Since this implied meaning can be generally understood without the need for additional context, the utterance falls under generalized implicature.

Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI)

Context of Data 3:

This quotation is taken from Letter No. 3, Series A in *Napoleon’s Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812*, compiled by Henry Forjambé. The letter was written on April 3, 1796, from Port Maurice, during the early stage of Napoleon’s military campaign in Italy, shortly after his marriage to Joséphine on March 9, 1796. Despite being in the midst of military affairs, the utterance reveals Napoleon’s emotional side: his sense of offense and disappointment toward the content of Joséphine’s letter, which he perceived as lacking sensitivity or being too harsh. The dominant context in this data is the **social context**, since the implied meaning relies on the interpersonal relationship between husband and wife and the expectation of gentle or affectionate communication. Understanding Napoleon’s hidden intention cannot be derived solely from linguistic structure, but rather from the condition of their relationship at that time.

Data 3

“How can you think, my charmer, of writing me **in such terms**?”

This utterance represents Napoleon’s reaction to Joséphine’s previous letter. The implicature here is particularized because its meaning cannot be derived from the sentence alone; it requires knowledge of their relational and emotional context. Napoleon implies that Joséphine’s words were harsh or insensitive, which caused him disappointment or hurt. The phrase “in such terms” does not specify the content of her letter but indirectly signals his dissatisfaction with her tone or choice of words. This data shows how PCI in Napoleon’s letters conveyed meanings that were deeply tied to the relational circumstances, with implications of hurt and longing that could only be understood through knowledge of their personal situation.

Context of Data 4:

This quotation constitutes the closing utterance of Letter No. 3, Series A in *Napoleon’s Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812*, compiled by Henry Forjambé Hall. The letter was written on April 3, 1796, while Napoleon was in Port Maurice, at the early stage of his military campaign in Italy. It belongs to the post-marriage period, when Napoleon had just left Joséphine in Paris following their wedding on March 9, 1796, and had begun leading the

military movement against the Austrian forces under Beaulieu. Although the utterance literally depicts the act of embracing, its primary meaning arises from the emotional context and their interpersonal relationship. The dominant context in this data is the **social context**, since the implied meaning relies on the understanding of Napoleon's emotional bond and longing for Joséphine, rather than on the mere physical gesture of an embrace.

Data 4

"Many times, I shall clasp thee in my arms, but, **but—it is not thee.**"

This utterance falls under particularized conversational implicature because its implied meaning is highly dependent on the emotional and situational context in which it was produced. Literally, the utterance depicts the act of embracing, yet the key phrase 'but, but—it is not thee' indicates that the embrace was not directed toward Joséphine herself. The first sign of particularized conversational implicature lies in the repetition of 'but,' which signals an inner emotional conflict, and in the phrase 'it is not thee,' whose ambiguity can only be resolved through an understanding of Napoleon's emotional background. In different contexts, the utterance could generate multiple interpretations: as an expression of guilt if uttered when Napoleon was with another woman; as a bitter realization after a dream if the context were sleep; or as a reflection of dissatisfaction with physical substitutes (such as a portrait or letter) that fail to replace genuine intimacy. This flexibility of interpretation demonstrates that the meaning of the utterance is not fixed and requires specific contextual knowledge, which is why it is categorized as particularized implicature.

Conventional Implicature

Context of Data 5:

This quotation is taken from Letter No. 13, Series G in *Napoleon's Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812*, compiled by Henry Forjambé Hall. The letter was written by Napoleon on November 22, 1806, from Berlin, following France's victory over Prussia in the Battles of Jena and Auerstädt. The utterance reflects a blend of personal concern and advice, as Napoleon expresses his care for Joséphine's state of mind while encouraging her to remain optimistic. The dominant context in this data is the **social context**, since the utterance illustrates the interpersonal relationship and Napoleon's attention to his partner's emotional condition, while also emphasizing the norms of affectionate and protective communication within their relationship.

Data 5

"I am sorry to find you in the dumps; **yet** you have every reason to be cheerful."

In this utterance, conventional implicature is marked by the use of the word 'yet.' This lexical item signals an implied contrast between two propositions presented by the writer. The first proposition, 'I am sorry to find you in the dumps,' expresses the writer's regret over the recipient's sadness, while the second proposition, 'you have every reason to be cheerful,' states the fact that rationally the recipient ought to feel happy. The contrast

implied by 'yet' does not affect the truth of either proposition; both remain factually valid. Thus, the conventional implicature in this utterance is lexically triggered, carried by the specific connective 'yet,' and conveys the writer's commentary on the tension between the recipient's emotional state and the rational grounds for cheerfulness. This conventional implicature highlights the writer's stance and emphasizes the contrast without relying on situational context or shared background knowledge.

Context of data 6:

This quotation is taken from Letter No. 14 in *Napoleon's Letters to Josephine, 1796–1812*, compiled by Henry Forjambé Hall. The letter was written by Napoleon on January 17, 1810, from Trianon, after their official divorce. The utterance reflects Napoleon's concern for Joséphine's emotional state following the separation, while also emphasizing the emotional bond and shared memories he continued to hold. The dominant context in this data is the **social context**, as the utterance highlights interpersonal interaction and Napoleon's sensitivity to Joséphine's feelings, as well as the way shared memories shaped the dynamics of their relationship after the separation.

Data 6

"I want badly to see you, **but** I must have some assurance that you are strong and not weak."

In this utterance, there is a conventional implicature marked by the use of the word 'but,' which conventionally indicates a contrast between two ideas: Napoleon's strong desire to meet Joséphine and his need for assurance that she is in a strong condition. This implicature does not depend on a specific context; rather, it arises from the conventional meaning of 'but' as a connector between two clauses. Through this structure, Napoleon implies that although he longs for Joséphine, he does not wish the meeting to occur if it would cause her distress—a form of affection that places Joséphine's well-being above his own desire.

CONCLUSION

This research examined the types of implicature and contextual factors in Napoleon Bonaparte's love letters to Joséphine de Beauharnais. A total of 30 instances of implicature were identified, consisting of Generalized Conversational Implicature (21 data or 70%), Particularized Conversational Implicature (5 data or 16.6%), and Conventional Implicature (4 data or 13.3%). The dominance of generalized implicature indicates that many of Napoleon's utterances carried implied meanings that could be generally understood without requiring highly specific contextual information. However, the presence of particularized and conventional implicatures reflects the diversity of pragmatic strategies used to express more personal, situational, and contrastive meanings within the relationship.

In relation to context, the analysis revealed that social context was the most influential (24 data or 80%), followed by physical context (6 data or 20%), while linguistic and shared knowledge contexts were not found. This highlights that Napoleon's implicit expressions were shaped primarily by the interpersonal dynamics between himself and Joséphine, including affection, longing, jealousy, and emotional conflict. The physical context appeared in references to time, place, and circumstances of writing, which occasionally

influenced interpretation. The absence of linguistic and shared knowledge contexts suggests that the letters relied more on relational and situational aspects rather than purely textual or background-based interpretation.

Taken together, the findings demonstrate that Napoleon's letters were not merely personal correspondence but also complex pragmatic artifacts that reveal how implicature operates in intimate communication. Through implicature, Napoleon managed to express devotion, vulnerability, and emotional intensity indirectly, showing how unspoken meanings could strengthen the intimacy of his relationship with Joséphine. This study contributes to pragmatic research by extending the application of Grice's implicature theory to historical love letters, thereby offering new insights into how language, context, and personal relationships intertwine to create layers of meaning beyond what is explicitly written.

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