



## Exploring Conversational and Conventional Implicatures in Sara Bareilles' Songs: She Used to Be Mine and Brave

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the role of implicature in shaping the interpretation and emotional impact of song lyrics, with a focus on Sara Bareilles' "She Used to Be Mine" and "Brave". The objectives are threefold: (1) to examine how implicature contributes to lyrical meaning and emotional resonance, (2) to identify instances of implicature within the lyrics, and (3) to analyze the relationship between linguistic expression and thematic message. Adopting a qualitative research design and a content analysis approach, the study draws on two primary theoretical references: Analyzing Meaning: An Introduction to Semantics and Pragmatics (Textbooks in Language Sciences 5) for implicature characterization, and Grice's Logic and Conversation as the principal framework for categorizing implicatures. The analysis identifies four types of implicature—Conventional Implicature (CI), Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI), Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI), and Scalar Implicature (SI)—present in both songs. Findings reveal that "She Used to Be Mine" predominantly employs Conventional Implicature (78%) and Scalar Implicature (60%), aligning with its introspective and reflective tone. In contrast, "Brave" relies more heavily on Generalized Conversational Implicature (56%) and Particularized Conversational Implicature (63%), reinforcing its motivational and empowering message. These results highlight the nuanced role of implicature in shaping both the interpretive depth and emotional impact of musical discourse.

**Keywords:** *Implicature, conversational implicature, conventional implicature, song lyrics*

### INTRODUCTION

With the continuous advancement of technology, the channels and modes of communication have expanded significantly. As noted by Adler and Rodman (2016), communication is defined as "the process of creating and exchanging meaning through verbal and nonverbal messages." Modern society now offers a wide range of tools for

individuals to articulate their ideas, opinions, thoughts, and concepts. Among these, songs hold a distinctive position as a medium through which composers, performers, and audiences can converge in shared emotional experiences. Beyond their artistic appeal, songs frequently serve as a mirror of cultural values, societal issues, and personal sentiments. Consequently,

examining the deeper layers of meaning in human language becomes essential—particularly in relation to the concept of implicature, which forms the core focus of this discussion.

Implicature practices are often shaped by daily conversation, issues can arise when the conversation is not going smoothly, a misunderstanding occurs. It is related to “how language functions in maintaining and changing power relations in contemporary society, about ways of analyzing language which can reveal these processes, and about how people can become more conscious of them, and more able to resist and change them” (Norman Fairclough. 2013, p. 9).

Paul Grice (1975), a seminal figure in the field of linguistics, conceptualized implicature as a key component of pragmatics concerned with meanings conveyed indirectly—those which are neither explicitly articulated nor strictly entailed by an utterance. According to Grice (1975:25), implicature represents the speaker's intended meaning, frequently communicated implicitly rather than overtly stated, thereby requiring inferential interpretation on the part of the listener.

Grice distinguished four principal types of implicature. Conventional implicature is independent of context, as its meaning is embedded within the linguistic form itself, enabling the audience to readily infer the intended message. Generalized conversational implicature involves meanings that, while not explicitly stated, can generally be inferred with minimal contextual information. Scalar implicature also depends on context but is intrinsically linked to a lexical or conceptual scale—such as degrees, quantities, or frequencies—requiring the listener to recognize the relevant scale to fully grasp the implied meaning. Lastly, particularized conversational implicature is highly context-dependent, necessitating a detailed understanding of the specific communicative situation. In this case, the intended meaning often diverges

significantly from the literal interpretation, posing greater interpretive challenges for the audience.

The urgency of researching this topic lies in the growing importance of music as a vehicle for cultural expression and emotional communication in society. Music is often a primary means of understanding individual and collective experiences, especially in an era where audiences are increasingly seeking to connect with songs that reflect personal struggles and triumphs. Bareilles' songs, which aim to universal themes such as identity, vulnerability, and courage, resonate deeply with audiences around the world. However, to fully appreciate and interpret the messages embedded in her lyrics, it is essential to understand how implicature functions in her songwriting. As Sterelny (1982: 192–3) pointed out, knowledge of the particular speaker the artist in this case is often more important than knowledge of non-universal generalizations. In the case of Bareilles, understanding her unique linguistic strategies and how she subtly conveys complex emotions through implicature allows for a richer and more shaded interpretation of her music. Furthermore, in the broader context of music and linguistic studies, exploring implicature in contemporary pop songs is an emerging area of research. As music continues to evolve, the ways in which artists convey meaning have become more intricate and layered. By examining how Bareilles employs implicature in these two iconic songs, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how meaning is constructed in modern songwriting. This is particularly significant as it can inform not only music analysis but also the way audiences unite with and interpret lyrics. As music continues to shape cultural discourse, investigating these subtle layers of meaning is essential to fostering a deeper connection between artists and audiences.

Li (2021) applied Conversational Implicature Theory exclusively within the context of ESP listening instruction, noting that

future research could incorporate a broader range of pragmatic frameworks. Addressing this gap, the present study extends the scope of analysis beyond conversational implicature to include conventional implicature, thereby offering a more comprehensive examination of implied meaning. Further insights into potential research gaps are provided by Jaya et al. (2023), who suggest that subsequent studies should prioritize direct data collection through field interviews with speakers to ensure that the findings reflect authentic realities rather than secondary perceptions. Similarly, Sofyan et al. (2022) highlight that previous investigations into speech level usage—particularly in teacher-student interactions—remain open to further exploration. They emphasize the need for research that examines the contextual application of speech levels and their pedagogical implications, as well as the potential of adopting a socio-pragmatic perspective to enrich the analysis. By integrating these identified gaps, the present research aims to contribute not only to the theoretical development of implicature studies but also to the broader understanding of pragmatic phenomena in diverse communicative and educational contexts.

This study represents an innovative application of implicature theory to the analysis of meaning construction and emotional resonance embedded within the lyrics of Sara Bareilles. It further incorporates a comparative dimension, examining the implicatures present in *She Used to Be Mine* and *Brave* to elucidate potential similarities and divergences in Bareilles' use of implicature across these works. By doing so, the research not only deepens the understanding of linguistic phenomena in song lyrics but also offers valuable contributions to the broader theoretical discourse in pragmatics and semantics. Specifically, the study seeks to: (1) examine the role of implicature in shaping the interpretive and affective dimensions of the songs; (2) identify and categorize instances of implicature within the lyrical content; and (3)

explore the interrelationship between linguistic form and the expressive dimensions of the lyrics.

### **Implicature**

Implicature is anything that inferred utterances which is not the truth conditions. When people talk to each other it can be not the real meaning. Brown and Yule (1983:31) delivered that “the term of implicature is used by Grice to account for what a speaker literally says”. Furthermore, Grice as quoted by Levinson (1992:127) explained that “the term of implicature is a general cover term to stand in contrast to what is said or expressed by the truth condition of expression and to conclude all kind of pragmatic (non-truth conditional) inference discernible”. Grice also explained in Grundy (2007:9) that how is it possible that the same sentence is understood to have two opposing meanings even though both are conveyed explicitly. This is the basis of Grice's thinking. Furthermore, Grice made the following example sentences.

A: Are you working this afternoon?

B: I'm going back to the office.

From the examples presented, it can be seen how to distinguish between what someone says and what the person means. It is known that 'context' is very important in determining what someone means when someone says something. To further understand the implied meaning or intended meaning in a speech, a study is needed based on implicature theory. The concept of to solve the problems of linguistic meaning that cannot be solved by ordinary semantic theory.

Grice's theory of conversational implicature posits that speakers, in principle, intend to cooperate in communication. This framework offers a means of interpreting aspects of meaning that cannot be adequately addressed by semantic theory alone. In this regard, Levinson (1987) highlights four key contributions of implicature theory: (1) it provides a functional explanation for linguistic phenomena that fall beyond the scope of structural linguistic theory;

(2) it explicitly distinguishes between the literal content of an utterance and the intended meaning, which is nevertheless accessible to language users; (3) it facilitates a more economical semantic description of the relationships between clauses linked by different conjunctions; and (4) it accounts for various linguistic phenomena that may superficially appear unrelated or even contradictory, but which are, in fact, systematically connected.

Leech (1993, p. 269) asserts that implicature serves as a strategic device to render utterances more polite, as direct statements may often be perceived as less courteous. Consequently, interlocutors addressing a second person tend to employ implicit forms of expression. In a similar vein, Gazdar (1979, p. 28) defines implicature as a proposition implied by the utterance of a sentence within a given context, even though such a proposition is neither explicitly stated nor entailed by the literal meaning of the utterance. This perspective underscores that implicature emerges from an interaction between contextual interpretation and the speaker's intended inference, and may operate in either context-dependent or context-independent forms. As Mey (2001, p. 450) notes, the term itself is derived from the verb imply. Building on this, Grice delineates two principal types of implicature—conversational and conventional—in his seminal work. Broadly speaking, implicatures encompass meanings that remain implicit in communicative exchanges, thereby positioning them as a central focus within the domain of pragmatics.

### ***Types of Implicature***

Kroeger (2019), drawing on Grice's theory, identifies two primary types of implicature: conventional implicature and conversational implicature. Both arise from the speaker's intended meaning, encompassing not only the explicit utterance but also the implied message, and can be interpreted through either conventional or conversational means. Grice

further subdivides conversational implicature into generalized and particularized types. The distinction between conversational and conventional implicatures is illustrated by constructions such as Anna is rich but she is happy. Here, the truth conditions align with those of the coordination Anna is rich and she is happy, except for the contrastive nuance introduced by but. This contrastive meaning is neither truth-functional nor context-dependent, thereby providing justification for the categorization of conventional implicature (Meibauer, 2009, p. 365). A more focused explanation is as follows:

#### **1. Conventional Implicature**

Conventional implicature is tied to specific linguistic expressions or constructions and is part of the conventional meaning of those expressions. A conventional implicature is a non-truth-conditional inference which is not deductive in any general, natural way from the saying of what is said, but arises solely because of the conventional features attached to particular lexical items and/or linguistic constructions (Huang, 2007:54). The most commonly cited example of a Gricean conventional implicature is the conjunction but, as in (a), which entails logical conjunction and carries the additional conventional implicature of contrast between the two conjuncts.

- a. She is smart but lazy.

CI: there is some contrast between being smart and being lazy.

- b. She is smart and lazy.

- c. She is smart and lazy – #not that there is any contrast between being smart and lazy.

Grice (1989, p. 25) characterizes conventional implicatures as instances in which “the conventional meaning of the words used will determine what is implicated, in addition to contributing to what is explicitly stated.” He illustrates this with examples such as the conjunction but and the adverb therefore. As

noted by Levinson (1983, p. 127), the conjunction *but* yields the same truth-conditional value as *and* within a sentence; however, unlike *and*, it carries an additional conventional implicature, specifically signaling a contrast between the two coordinated elements.

## 2. Conversational Implicature

The present study examines the dialogues within the script's lyrics through the lens of Grice's theory of conversational implicature in pragmatics. According to Kroeger (2019), this type of inference is not contingent upon specific contextual features but is instead generally linked to the nature of the proposition conveyed. For instance, an utterance such as "The weather is nice today" during a picnic may carry the implicature of inviting others to remain outdoors. Unlike conventional implicature, which conveys a fixed meaning derived from a particular lexical item, conversational implicature is not inherently bound to any linguistic expression (Grundy, as cited in Victory, 2010). Rather, it emerges through the process of inference when an utterance is interpreted within its situational context.

According to Grice (1975:49–50), a speaker who, in uttering (or appearing to utter) proposition *p*, thereby implies proposition *q*, can be said to have generated a conversational implicature of *q*, provided that the following conditions are met: (1) the speaker is presumed to be adhering to the conversational maxims, or at least to the overarching Cooperative Principle; (2) it is necessary to suppose that the speaker is aware of, or believes, *q* in order to render their utterance of *p* (or its particular formulation) consistent with this presumption; and (3) the speaker believes—and expects the hearer to believe that the speaker believes—that the hearer possesses the capacity to infer, or intuitively grasp, that the supposition outlined in (2) is required. Grice further distinguishes two principal types of conversational implicature.

### a. Generalized Conversational Implicature

Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI) refers to an implied meaning that can be interpreted without reliance on specific contextual information. Levinson (1983) characterizes GCI as arising independently of particular contextual features. As a subtype of conversational implicature, GCI emerges in discourse when a speaker's utterance conveys an additional meaning that is inferred in a default manner, without the need for specialized background knowledge or elaborate contextual inference. In essence, its interpretation is accessible through general pragmatic conventions rather than context-specific cues.

Generalized Conversational Implicature emerges within discourse and is inferred through broadly applicable conversational maxims and principles, rather than being dependent on highly specific contextual cues or specialized background knowledge. Such implicatures are derived from the general structure of communication itself. For example, when a speaker states, "She's not here," the likely generalized inference is that the referent is absent from the immediate setting. According to Grice's framework, these implicatures can be systematically deduced from both the content of the utterance and its manner of delivery, under the assumption that the speaker adheres to the Cooperative Principle and its associated conversational maxims.

Sadock (1978: 294) noted another useful diagnostic property, namely that conversational implicatures are reinforceable. He used this term to indicate that the implicature can be explicitly expressed without resulting in an awkward or unnecessary repetition. Scale implicature was another topic that needed to be covered while talking about generalized conversational implicature. Scalar implicature refers to a variety of additional generalized conversational implications that are discussed on a scale of values. Scalar Implicature is the special type of generalized Implicature. Scalar

implicature is expressed the quantity such as; all, most, some, few, always, often and sometimes (Yule, 1996). A speaker chooses the most instructive word from the scale while making an utterance.

#### **b. Particularized Conversational Implicature**

Yule (1996) argued that particularized conversational implicature is a type in which the interlocutor indirectly requires more assistance to understand the meaning of a conversation because the context used in this type is not of a general nature. According to Kroeger (2019) cited on Grice's theory, Particularized Conversational Implicature is meaning that the intended inference depends on particular features of the specific context of the utterance. This is typically a conversational implicature that can only be derived in a specific context. This suggests that the meaning conveyed in the conversation is unique and needs a particular context to be fully grasped.

### **METHOD**

Qualitative research methods provide an effective means of data collection, prioritizing in-depth understanding and often focusing on the lived experiences and perspectives of individuals or groups. In order to offer comprehensive explanations and examine the use of implicature within discourse, this study adopts a descriptive qualitative approach. Given its qualitative design, the study's findings are closely linked to linguistic phenomena, particularly the types of implicature employed by students in the English Education Study Program during informal conversations. Documenting qualitative analysis as a process is essential, primarily to facilitate deeper learning and methodological refinement. A clearer understanding of the analytical process enables researchers to reflect, enhance their approaches, and render them more applicable for broader use by others (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The conceptual foundation of this research is anchored in its primary source material.

Primary sources are essential for obtaining critical insights and providing detailed information that directly aligns with the central focus of the study. Serving as the most direct and unfiltered means of accessing authentic data, they are indispensable for comprehending the key dimensions of the research topic. In this study, the primary data is drawn from the lyrics of Sara Bareilles's songs, specifically *She Used to Be Mine* and *Brave*. The selection of these works is based on their thematic relevance to the study's investigation of implicature.

Secondary sources, by contrast, encompass data previously collected, analyzed, and interpreted by other researchers. Such materials are used to extend, contextualize, and substantiate the primary analysis. They may take various forms, including scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and reputable online publications. In this research, secondary sources—particularly academic books and journal articles—were employed to enhance the depth and credibility of the analysis.

The researcher utilizes a content analysis approach that aims to describe implicatures applied in lyrics "She Used to Be Mine" and "Brave" by Sarah Bareilles' songs. That is done by defining it in the form of outlining the process of recognizing the function of implicatures. Meanwhile, the techniques used for data collection are reading, listening, and analyzing comprehensively the lyrics and data note-keeping. The data description then goes through three phases, namely the preparation phase where the data is taken and selected, the organizing phase where the data is grouped into the category, resulting in the analyzing process and the results where the analysis process and conclusion making are carried out (Elo and Kyngas, 2008). To avoid misinterpretation, the researcher tries to explain the definitions of the key terms below according to their expectative meaning and context.

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **Findings**

This study aims to investigate the use of

implicature in Sara Bareilles' songs "She Used to Be Mine" and "Brave" through the lens of Grice's theory. The analysis will explore both conversational and conventional implicatures embedded within the lyrics. Building on Sbisà's (2021) theoretical examination of explicating implicit meaning—which also provides a framework for distinguishing between implicature and presupposition—this research will identify and analyze key lyrical moments where implicature functions to convey nuanced meanings that extend beyond the literal interpretation of the text.

#### The types of implicatures found in the lyrics of "She Used to Be Mine" and "Brave" by

#### Sara Bareilles song

According to Kroeger (2019), based on Grice's theory: conventional implicature, conversational implicature. Previously discussed, that conversational implicature has subclass, there are mentioning below in (2), (3), (4). The types of implicatures found in the lyrics of "She Used to Be Mine" and "Brave" by Sara Bareilles song are analyzed in the following table (Table 4.1 and Table 4.2). Each table analyzes four types of Implicature. They are (1) Conventional Implicature (CI); (2) Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI); (3) Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI); and (4) Scalar Implicature (SI).

Table 1 "She Used to Be Mine" Song Lyric

No	Data	Types of Implicature			
		CI	GCI	PCI	SI
1	<i>It's not simple to say</i>		√		
2	<i>Most days I don't recognize me</i>				√
3	<i>That these shoes and this apron</i>			√	
4	<i>That place and its patrons</i>			√	
5	<i>Have taken more than I gave them</i>			√	
6	<i>It's not easy to know</i>		√		
7	<i>Although it's true</i>		√		
8	<i>I was never attention's sweet center</i>		√		
9	<i>I still remember that girl</i>		√		
10	<i>She's imperfect but she tries</i>	√			
11	<i>She is good but she lies</i>	√			
12	<i>She is hard on herself</i>		√		
13	<i>She is broken and won't ask for help</i>	√			
14	<i>She is messy but she's kind</i>	√			
15	<i>She is lonely most of the time</i>				√
16	<i>She is all of this mixed up</i>	√			



17	<i>And baked in a beautiful pie</i>	√			
18	<i>She is gone but she used to be mine</i>	√			
19	<i>It's not what I asked for</i>		√		
20	<i>Sometimes life just slips in through a back door</i>				√
<b>Frequency</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

Table 1 demonstrates that all categories of implicatures are present in the data extracted from the script lyric in "*She Used to be Mine*" by Sara Bareilles. When considering the frequency of each type, it is evident that all categories of implicatures appear in the source material. According to the data, the most

common type is the conventional implicature and generalized conversational implicature, which appear 7 times each type out of the total 20 instances. Following that type is the particularized conversational implicature and scalar implicature, which arise 3 times each type.

Table 2 "*Brave*" Song Lyric

No	Data	Types of Implicature			
		CI	GCI	PCI	SI
1	<i>You can be amazing</i>		√		
2	<i>You can turn a phrase into a weapon or a drug</i>		√		
3	<i>Nothing's gonna hurt you the way that words do</i>				√
4	<i>Kept on the inside and no sunlight</i>	√			
5	<i>Sometimes a shadow wins</i>				√
6	<i>Say what you wanna say</i>		√		
7	<i>And let the words fall out</i>			√	
8	<i>Honestly, I wanna see you be brave</i>		√		
9	<i>Fallen for the fear</i>		√		
10	<i>And done some disappearing</i>		√		
11	<i>Don't run, stop holding your tongue</i>		√		
12	<i>Maybe one of these days you can let the light in</i>			√	
13	<i>Show me how big your brave is</i>		√		
14	<i>And since your history of silence</i>			√	
15	<i>Won't do you any good</i>		√		
16	<i>Did you think it would?</i>			√	



17	<i>Let your words be anything but empty</i>	√			
18	<i>Why don't you tell them the truth?</i>			√	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>

Table 2 shows that the data is taken from the lyric of Sara Bareilles' "*Brave*" has implicatures in every category. It is clear that all kinds of implicatures are present in the source material when taking into account the frequency of each type. The data indicates that the generalized conversational implicature is the most prevalent type, occurring 9 times out of 18 instances. The next position is the particularized conversational type which appears 5 times. The last common type is the conventional implicature and the scalar implicature which reveal 2 times for each type.

### 1) Conventional Implicature in "*She Used to Be Mine*" Song Lyrics

According to Huang (2007: 54), a conventional implicature is a non-truth-conditional inference which is not deductive in any general, natural way from the saying of what is said, but arises solely because of the conventional features attached to particular lexical items and/or linguistic constructions. The following are part of lyrics of "*She Used to Be Mine*".

*She is imperfect but she tries She is good but she lies*

*She is broken and won't ask for help She is messy but she's kind*

*She is gone but she used to be mine*

These lines are script lyric from the song "*She Used to Be Mine*" by Sara Bareilles, and they beautifully illustrate conventional implicature. Conventional implicature appears from the conventional meaning of words and phrases, rather than the specific context of the conversation.

"*She is imperfect but she tries*" The word

"but" signals a contrast between "imperfect" and "tries." The conventional implicature here is that despite her imperfections, she makes an effort. "*She is good but she lies*" Again, "but" indicates a contrast between being "good" and "lies." The conventional implicature is that she has positive qualities, even though she is dishonest at times. "*She is broken and won't ask for help*" The conjunction "and" connects the two clauses, suggesting that her brokenness is connected to her unwillingness to seek help. The implicature is that her emotional or mental state is intertwined with her reluctance to reach out. "*She is messy but she's kind*" The word "but" once more contrasts "messy" with "kind." The conventional implicature is that despite her disorganization or chaos, she has a kind nature. "*She is gone but she used to be mine*" The word "but" contrasts her absence with the fact that she was once an important part of the narrator's life. The implicature is that the narrator still feels a connection or loss despite her absence. The word "but" signals a contrast between "imperfect" and "tries." The conventional implicature here is that despite her imperfections, she makes an effort.

### 2) Conversational Implicature in "*She Used to Be Mine*" Song Lyrics

Referring to the theoretical framework, researcher will discuss in specific kind of conversational implicatures. As the following details, showing the description and data found for generalized conversational implicature, particularized conversational implicature, scalar implicature.

#### a) Generalized conversational implicature

Thus, the phrase "*It's not simple to say*" likely contains a Generalized Conversational

Implicature because it reflects a generalizable sentiment (difficulty in communication) that most people can understand, but is not tied to any specific context other than the narrator's personal experience. The exact nature of what is difficult to say is left implicit, and the listener is encouraged to infer it from the larger context.

It's possible to interpret the statement "*It's not easy to know*" as a generalization that could be applied to everyone, not just the narrator. It alludes to a more general notion: that people generally struggle to grasp themselves or complex situations. No particular background knowledge is necessary for the sentence to make sense.

The phrase "Although it's true" can be used in a variety of contexts. The statement relates to any circumstance when a fact or truth is acknowledged yet there is a connotation that more should be taken into consideration or that the truth is not the complete story; it is not dependent on any one specific case or incident. Because of this, it is a generalized conversational implicature, meaning it can be applied to an extensive range of discourse forms.

**b) Particularized conversational implicature**

The phrase, "*That these shoes and this apron*" refers to objects that are part of the narrator's personal experience likely representing the narrator's role, identity, or daily life (perhaps as someone who works in a certain setting, like a housewife). The listener is meant to understand that the shoes and apron are not just simple items of clothing but represent something larger.

In this case "*That place and its patrons*" is a particularized conversational implicature because its meaning is highly dependent on the specific context provided by the narrator's experience. The listener must infer the nature of the place and its patrons based on prior context or knowledge. "*That place and its patrons*" can be something which recall the

narrator's memories.

The expression "*have taken more than I gave them*" describes a personal encounter in which the narrator feels as though they have been taken advantage of or depleted after investing something (perhaps time, energy, emotion, etc.) in a relationship or circumstance. This phrase's "more" denotes an imbalance.

**c) Scalar implicature**

The sentences like "*Most days I don't recognize me,*" "*She is lonely most of the time,*" and "*Sometimes life just slips in through a back door*" can be interpreted as involving scalar implicature. The word choice like most and sometimes imply something about the other possible terms on the scale scalar implicature occurs when a narrator chooses a term from a scale of possibilities (e.g., "always," "often," "sometimes") and this choice implies something about the other possible terms on the scale.

**3) Conventional Implicature in "Brave"**

**Song Lyrics**

*Kept on the inside and no sunlight Let your words be anything but empty*

These expressions have an inherent meaning that is understood regardless of the conversational context, making them conventional implicatures. The phrase "no sunlight" and "kept on the inside" carry inherent. The phrase "*no sunlight*" is a conventional expression associated with hiddenness, secrecy, or repression. It describes an image of something being kept in the dark. The phrase "*kept on the inside*" is another conventional expression suggesting inwardness or concealment. In this case, the expression "*anything but empty*" refers to something lacking meaning or sincerity, which is a fixed, conventional meaning for this word.

**4) Conversational Implicature in "Brave"**

**Song Lyrics**

Referring to the theoretical framework, researcher will discuss in specific kind of



conversational implicatures. As the following details, showing the description and data found for generalized conversational implicature, Particularized conversational implicature, Scalar Implicature.

**a) Generalized conversational implicature**

The phrase "*You can be amazing*" implies that the listener has the potential to be amazing, suggesting they might not currently be amazing make it classified as generalized conversational implicature. This implication arises naturally from the phrase itself, rather than relying on a specific situational context (which would be necessary for particularized conversational implicature).

The phrase "*You can turn a phrase into a weapon or a drug*" implies that language (or how someone uses words) can have powerful effects, either harmful (weapon) or beneficial (drug). This meaning arises naturally from the statement itself and does not require an unusual or highly particular context. The narrator provides enough information but does not explicitly state how words can be used as a weapon or a drug, leaving the listener to infer that words can influence, heal, or harm.

"*Say what you wanna say*" is a generalized conversational implicature because it implies encouragement or permission to speak freely, and this meaning is generally understood across different contexts without requiring a unique situation to derive the implicature. However, it implicitly suggests that the narrator is encouraging honesty, openness, or expression without directly stating it.

**b) Particularized conversational implicature**

In the context of the song, the phrase "*let the words fall out*" has a particular emotional weight. Perhaps after a period of silence or repression, the narrator is urging the listener to speak up and let go of their inhibitions. The statement implies that it's time for someone who

has remained silent or has kept their truth to speak without fear of criticism, and the listener is supposed to understand that this encouragement is specifically for them.

The sentence "*Maybe one of these days you can let the light in*" is a particularized conversational implicature because its full meaning is dependent on the context in which it is said. It carries a context-specific implication that would only be fully understood by the listener if they are aware of the emotional or relational situation being discussed.

The expression "*And since your history of silence*" alludes to a pattern or practice of silence that the individual has had in the past, implying that they have previously been quiet, restrained, or silent. The narrator is probably making a remark about the individual's propensity to keep quiet, perhaps when they ought to have spoken up. The implication here is that the narrator is reflecting on a specific history of silence, which could be a personal trait or a response to particular situations.

"*Did you think it would?*" is not a general statement that can apply to many situations, it's tied to a specific expectation or situation. Without understanding the context in which the expectation was set, the listener might struggle to fully interpret the meaning of this phrase.

The line "*Why don't you tell them the truth?*" is a particularized conversational implicature because its meaning depends on the specific context and the listener's understanding of the situation at hand. The sentence assumes prior knowledge of the context in which the listener is not being truthful or needs to reveal the truth, making it a particularized implicature

**c) Scalar implicature**

The statement "*Nothing's gonna hurt you the way that words do*" implies that words cause more emotional pain than anything else (or at least comparable to significant harm). This is an example of a scalar implicature, where "nothing" adopts an extreme comparison

without explicitly listing all possible sources of harm.

The phrase *"Sometimes a shadow wins"* creates a scalar implicature because it operates on a scale of frequency, where the choice of "sometimes" implies that stronger. In this case, "sometimes" is a weaker term compared to "always", leading to an implicature that there are times when a shadow does not win.

### 1. The similarities and differences exist in the

### use of implicatures between *"She Used to Be Mine"* and *"Brave"*

The table 4 presents a comparative analysis of the use of implicatures in *She Used to Be Mine* and *Brave* by Sara Bareilles, highlighting the frequency of different implicature types and their impact on the songs' meanings. It also examines how each song conveys its message through implicature.

Table 3 Comparison of implicature in *"She Used to Be Mine"* and *"Brave"*

Category	<i>She Used to Be Mine</i>	<i>Brave</i>	Explanation
Types of Implicatures Present	CI, GCI, PCI, SI	CI, GCI, PCI, SI	Both songs use all four types of implicature
Conventional Implicature (CI)	78% (Higher Usage)	22% (Lower Usage)	<i>She Used to Be Mine</i> relies more on fixed expressions and contrastive conjunctions ( <i>is imperfect but she tries</i> ). <i>Brave</i> focuses on open-ended, direct encouragement.
Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI)	44% (Lower Usage)	56% (Higher Usage)	<i>Brave</i> has more generalized messages that are universally applicable (e.g., <i>"Say what you wanna"</i> ). <i>Used to Be Mine</i> is less of it.
Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI)	38% (Lower Usage)	63% (Higher Usage)	<i>Brave</i> requires more specific context to derive meanings (e.g., <i>"Maybe one of these days let the light in"</i> ).
Scalar Implicature (SI)	60% (Higher Usage)	40% (Lower Usage)	<i>She Used to Be Mine</i> frequently uses words implying degrees of meaning ( <i>"Most days recognize me"</i> ), while <i>Brave</i> is more direct.
The Emotional Theme	<b>Introspective, Reflective</b>	<b>Motivational, Empowering</b>	<i>She Used to Be Mine</i> explores personal regret, while <i>Brave</i> focuses on self-expression and overcoming fear.

### Discussions

#### The types of implicatures found in the lyrics of *"She Used to Be Mine"* and *"Brave"* by Sara Bareilles song

The analysis of implicature in Sara Bareilles' songs *"She Used to Be Mine"* and *"Brave"* revealed notable use of Grice's theory of

implicature, including both conventional and conversational implicatures, within the lyrics of both songs. From the analysis that has been done related with implicature occur in the script lyric, the researcher can conclude that each type of implicature is revealed in both songs as below detail.

Table 4 Summary of Implicature Frequency

Script Lyrics	Data	Types of Implicature			
		Conventional implicature	Generalized conversational implicature	Particularized conversational implicature	Scalar implicature
<i>She Used to Be Mine</i>	Frequency	7	7	3	3
<i>Brave</i>		2	9	5	2
Percentage		78%	44%	38%	60%
		22%	56%	63%	40%

Both songs use all four types of implicatures identified in Grice's theory: Conventional Implicature, Generalized Conversational Implicature, Particularized Conversational Implicature, and Scalar Implicature. This implies that both songs use a multi-layered, intricate approach to meaning, with subtle inferences balancing out direct expressions to enable deeper interpretations of the lyrics.

## 2. Conventional Implicature

Conventional implicature is intrinsically linked to specific lexical items such as but, yet, and, and even, which may convey additional layers of meaning beyond their literal semantic content. Unlike conversational implicature, this type is not governed by the principles or maxims of Pragmatics and does not require a particular contextual background for interpretation (Yule, 1996). As illustrated in Table 4.3, the song "She Used to Be Mine" demonstrates a predominant reliance on conventional implicature (78%), indicating frequent use of fixed, widely recognized expressions or constructions. For instance, lines such as "She is imperfect but she tries" and "She is good but she lies" employ the conjunction but to signal contrast—an interpretation readily accessible in everyday discourse. This pattern

contributes to a sense of universality and familiarity, thereby reinforcing the song's overarching themes of self-awareness and internal conflict. In contrast, "Brave" exhibits a substantially lower occurrence of conventional implicature (22%), suggesting a lyrical style less dependent on formulaic expressions and more oriented toward contextual nuance and individualized interpretation.

## 2. Conversational Implicature

As discussed on above, there are subclass of conversational implicature. Narrowly advise on the following points.

### a) Generalized conversational implicature

The use of generalized conversational implicature is important in both songs. This implies that "Brave" and "She Used to Be Mine" both express concepts that listeners can relate to on a universal level. For instance, the line "It's not easy to know" in "She Used to Be Mine" refers to personal complexity or difficulty in a general, sympathetic way. Similar to this, the line "Say what you wanna say" from "Brave" can be applied to any situation where speaking one's truth is encouraged.

Levinson (2000, p. 181) claims that generalized conversational implicatures appear

without the use of particular knowledge of specific context. In line with this, Fauziah (2016) argues that generalized conversational implicature is a type of conversational implicature that has an understandable meaning because it does not require particular knowledge when uttered.

**b) Particularized conversational implicature**

"*Brave*" makes greater use of particularized conversational implicature (63%), reflecting the song's personalized message. For example, lines like "*Maybe one of these days you can let the light in*" and "*Why don't you tell them the truth?*" are meant to be understood in a specific context, speaking directly to the listener's experience of vulnerability and personal growth. These implicatures create a more intimate, situational message, urging listeners to reflect on their own lives. In contrast, "*She Used to Be Mine*" applies particularized conversational implicature less frequently (38%), which means that the song's lyrics are less context-dependent and more reflective of a universal emotional struggle. Grundy (2000) states in the case of implicature, context helps us to determine what is conveyed implicitly but not explicitly stated by the speaker. The lyrics tend to speak to more general experiences of loss and self-reflection.

**c) Scalar implicature**

Scalar Implicature is used more frequently in "*She Used to Be Mine*" (60%) than in "*Brave*" (40%). In "*She Used to Be Mine*," phrases like "*Most days I don't recognize me*" and "*She is lonely most of the time*" utilize terms like "most" and "sometimes," which introduce a scale of possibilities, implying varying degrees of emotional states or experiences. This is in accordance with (Yule, 1996) scalar implicature is expressed the quantity such as; all, most, some, few, always, often and sometimes. When releasing an utterance, a speaker chooses the word from the scale, which is the most informative.

These scalar expressions enrich the complexity of the song's emotional landscape, illustrating the narrator's fluctuating state of mind. In "*Brave*," the use of scalar implicature is less pronounced, showing that the emotional tone of the song is more definitive and less about varying emotional states. The focus in "*Brave*" is more on taking action and embracing empowerment, rather than on the fluctuating emotional journey emphasized in "*She Used to Be Mine*."

**The similarities and differences exist in the use of implicatures between "She Used to Be Mine" and "Brave"**

The researcher found out several similarities and differences exist in the use of implicature between "*She Used to Be Mine*" and "*Brave*" as the following explanation:

The lyrics of both songs are full of implicit meanings because they use Conventional Implicature (CI), Generalized Conversational Implicature (GCI), Particularized Conversational Implicature (PCI), and Scalar Implicature (SI).

Conventional Implicature (CI) contributes to the implicit meanings in both songs by using fixed expressions and contrastive conjunctions like *but* and *and* to highlight opposing ideas. For example, in *She Used to Be Mine*, the phrase "*She is imperfect but she tries*" implies that imperfection does not prevent effort, while in *Brave*, the phrase "*Let your words be anything but empty*" implies an inherent urge for genuine self-expression.

There are generally relatable Generalized Conversational Implicatures (GCI) in both songs that listeners can relate to universally. For instance, phrases like "*It's not easy to know*" (*She Used to Be Mine*) and "*Say what you wanna say*" (*Brave*) apply to large human experiences without requiring a specific context. This is the same line with Martini (2018) The conversational implicature could possibly take place in daily conversation naturally.

Particularized Conversational Implicature



(PCI) makes the lyrics more thought-provoking by requiring listeners to infer meaning based on context. In *Brave*, the line "*Maybe one of these days you can let the light in*" implies a scenario where someone has been grappling with silence or fear, offering a gentle nudge toward change. Similarly, in (*She Used to Be Mine*), the phrase "*That place and its patrons*" does not explicitly define the location or the people. Yule (1996) argued that particularized conversational implicature is a type in which the interlocutor indirectly requires more assistance to understand the meaning of a conversation because the context used in this type is not of a general nature.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that all four types of implicature are present in the lyrics of "She Used to Be Mine" by Sara Bareilles. Quantitative analysis indicates that conventional implicature and generalized conversational implicature are the most frequently occurring types, each appearing seven times out of a total of twenty instances. In contrast, particularized conversational implicature and scalar implicature are less prevalent, each occurring three times.

Similarly, the analysis of "Brave" demonstrates the presence of all implicature types, albeit with a different distribution. Generalized conversational implicature emerges as the most dominant form, appearing nine times out of eighteen instances, followed by particularized conversational implicature with five occurrences. Conventional implicature and scalar implicature are the least frequent in "Brave", each appearing twice.

The comparative analysis underscores the distinct functional roles of implicature in the two songs. "She Used to Be Mine" relies heavily on conventional and generalized conversational implicatures to convey emotional depth, internal conflict, and themes of regret, loss, self-doubt, and self-reflection. These implicatures enrich the song's

introspective tone, enabling listeners to draw nuanced inferences from context, tone, and narrator intention. In contrast, "Brave" employs a greater proportion of particularized conversational implicature alongside generalized conversational implicature to encourage self-empowerment, fearlessness, and personal growth. Through its motivational and forward-looking tone, the song uses implicature as a rhetorical device to inspire listeners to embrace authenticity, confront fear, and express their truths. Overall, the differing patterns of implicature usage reflect the divergent communicative aims of the two works: "She Used to Be Mine" centers on personal introspection and the emotional challenges of self-discovery, whereas "Brave" prioritizes empowerment and proactive self-expression.

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