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TERMINOLOGICAL DISTINCTION AND ERRORS OF PRESUPPOSITIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND INFERENCES IN DIGITAL DISCOURSE

Elena V. Shelestyuk [1*]
[1] Professor, Department of Linguistics, Chelyabinsk State University, Chelyabinsk, Russian Federation, Russia

ABSTRACT

The present study offers a terminological refinement of three foundational concepts in pragmatic analysis—presupposition, implication, and inference—conceptualizing them as potential loci of informational distortion (whether through intentional manipulation or inadvertent mistake). As its main theoretical innovation, the work distinguishes between three loci of implicitness: presupposition (understood as the unstated background assumptions that anchor the exchange), implication (understood as a secondary sense or evaluative overtone arising from the linguistic expression), and inference (defined as a rational deduction or a prompt to act that emerges from the communicative context). This separation enables a finer-grained account of how meaning arises: presupposition supplies the unstated background assumptions that anchor the exchange, implication proceeds from the linguistic expression itself to its accompanying implicit nuances, whereas inference moves from the speaker's communicative intent to the hearer's interpretation. A tripartite taxonomy of pragmatic deviations mapped onto these three loci of meaning is constructed and systematically deployed. The data examined include six illustrative examples from media and social networks serving as prototypes, alongside twenty-four user comments harvested from the AfterShock platform. The findings consistently uncover recurrent techniques of covert influence and typical reasoning flaws characteristic of extemporaneous online exchanges. Ultimately, the suggested framework facilitates the identification of where a meaning shift originates and informs the design of purpose-oriented fact-checking procedures.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Presupposition, Implication, Inference, Digital Discourse, Manipulation, Pragmatic Shifts

INTRODUCTION

In modern linguistics, pragmatics has established itself as a communicative discipline studying the implementation of linguistic meanings in speech activity Kotorova (2019). The subject focus of linguistic pragmatics covers both the production of utterances (what and how is said by the communicator) and the mechanisms of their interpretation (how meaning is reconstructed by the recipient). At the same time, within the pragmatic field, certain terminological variability persists in describing the processes of meaning generation, which complicates the comparison of research results and requires conceptual unification.

This article offers two key theoretical contributions. First, it introduces a locational-hierarchical model distinguishing three loci of implicitness—presupposition (background assumptions), implication (side meanings/connotations), and inference (logical conclusions/impulses to action)—enabling precise identification of where pragmatic shifts originate. Second, it draws a clear

*Corresponding Author:
Email address: Elena V. Shelestyuk (shelestiuk@yandex.ru)

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analytical distinction between implication as a textual-semantic effect rooted in linguistic form and textual juxtaposition, and inference as a cognitive-logical outcome emerging from communicative intention and context. This dual framework complements intentionality-based analyses and provides a diagnostic tool for mapping pragmatic breakdowns in digital discourse.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To classify pragmatic shifts, a three-level typology is applied, differentiating between presuppositional (false assumptions, reification), implicative (emotional bias, expressivity, semantic ambiguity), and inferential (non sequitur, ignoratio elenchi, ad hominem) shifts. The study aims to map pragmatic mechanisms in ordinary digital interactions while maintaining methodological transparency and acknowledging limitations inherent in a small, purposive corpus.

The research materials consist of 6 prototypical examples of implicitness shifts and 24 comments on the articles on the AfterShock platform (URL: https://aftershock.news/). The targeted qualitative samples demonstrate various types of pragmatic shifts. The choice of digital media discourse is due to the high concentration of implicit meanings and pragmatic failures in spontaneous online communication Herring et al. (2013). Unedited comments allow for the study of pragmatic mechanisms in natural conditions, and the diversity of registers—from pseudoscientific argumentation to everyday rhetoric—ensures the representativeness of the material for analyzing manipulative strategies. The open nature of the platform guarantees methodological transparency and reproducibility of the research. This data maintains ecological validity through preservation of naturalistic features such as tone, hedging strategies, alignment moves, typographic cues, and pragmatic failures.

To ensure methodological transparency, we employed a two-stage hybrid protocol: first, DeepSeek-V3 pre-annotated all comments using a structured prompt designed to identify the primary locus of implicit shift (presuppositional, implicative, or inferential) and to flag secondary effects; second, two independent human researchers blind-coded the same comments using the identical taxonomy, resolving disagreements through consensus discussion (initial agreement: [X]%, final Cohen's κ = [Y]). The AI outputs served as an efficiency aid and did not determine final classifications – all reported shifts in Table 2 are human-verified, with full annotation logs, prompt history, and raw outputs archived in supplementary materials for full replicability.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CONCEPTS AND DISTINCTIONS

Presuppositions in the narrow sense are implied premises at the level of the topic of the message. In the broad sense, presuppositions can be interpreted as the background knowledge of speakers, their awareness of the situation and the interlocutor. The term "presupposition" has a longer history than the term "pragmatics" itself, since interest in this phenomenon was initially shown by philosophers (G. Frege, P. Strawson). In relevance theory, presuppositions are considered as elements of the recipient's cognitive environment—background knowledge activated in the process of interpretation and serving as the basis for deriving explicatures and implicatures Simons (2005). According to N. Fairclough's classification, three types of presuppositions (assumptions) are distinguished: existential, propositional, and evaluative Fairclough (2003). This typology is used in critical discourse analysis to identify implicit assumptions involved in the construction of social representations.

Implication in the broad sense is the presence in the text of meanings that are not verbally expressed but are guessable by the addressee Arnold (2021). In the narrow sense, it is an additional implied meaning arising from the relationship of juxtaposed units of the text but not verbally expressed by them. Differential features of textual implication include the ability to convey subjective-evaluative information, limitation to the microcontext, and variability of reconstruction Arnold (1982).

Inference is understood as a logical conclusion or impulse to action that results from the interpretation of communicative intention in context. This definition aligns with the Gricean logical tradition, as it focuses not on the procedural aspect of meaning reconstruction but on its final product. This interpretation finds support in A. Graesser's constructionist model, which distinguishes between logical (necessary) and pragmatic (knowledge-based) inferences Graesser et al. (1994). In contrast to implication as a textual, semantically determined phenomenon, inference represents the pragmatic outcome of interpretation—a conclusion that may prompt action or form a new belief.

In modern linguistic literature, the concepts of implication (implicature) and inference are often equated. For example, Bohn and Frank (2025) use the term "pragmatic inference" as a generalizing term to describe the process of meaning reconstruction. However, we argue that the analytical distinction between implication (as a semiotic and textual-semantic effect) and inference (as a cognitive-logical conclusion) retains methodological significance. This distinction allows for a more precise description of the directionality of meaning generation: inference describes the reconstruction of the speaker's intention in context, while implication captures additional meanings derived from the form and organization of the utterance.

Thus, we propose differentiating implication as a side meaning or connotation of an utterance from inference as a logical conclusion or impulse to action arising from the communicative situation. The introduced differentiation of categories builds a hierarchical model of communicative outcome, assigning to presupposition, implication, and inference the roles of background assumption, side meaning, and logical conclusion, respectively.

In the process of communicative interaction, the correct decoding of presuppositions, implications, and inferences is a condition for the success of a speech act. However, the mechanisms of their recognition are subject to failures, functioning either as strategies of hidden influence or as cognitive errors initiated by the addresser (manipulation/shift) or the addressee (inattention/defense mechanisms) Macchi et al. (2019), Van Eemeren and Verheij (2018).

This study distinguishes three categories of shifts in the erroneous and manipulative modes: presuppositional (mismatch of background knowledge vs. introduction of a false premise as a fact), implicative (inability to recognize connotations vs. creation of biased associations through markers), and inferential (incorrect conclusion vs. imposition of an action scenario). This tripartite division describes the directionality of meaning generation at the level of outcome, where each level can become a locus of unintentional error or strategic manipulation depending on the addresser's intention and the recipient's cognitive resources.

The division of implications into three types—non-intentional, conventional, and intentional—provides important theoretical grounds for our classification of pragmatic shifts Maslennikova (1999). The fundamental difference between this approach and ours, however, lies in a different analytical focus. Maslennikova's perspective is intentionality-based, examining meaning creation through the lens of intent. Our perspective is locational-hierarchical, examining shifts (intentional and unintentional) across the three loci—presuppositional, implicative, and inferential levels of communication. This structural approach allows us to identify precisely where shifts occur, rather than merely focusing on whether they are deliberate or spontaneous. Both perspectives, while distinct in their core objectives, offer complementary insights that enrich our comprehension of pragmatic phenomena.

A methodological note is necessary here. One should avoid mechanically searching for implicitness in any text, since implicit components are an integral part of any effective communication: without presuppositions and implicatures, speech loses economy and naturalness. The value of pragmatic analysis lies not in merely noting the presence of hidden meanings, but in identifying patterns of their use for hidden influence or cognitive failures. The criterion for distinguishing communicative norm, error, and manipulative strategy is, after all, the communicants' intentions: cooperation and clarification of meaning (norm), unconscious cognitive failure or deficit of background knowledge (error) versus targeted introduction of controversial assumptions or imposition of conclusions that do not follow from the premises (manipulation). Within the framework of this study, "errors" and "manipulations" refer specifically to those cases where implicitness—unintentionally or intentionally—distorts the process of meaning decoding by the recipient.

Table 1

Table 1 Theoretical Framework: A Three-Level Hierarchy of Implicit Meaning

Level	Definition	Function
Presupposition	Implied premises / background knowledge (existential, propositional, evaluative)	Establishes communicative ground
Implication	Side meanings / connotations derived from linguistic form & textual juxtaposition	Adds subjective-evaluative layer
Inference	Logical conclusion or impulse to action arising from communicative intention & context	Drives interpretation & behavior

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Building upon the theoretical differentiation of presupposition, implication, and inference, this section presents the empirical findings of the study. The analysis is structured to validate the proposed hierarchical model through a two-tiered approach: first, by deconstructing controlled prototypical utterances to isolate specific mechanisms of manipulative influence and unintentional pragmatic failure; and second, by examining naturalistic data from digital discourse to observe these mechanisms in spontaneous interaction. This progression from abstract prototypes to real-world application allows for the identification of distinct pragmatic shifts—systematic deviations between intended and decoded meaning—that characterize both strategic influence and communicative breakdown. The following discussion demonstrates how these shifts manifest across the three levels of implicitness, revealing their interdependent roles in shaping communicative outcomes.

ANALYSING PROTOTYPES OF LOGICAL SHIFTS OF IMPLICITNESS

The introduced differentiation of categories builds a hierarchical model of communicative outcome, assigning to presupposition, implication, and inference the roles of background assumption, side meaning, and logical conclusion, respectively. Below is an analysis of six prototypical utterances from media and social networks illustrating the interaction of these categories in manipulative strategies and inadvertent (often unconscious) errors.

MANIPULATIONS WITH IMPLICIT INFORMATION

1) **Manipulation of Presuppositions:** "There is still no democracy in the country now."—The utterance asserts as uncontested background that democracy never existed in the past and continues to be absent now. The adverbs "still" and "now" imply disappointment and a failed effort. While an inference toward action ("bring democracy") is suggested, the manipulative force rests primarily on the unverified presupposition, which makes the call to action appear logically necessary.
2) **Manipulation of Implications:** "Even those people who consider themselves healthy..."—The presupposition (existence of such people) is unremarkable. The manipulative work is done by the markers "even" and "consider", which imply a discrepancy between subjective self assessment and objective reality, suggesting hidden vulnerability. The resulting inference (the product suits everyone) is secondary; the core manipulation lies in the connotative associations created by the lexical choice.
3) **Manipulation of Inferences:** Daughter to mother: "A new iPhone has been released."—The presupposition (existence of the phone) and implication (prestige, superiority via "new") are present, but the manipulative effect is rooted in inference: the recipient is guided toward the action oriented conclusion that a purchase is needed. The utterance functions as a covert purchase directive, exploiting status expectations Larina (2015).

UNINTENTIONAL OR UNCONSCIOUS ERRORS BASED ON IMPLICIT INFORMATION

Below is an analysis of three prototypical utterances illustrating pragmatic failures (errors of presupposition, implication, and inference).

1) **Error of Presupposition (false background assumption):** Dialogue: "How do you communicate on Telegram? Via VPN? Switch to Max!"—"And you?"—The respondent falsely presupposes that the addresser has VPN problems and is seeking advice, whereas the actual intention is promotional. The mismatch of background assumptions leads to communicative failure (Dynamic Pragmatics Research Group, 2025).
2) **Error of Implication (incorrect coding/decoding of connotation):** Utterance: "Do you still carry a 'baggage of grudges'? ... Your experience would be so interesting!"—Ironic markers (scare quotes, "still", "so interesting!") create ambiguity. The addressee may misdecode the intended force (playful vs. passive aggressive), causing pragmatic failure. Such mismatches in implicature decoding are common in digital contexts where prosodic cues are absent; ambiguous connotative framing increases misalignment risk Solidjonov (2026), Ma et al. (2025).
3) **Error of Inference (invalid logical conclusion):** Utterance: "You think they care about science? Then where's the extra funding?"—Rests on an unstated conditional (if care → extra funding), ignoring alternative explanations. The conclusion does not logically follow. This error lies in treating a contingent indicator as a necessary condition; complex constructs admit multiple non redundant manifestations Graesser et al. (1994). Conflating rhetorical force with logical validity shifts dialogue from collaboration to adversarial positioning Nikalje (2024), Bambini et al. (2021).

PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS OF ONLINE COMMENTS: PRESUPPOSITIONAL, IMPLICATIVE, AND INFERENTIAL SHIFTS

Besides 6 prototypes in 4.1, 24 comments were purposively sampled from AfterShock (selected for its free, untrammeled, and open-criticism environment conducive to spontaneous pragmatic phenomena) to provide balanced coverage across the three shift loci (presuppositional, implicative, inferential) and to illustrate prototypical instantiations of each, enabling clear demonstration of the model's diagnostic logic. This qualitative selection is appropriate for theory validation and hypothesis generation; it does not support frequency claims, which await future quantitative testing with random samples. The analysis focuses on specific types of shifts (error or manipulation) determining the pragmatic failure in each case.

Table 2

Table 2 Pragmatic Shifts in Comments to Internet Articles with Single Crucial Locus

Exact formulation of example (English translation)	Crucial locus	Fallacy / rhetorical or logical figure (trap)	Brief analysis of shift
Comment 1: "A person has reached the stage of growing up, and therefore it is time to understand that Life is immeasurably wider than the children's sandbox, that there exists a huge world of spirits (plasmodial	Presupposition	Ontological inflation (the fallacy of postulating entities or categories of existence without sufficient empirical or logical necessity, thereby	Existence of unfalsifiable "plasmodial beings" postulated as uncontested background → also enabling non-sequitur about extraterrestrial contact (ontological shift).

beings), and the cosmic family of aliens has long been waiting for our maturation..."		violating the principle of parsimony (Occam's razor)).	
Comment 2: "The Antichrist will no longer come, I annihilated him in the womb in 2015... in 2020 they wanted to put the Crown on me, it gave power over people's organisms..."	Presupposition	Ontological inflation	Absurd metaphysical abilities claimed as fact; lexicon ("annihilated", "Corona") implies "initiated" status, boosting rhetorical weight without evidence.
Comment 3: "Evolution gave creatures reason as a way to control evolution itself... We spent this biogenetic impulse on mental onanism... AI can be considered the second form of intelligent life on the planet, but we created it and immediately limited its evolutionary freedom. So again we violate the laws of evolution. Naturally, evolution itself will sweep us away as an obstacle to its own development."	Presupposition	Teleological fallacy	Evolution attributed teleology (purposefulness) → anthropomorphising a process; markers "mental onanism" imply moral inadequacy; metaphorical scenario ("swept away") risks being taken as scientific forecast.
Comment 4: "Individualism + 'energy efficiency' = war of all against all."	Presupposition	Teleological fallacy	An unproven premise is introduced that combining these concepts inevitably leads to conflict, excluding cooperation.
Comment 5: "Bees have a reproductive instinct. Humans do not. The very fact that someone under the influence of culture does not reproduce shows that this is not an instinct..."	Presupposition	False dilemma / biosocial dualism	Instinct defined simplistically as excluding cultural variability → opposition "bees/humans" implies inadmissible "biologisation"; final conclusion ("article is unscientific") is inferential error from dichotomous thinking.
Comment 6: "The very idea that someone would selflessly work so that someone else could live better—it is beautiful, this idea. But absolutely unviable. Alas, people are not capable of that."	Presupposition	Fatalistic anthropology	Pessimistic model of human nature introduced as indisputable background ("people are not capable"); markers "absolutely unviable" imply fatalism; inferential manipulation imposes conclusion that reform is hopeless (demotivation tool).
Comment 7: "Inept operators will write everything down on a piece of paper, memorize it, slam themselves on the ground and become skilled? Doubtful... Back in the Gulag era it was simpler: Inept operator? — A green cross on the forehead! ... That is a rational policy of minimal sacrifices."	Presupposition	Ontological inflation + false dilemma	The background assumption is that people cannot be retrained. From this, the only alternative is posited to be repression.
Comment 8: "Doctors, teachers, mothers, soldiers—they are in 'critical conditions' every day, so they have a temporary clouding of reason, they stop measuring things by personal comfort."	Presupposition	Straw man (misrepresentation of an opponent's argument to make it easier to attack)	The opponent is implicitly ascribed the premise that altruists act in a state of madness, whereas the original thesis referred to extreme situations.

Comment 9: "...the frequency of wavering from extreme to extreme in our ethical system unambiguously hints that something is deeply wrong with it."	Implication	Connotative substitution (variability → defectiveness)	Lexical markers "wavering from extreme to extreme" create semantic association between "variability" and "defectiveness" without logical justification; recipient accepts connotation as proof of systemic instability, ignoring that historical changes may reflect normative adaptation.
Comment 10: "Daniil Andreev, after all, is a poet. Therefore, condemning him for 'The Rose of the World' is the same as condemning Dante for his description of Hell and Paradise."	Implication	Category error (artistic status → epistemic inviolability)	Marker "poet" creates implication of epistemic inviolability; artistic discourse shields philosophical claims from critical verification, blocking rational discussion.
Comment 11: "Measures to restrict access to Internet resources are the introduction of a property qualification and the creation of a regulated financial barrier ('fees') between 'parallel communities'."	Implication	Connotative substitution—analogy, metonymy, irony/sarcasm (payment → segregation)	Semantic association created between charging for traffic and intentional introduction of a property qualification; recipient accepts connotation of "qualification" (presupposing segregation) as only possible meaning, ignoring alternative interpretations (e.g., state security, domestic service penetration).
Comment 12: "A long read, with a lot of contradictions and logical inconsistencies. Did you write with the help of neural networks, or do you just like graphomania? ... The OP really wanted to add solidity to their article."	Implication	Ad hominem (via connotative pejorative substitution)	Main shift is inferential (ad hominem), supported by presuppositional error (self-assignment of AI detector expertise) and implicative manipulation (pejoratives "long read", "graphomania" imply disdain).
Comment 13: "This petty cheating did not succeed."	Implication	Ad hominem (via connotative pejorative substitution, expressivity)	Instead of analyzing the opponent's logic, the word "cheating" is used, connoting deliberate deception.
Comment 14: "The author is just an infogypsy warming up his future flock with his articles."	Implication	Ad hominem (via connotative pejorative substitution, metaphor)	Pejorative markers ("infogypsy", "warming up his flock") create an association with fraud and sectarianism without refuting the arguments.
Comment 15: "I tried reading it—just a stream of drivel."	Implication	Ad hominem (emotional evaluation instead of argument, expressivity)	The word "drivel" carries a strong negative connotation but does not specify where the text is logically flawed.
Comment 16: "It looks very funny when a man builds his authority on having taught his wife to seek her own fault in every conflict."	Implication	Sarcasm + connotative substitution	"Very funny" implies absurdity, while the original statement (about mutual analysis) is replaced with the image of "training."
Comment 17: "The energy efficiency of a dissipative system is not the same as that of a steam locomotive.	Inference	Premise error: Ignoratio elenchi + hasty generalization	A difference in terminology across contexts does not prove ignorance of physics; the

Therefore, the author has gaps in elementary physics."			conclusion does not follow from the premise.
Comment 18: "Education exists only to produce compliance, any reform equals state control."	Inference	Premise error: Ignoratio elenchi (irrelevant conclusion)	Chain: presuppositional trap (education's sole function is compliance) → ontological shift (pedagogy → state control) → inferential substitution (reform = control). Recipient disputes final claim while the ground has been replaced.
Comment 19: "The author has major gaps in knowledge and experience—hence the 'cockroach wedding' in his theory."	Inference	Argument error: Ad hominem	The conclusion that the theory is unsound is drawn from an assessment of the author's personality, not from an analysis of the arguments.
Comment 20: "Individualism + 'energy efficiency' = war of all against all."	Inference	Conclusion error: Non sequitur	From the premises "individualism" and "energy efficiency", "war of all against all" does not logically follow; the possibility of cooperation is ignored.
Comment 21: "From one(!) local(!) Marxist's article about some incident at some enterprise in the 90s(!), the author makes a logical leap to how Marxists(!) view the organization of their enterprise" (accusation of an unjustified logical leap from a single instance to general.)	Inference	Conclusion error: Secundum quid (hasty generalization) or non sequitur	Single case treated as representative of all Marxists; ignores statistical significance, historical context, and ideological diversity. The exclamation marks carry implicative dismissiveness, but the core failure is the invalid inference.
Comment 22: "An engineering approach within the postmodern paradigm is impossible. You cannot call your ideology engineering while building it on personal experience teaching tango."	Inference	Conclusion error: False dilemma + non sequitur	Lack of formal education does not invalidate the methodological engineering approach; transdisciplinary synthesis is ignored.
Comment 23: "He needs money and doesn't care about you, and you are suckers, keep working as doctors and teachers—there's your autohumanism."	Inference	Conclusion error: Motive construction (false cause)	A hidden selfish motive is attributed to the author without evidence, and on that basis the entire ideology is declared a fraud.
Comment 24: "But YouTube never pushed anything like that to me. Maybe because YouTube has a normal recommendation system, while various trash sites have a propaganda system" (Other potential factors like user history or content type are ignored.)	Inference	Conclusion error: Post hoc ergo propter hoc (false cause)	Correlation (different recommendations) treated as causation (YouTube = "normal", others = "propaganda"). Ignores alternative explanations (user history, content libraries, algorithmic objectives). Presupposes transparency of algorithmic causality; evaluative labels reinforce but do not replace the inferential flaw.

The 24 comments empirically validate the three level hierarchical model: each pragmatic shift is driven by a single crucial locus—presupposition, implication, or inference—while the other two levels are secondary consequences. This refines existing taxonomies that often conflate or distribute causal weight indiscriminately.

Presuppositional dominance (Comments 1–8 in Table 2). Eight examples locate the primary failure at unverified background assumptions. Whether postulating "plasmodial beings", claiming metaphysical annihilation of the Antichrist, attributing teleology to evolution, asserting a false dilemma about instinct, installing fatalistic anthropology, assuming people\e cannot be retrained, or misrepresenting an opponent's argument (straw man)—the addresser installs an ontological premise as uncontested fact. This presuppositional trap then enables implicative connotations and inferential leaps. Even when the eventual output is a logical error, the root cause remains presuppositional.

Implicative substitutions (Comments 9–16 in Table 2). In these eight cases, the shift originates in connotative meaning. Lexical markers equate "wavering" with "defectiveness"; the label "poet" is treated as a shield against criticism (category error); a fee becomes a "property qualification" by connotative transfer; pejoratives ("long read", "graphomania") execute ad hominem through implication; the word "cheating" connotes deliberate deception without argument. Conceptual transfers (metaphor, metonymy, analogy, epithets, irony, sarcasm, stylistic colouring, phono-graphic figures, syntactical figures)—when used argumentatively—create implicative shifts: they substitute an evoked association or emotion for evidentiary reasoning. In each example, presuppositions (e.g., that variability is abnormal, that poets are epistemically privileged) are derived from the connotation, not vice versa. The inference then follows automatically once the connotative frame is accepted. Thus the implicative level is the crucial trigger.

Inferential failures (Comments 17–24 in Table 2). Logical fallacies—irrelevant conclusion, hasty generalization, false cause, ad hominem, motive construction, post hoc ergo propter hoc—are predominantly inferential distortions. They substitute a spurious logical connection for a valid one. We further divide the inference locus into three subloci corresponding to the classical syllogistic structure: premise, argument, and conclusion, which allows us to localize the failure precisely.

- **Ignoratio elenchi** (irrelevant conclusion) is primarily a premise error: the arguer replaces the original claim with a different one, often via a hidden presuppositional shift. For example, Comment 18 ("Education exists only to produce compliance, any reform equals state control") covertly shifts the ontology from pedagogy to state control; the conclusion does not follow from the original premise.
- **Other premise errors** include Comment 17 (a difference in terminology across contexts does not prove ignorance of physics—hasty generalization).
- **Conclusion errors** include Comment 20 (non sequitur: individualism + energy efficiency → war of all against all), Comment 21 (secundum quid: one Marxist article generalised to all Marxists), Comment 22 (false dilemma + non sequitur about engineering and tango teaching), Comment 23 (motive construction: attributing selfish motives without evidence), and Comment 24 (false cause: YouTube vs. trash sites).
- **Argument error** (ad hominem) appears in Comment 19 (attacking the author's knowledge/experience instead of the arguments).

The model's diagnostic power lies in identifying the crucial locus. Once identified, targeted verification becomes straightforward: 1) for presuppositional shifts: verify ontological status of background claims; 2) for implicative shifts: identify any conceptual transfer, figure of speech, or evaluative marker, and separate connotative freight from factual content; 3) for inferential shifts: test logical validity, check for hidden premises or confounding variables, and distinguish premise errors (ignoratio elenchi, hasty generalization from false premise) from conclusion errors (non sequitur, false cause, post hoc) and argument errors (ad hominem).

To illustrate the three-locus meaning shift model, in our material we purposively picked 8 cases of presuppositional shifts, 8 implicative and 8 inferential shifts. Of course, real-world data may not exhibit such neat distribution. The statistics and percentage of meaning shifts is yet to be discovered. The table confirms that a single locus drives each shift, and the other two levels are downstream effects. Inferential manipulations—especially ignoratio elenchi as a premise error—appear to be the most damaging because they bypass content discussion entirely.

CONCLUSION

The analysis confirms the heuristic value of the three-locus (or three-level) model (presupposition → implication → inference) for diagnosing pragmatic shifts in digital discourse. The empirical material reveals mixed discourse—from pseudoscientific argumentation to esoteric speculation—with a high density of manipulative strategies. Addresser-caused shifts predominate across all three loci: presuppositional (unverified background assumptions, reification, teleological fallacy, fatalistic anthropology), implicative (emotionally charged lexicon, pejoratives, conceptual transfers, figures of speech), and inferential (including premise errors such as ignoratio elenchi, conclusion errors such as non sequitur and false cause, and argument errors such as ad hominem). The identified chain—presuppositional trap → ontological shift → inferential substitution—appears to give particular stability to manipulation and make critical verification difficult for the recipient.

Addressee errors occur when the recipient fails to correctly decode an utterance. While such errors may reflect inattention or lack of pragmatic competence (cf. "How do you communicate on Telegram? Via VPN? Switch to Max!"—"And you?"), they can also be

elicited by addresser-created ambiguity, logical flaws, or manipulative framing. The present data suggest that inferential failures may originate more frequently at the addresser level (as logical errors in encoding) than at the addressee level (as failures in decoding), though this distribution requires quantitative verification. The distinction between encoding errors and decoding errors is essential for a balanced account of pragmatic breakdown.

The methodological value of distinguishing implication (textual-semantic effect) from inference (cognitive-logical conclusion) lies in the ability to precisely localise the shift locus and develop targeted verification strategies: explicit checking of presuppositions, reflection on implicative markers (including tropes and figures of speech), and control of logical coherence. Developing critical pragmatic competence among digital discourse participants can minimise pragmatic failures and foster a more responsible communicative culture.

Our qualitative (purposive) sample yielded an artificial balance of 2+8 presuppositional, 2+8 implicative, and 2+8 inferential shifts, designed to illustrate all three loci equally. Determining their natural prevalence in digital discourse requires quantitative corpus analysis and remains a task for future research.

Quantitative verification would require automated annotation using NLP models and double-blind coding. A proposed algorithm includes automated data collection (Python, requests/Selenium) with ethical parsing, a coding scheme along "level of analysis" × "type of shift", calculation of inter-expert reliability (Cohen's $\kappa \geq 0.75$), pre-annotation with NLP models, expert verification, and statistical analysis (frequency analysis, logistic regression). This scheme ensures methodological continuity between qualitative typology and large-scale empirical testing.

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