

# **Irregular Negations: Implicature and Idiom Theories**

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Horn identified a number of unusual negations that are not used in accordance with the standard rules of logic. I call them irregular negations. We will study five different types: scalar, metalinguistic, and evaluative implicature denials; presupposition denials; and contrary affirmations. What do these negations mean or convey? How is their irregular interpretation related to their regular interpretation? Are they pragmatically or semantically ambiguous? These are the principal questions I shall address. I will here focus on one type of pragmatic theory: implicature theories. I argue that an implicature theory works well only for evaluative implicature denials. Other irregular negations, I argue, are semantically ambiguous in an unusual way. I stress the partial compositionality of irregular negations, while accounting for their distinctive features by making the case that they are idioms which plausibly evolved from generalized conversational implicatures.