

Intention and diverging interpretations of implicature in the “uncovered meat” sermon

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Abstract

The standard model of communication in linguistic pragmatics is founded on the assumption that “successful” communication involves the addressee making inferences about the intentions of the speaker. Miscommunication of implicatures thus presumably arises when the addressee does not correctly infer the speaker’s intention. In this paper, however, it is argued that this view of the (mis)communication of implicatures does not adequately account for the manner in which intentions may become the subject of discursive dispute in interaction thereby giving rise to diverging interpretations of implicatures. Drawing from an analysis of the “uncovered meat” comments made by Sheik Taj Din al-Hilali and the ensuing controversy over what was implied by them, it is argued that to label such an incident as simply a misunderstanding of the speaker’s intentions is misleading. Instead, it is suggested that the way in which Hilali’s comments were shifted from a specific audience in the Muslim community to wider Australian society by the media engendered discursive dispute over Hilali’s intentions, and thus gave rise to the co-constitution of diverging interpretations of what was implied by Hilali. Building a model of the communication of implicatures must therefore move beyond the received view that it involves “correctly” inferring the intentions of speakers to encompass a broader view where both converging and diverging interpretations of implicatures emerge through their conjoint co-constitution in interaction.

1. Introduction

One of the key assumptions underlying the field of pragmatics is that what is communicated, in particular, meaning beyond what is said, crucially involves the intentions of speakers. A significant amount of theorizing in pragmatics has been premised on the view that communication

involves speakers expressing their intentions, and hearers attributing intentions to those speakers. If the intentions attributed by the hearers are roughly the same as those expressed by the speaker, then communication is considered to have been successful. In Gricean and neo-Gricean implicature theory (Grice 1975, 1989; Levinson 1983, 2000, 2006) and Relevance Theory (Carston 2002; Sperber & Wilson 1995), for example, implicatures are said to arise through inferences about the speaker's 'intention' based on what is said by the speaker, pragmatic principles, contextual information, and shared background knowledge. While there has been less attention directed at situations involving unsuccessful communication, miscommunication of implicatures presumably arises when the addressee does not correctly infer the speaker's intention.

Upon closer examination, however, the status of the speaker's intentions vis-à-vis (mis)communication is not always as straightforward as the received view might suggest (Arundale this volume; Bilmes 1986; Clark 1997; Gibbs 1999; Haugh 2007; Heritage [1990] 1991). One issue that has arisen is the inherent ambiguity in the temporal status of these intentions. It is commonly assumed in pragmatics that the communication of implicatures involves the hearer's making inferences about the *a priori* intentions of speakers, since an *a priori* intention is closest to what we normally understand intention to be in the intuitive folk sense, namely as a plan or aim formulated by the speaker before uttering something (Gibbs 1999; Malle & Knobe 1997). However, intention can be used in multiple ways to refer to different points in time in relation to specific utterances in discourse, in particular, intention may be invoked *post facto* by interactants. Communication theorists (Arundale this volume; Arundale & Good 2002: 127–128; Buttny 1993; Buttny & Morris 2001; Jayyusi 1993), conversation analysts (Heritage 1984, 1988; [1990] 1991; Moerman 1988), social psychologists (Gibbs 1999, 2001; Malle 2001, 2004), and discursive psychologists (Edwards 1997: 107–108, 2006: 44, this volume; Edwards & Potter 2005: 243–244; Locke & Edwards 2003; Potter 2006: 132; Stokoe & Edwards 2008), for example, have demonstrated how intention can become a topic of discussion in and of itself, and how this is exploited by participants in accounting for their actions.

However, the challenge to the received view of the role of intention in communicating implicatures goes beyond the issue of the ambiguous temporal status of intentions. As Edwards (2006: 44) notes, a *post facto* notion of intention is “generally open to formulation, denial, opposition, alternative description, or the partialling-out of intent with regard to specific, formulated components of actions.” This *post facto* invoking of intention to account for “miscommunicated” meaning may also engender discursive dispute about those intentions, since participants may not

always “agree” about what has been communicated. According to the Conjoint Co-Constituting Model of Communication (Arundale 1999, 2004, 2006), while participant interpretations of utterance meaning are very often similar or convergent, “participants can and do conjointly co-constitute complementary and even divergent meanings and actions for an utterance in sequence” (Arundale 2006: 196). It follows from this view that diverging interpretations of what is implied can emerge in discourse.

The recent furor over the alleged criticism of Islam implied by comments made by the Pope in his speech at the University of Regensburg on in 2006 illustrates how diverging interpretations of implicature, arising from *post facto* dispute over the intentions of speakers, can become a very high stakes matter indeed. The offending passage from the Pope’s speech was interpreted by many Western commentators as implying that religious teachings should never be used to justify violent actions, particularly acts of terrorism. However, the same passage was interpreted by others as implying disrespect towards Islam, and so ignited a wave of protests around the world (Ruether 2006: 127; Soage 2007: 137). The way in which the Pope’s intended implicature became the subject of discursive dispute between commentators around the world indicates that intentions can be invoked as well as disputed *post facto* by participants in accounting for “miscommunicated” implicatures.

Somewhat ironically a remarkably similar controversy arose in the Australian media just one month after the Pope’s comments inflamed the Muslim world, when the Mufti of Australia, Sheik Taj Din al-Hilali, was reported in *The Australian* as having compared women who dress immodestly to “uncovered meat” and blaming them for inviting rape in a sermon delivered in the Lakemba mosque in Sydney (“Muslim leader blames women for sex attacks,” Richard Kerbaj, *The Australian*, 26 October 2006). At the heart of the controversy was once again a quotation borrowed from another scholar that implied, depending on one’s point of view, either a message of modesty and abstinence (according to Hilali and his advocates), or that women who don’t wear appropriate clothing are to blame for sexual assaults (according to the majority of commentators in the Australian media).

The question therefore arises in regards to how allegedly “misinterpreted” implicatures such as these might be analyzed. According to the received view of implicature, Hilali’s (as well as the Pope’s) intentions must have been misunderstood by their critics, and so incidents such as these should be labeled as instances of miscommunication. But the continuing existence of diverging interpretations of what was implied by the “uncovered meat” comments, despite claims from Hilali and his supporters that he had been “misinterpreted,” indicates that labeling such

incidents as simply a matter of miscommunication gives us an impoverished account. In particular, the dispute over what was implied suggests that the invoking of speaker's intentions is not necessarily a straightforward matter, as such involkings can involve dispute over the "speaker's stake or investment in producing those descriptions" (Edwards & Potter 2005: 246). Unraveling such disputes thus encompasses not only an analysis of intention, but also the various interpretive norms and sociocultural presuppositions underlying the co-constitution of implicatures.

In this paper, it is argued that it is important to carefully analyze how such diverging interpretations arise, and to consider whether incidents such as these, which involve discursive disputes about intention, pose a substantial challenge to existing accounts of implicature. The data set that forms the basis of this analysis draws from the widespread and in-depth coverage in newspapers, radio and television of the "uncovered meat" comments made by Sheik Taj Din al-Hilali in his sermon, and the ensuing controversy over what was implied by them.¹ In the following sections, the diverging interpretations of implicature that arose from Hilali's sermon, in particular, his comments about "uncovered meat" and the ensuing furor to which they gave rise to are first outlined in greater detail. The various accounts invoked by Hilali and his supporters in rejecting what was reported as implied in the Australian media, and in claiming an alternative interpreting of the "uncovered meat" comments are then discussed, before analyzing how those accounts themselves become the focus of discursive dispute. It is then argued that those discursive disputes arose as a consequence of discursive dispute, at a deeper level, over the different interpretive norms and sociocultural presuppositions underlying these respective interpretations. Finally, possible implications of this analysis for the intention-based view of implicature are considered.

2. The "uncovered meat" sermon controversy

In October 2006, a partial (and later full) translation of a sermon given to worshippers at the Lakemba mosque in Sydney on the 25th of September by one of Australia's most senior clerics, Sheikh Taj al-Din al-Hilali, the (now former) Grand Mufti of Australia, was published in the only national daily newspaper, *The Australian*. The translated sections from the sermon reported in the article sparked an outpouring of outrage from broad sections of Australian society, including Muslim leaders, the Prime Minister and other prominent Australians, calling for Hilali to be sacked, with some such as the Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner Pru Goward even suggesting that Hilali be deported. It became the leading news

report on national television as well as in the print media in Australia, and was also reported in other major international news outlets in North America, Europe and Asia.

The original translation was as reported as follows in *The Australian*:

- (1) (“Muslim leader blames women for sex attacks,” Richard Kerbaj, *The Australian*, 26 October 2006)

If you take out uncovered meat and place it outside on the street, or in the garden or in the park, or in the backyard without a cover, and the cats come and eat it . . . whose fault is it, the cats or the uncovered meat? The uncovered meat is the problem. If she was in her room, in her home, in her hijab, no problem would have occurred.²

The main implicatures derived by those who were offended by Hilali’s sermon, in particular the comparison between women and uncovered meat, were that “women who dress inappropriately invite rape,” “it is the fault of women who dress inappropriately if they are raped,” and so “in these situations the fault for rape cannot be solely attributed to the perpetrators” (implicature set I_A). For example, in the following excerpt from the *Today* show, which was broadcast the very morning the quotes from the sermon were initially published in *The Australian*, we can see how both the presenter, Jessica Rowe, and her guest, Pru Goward, align themselves with the view that Hilali had implied women who don’t wear the *hijab* (Islamic head-dress) invite rape, and so can be blamed for such rapes (transcription conventions for excerpts from television and radio broadcasts are listed at the end of this paper).

- (2) (“Cleric calls women meat,” *Today*, Channel 9, 26 October 2006)

- 1 JR: Well the nation’s top cleric has touched off a firestorm by blaming immodestly dressed women for sex attacks. Sheikh al-Hilali has likened women who don’t wear Islamic head-dresses to abandoned me:at that attracts animals. And joining us now is Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner Pru Goward. Pru, thanks for coming in↑
- 2 PG: Fine, Jessica.
- 3 JR: Should Sheik al-Hilali be sacked over this.
- 4 PG: I think it’s- it’s more than that. A:h (.) I think he’s taken advantage of Australian ↑tolerance, we’re a very tolerant coun↑try. A:h and I feel that a- a lot of Australians this morning would be feeling that that tolerance has been abused. There is a history now of the Sheikh saying things like this. It is incitement to a crime. A:h young men, young Muslim men, who now rape women, wou- can cite this in court, can quote this man in court, the:ir leader in court.

In this excerpt, Jessica Rowe first outlines the key allegation, namely that Hilali implied women who dress inappropriately invite sexual assault (line 1). This allegation is not only ratified by Pru Goward (line 4), but is expanded into the accusation that has Hilali incited “young Muslim men” to commit sexual crimes. While this latter accusation soon faded in the media discourse, the interpreting of Hilali’s comments as implying women are at fault for rape (I_A) continued to be reported in the Australian media throughout the weeks that followed.

Yet while many were offended by Hilali’s sermon, in particular the “uncovered meat” comments, Hilali himself and his supporters argued that his analogy actually implied something quite different. The main implicatures that were derived by Hilali and his advocates were that “Muslim women should dress and behave modestly,” “Muslims should practice abstinence outside of marriage,” and “provocative behavior can lead to sex outside of marriage” (implicature set I_B).³ Hilali himself released a statement through the Lakemba mosque website where he claimed his sermon was about modesty and sexual relations between unmarried persons, and did not relate to rape.

- (3) (“Media statement by Sheikh Taj Alihilali,” *Lakemba Mosque*, released via *IslamiSydney.com*, 26 October 2006)

I spoke about the causes that lead to fornication for both men and women. If the sin should occur, then both the man and the woman would be equally guilty of fornication. This has no relation to rape. I would like to unequivocally confirm that the presentation related to religious teachings on modesty and not to go to extremes in enticements, this does not condone rape, I condemn rape and reiterate that this is a capital crime.

In his media statement, then, Hilali not only rejected the view attributed to him by the media that he was blaming women for rape (implicature set I_A), but also claimed a message of modesty and abstinence was his intended meaning (implicature set I_B). In the following section, the ways in which various attempts to account for the existence of these diverging interpretations of implicature were made by Hilali and his supporters are thus considered.

3. Accounting for diverging interpretations of implicature

The notion of accounting, first found in the work of Sacks (1992[1964]), has received significant attention in both communication studies (for example, Buttny 1993; Buttny & Morris 2001; Young 1997) and in conver-

sation analysis/ethnomethodology (for example, Antaki 1988, 1994; Garfinkel 1967; Heritage 1984, 1988). It is generally differentiated into two types, namely normative and moral accountability (Heritage 1988). Normative accountability is essentially “the taken-for-granted level of reasoning through which a running index of action and interaction is created and sustained,” while moral accountability involves “the level of overt explanation in which social actors give accounts of what they are doing in terms of reasons, motives or causes” (Heritage 1988: 128). In addition, overt explanation can be further subdivided into the use of accounts in the immediate context of the activities they account for, and narrative explanations which are external to that activity (131–132). In rejecting the implicatures attributed to the “uncovered meat” comments by the Australian media (I_A), Hilali and his supporters explicitly invoked a number of different accounts in claiming what was implied (I_B). These accounts offered by Hilali and his supporters thus clearly fall into this latter category of moral accountability, as they were (conjointly) co-constituted after the sermon, although normative accountability was also invoked at times in these accounts.

One account offered in asserting the meaning of the “uncovered meat” comments as being consistent with implicature set I_A was an appeal to intention or intended meaning. These appeals centered on the claim that Hilali did not mean or intend to imply that women who dress inappropriately invite or deserve to be sexually assaulted. This type of accounting was invoked by both Hilali and his key spokesperson, Keysar Trad, on a number of occasions both through press releases and during television interviews. Hilali, for instance, was reported as claiming in an interview on *A Current Affair* with Ben Fordham that the implicatures attributed to the “uncovered meat” comments (I_A) were “unintended”.

(4) (“Ben Fordham interview with Hilali,” *A Current Affair*, Channel 9, 26 October 2006)

- 1 BF: The quotations in (The Australian), are they correct?
- 2 H: This has taken sentences and given them meaning that is unintended. Within the full context the intended meaning was to encourage people to abstain from sex outside of marriage and encourage modesty.

In line 2, Hilali invokes an account where the *a priori* meaning he had in mind when he made the comments is not consistent with the implicatures being attributed to them. Underpinning this account is a claim to exclusive knowledge of such intentions, and the assumption that such meanings are his to control.

A second kind of accounting involving appeals to intention was the claim that the intended audience was members of the mosque, not the general public. In making this claim, Hilali and his supporters attempted to normalize the “uncovered meat” comments within another context, while at the same time admitting they were not appropriate outside of the intended context of religious teaching in a mosque. For instance, in one press release Hilali explains that his message was intended for a specific audience, not the general public.

- (5) (“Explanatory statement by the Mufti El-Hilali regarding the recent media campaign,” *Lakemba Mosque*, 30 October 2006)

The metaphor I used of the ‘exposed meat’ was not appropriate for the western mentality . . . This metaphor was used in a private lesson given inside the mosque after the *Taraweeh* (optional night) prayers on the fourth day of Ramadan. It was meant for the Muslim attendees at the mosque and not the general public and particularly not the general women of our Australian society.

Hilali went on in the statement to admit that while he believed the analogy was inappropriate and unacceptable in the context of wider Australian society, its implied meaning (I_B) would have been readily understood by its intended audience. In doing so, Hilali was presupposing that implied meanings can vary depending on the audience.

Another supporter of Hilali, his spokesperson Keysar Trad, also attempted to normalize the use of “exaggerated examples” in the context of religious instruction during his interview with Karl Stefanovic on the *Today* show.

- (6) (“Keysar Trad defends Alhilali,” *Today*, Channel 9, 30 October 2006)

1 KT: Now let’s not forget that religious leaders are not there to be politically correct. They are the:re to guide people to do what is right.

[section omitted]

He’s there to give religious interpretation, and to encourage people (.) sometimes using fire and brimstones examples as clerics do: (.) to do what is right.

In this excerpt, Trad argues that religious leaders or clerics are trying to give moral guidance, and so it is unsurprising to see the use of “fire and brimstone examples” with such an audience. The normalization of such comments in other cultural contexts outside of Australia was also apparent in comments made by one of Hilali’s daughters, Shayma Saafan, who

argued that “If he used that in Egypt or Lebanon or an Arab country, there would be no issue. But to say that here, then that is a problem” (“Defending the faith: Sheik Taj Aldin Alhilali,” *60 Minutes*, Channel 9, 12 November 2006). Thus while some supporters such as Trad attempted to normalize the comments in the context of religious instruction within the Muslim community in Australia, others such as Saafan normalized them only in religious contexts outside of Australia.

Other forms of accounting, on the other hand, were used to reject or discredit I_A , including the claim that the “uncovered meat” comments had been misunderstood. Hilali, for example, in an interview on *A Current Affair* with Ben Fordham attributed the interpreting of his comments as implying women are at fault for rape as being due to a “misunderstanding.”

(7) (“Ben Fordham interview with Hilali,” *A Current Affair*, Channel 9, 26 October 2006)

- 1 BF: Can you say very clearly that you are sorry for the people who have been offended?
- 2 H: ((muffled)) A 100 percent misunderstanding.
- 3 BF: I can’t hear you saying, I can’t hear you saying sorry.
- 4 H: Misunderstand. I’m very, very sorry for that. People misunderstanding my talk and my message.

In this excerpt, while Fordham tries to elicit an apology from Hilali for the offense caused by the “uncovered meat” comments (lines 1 and 3), Hilali avoids taking full responsibility for this offense by apologizing for the misunderstanding caused by the comments rather than the comments themselves (line 2). In doing so, Hilali attempts to reframe the offense in line 4 as arising from a misunderstanding of his intended meaning, rather than the comments themselves being inappropriate, and so implicitly defends his right to make such comments to his intended audience.

A second account offered was the claim that Hilali was quoting from another literary scholar in making this analogy. In an interview with Monica Attard on *Sunday Profile*, Hilali distances himself from the negative implications attributed to him in this way.

(8) (“Sheikh Taj el-Din al-Hilali, Australia’s most senior Muslim cleric, never far from the headlines,” *Sunday Profile*, ABC Radio, 11 March 2007)

- 1 MA: The implication there is that you are saying a woman is responsible for whatever happens to her including rape if she dresses inappropriately (.) immodestly.

- 2 H: ((translated from Arabic by Keysar Trad)) Firstly this is a:h just ah the reverse meaning of of of what he's said.
 ((section omitted))
 Secondly that was quoting a literary figure but the- the meaning is reversed completely when people look at it like this.
 I'm giving an example (.) an analogy to clarify to people the significance of sexual crime.

Hilali claims that by quoting an analogy from the poet al-Rafi he was trying to encourage his listeners to be modest to avoid sexual relations outside of marriage, but in doing so also attempts to distance himself from the analogy itself. The similarities with the controversy over the Pope's quote of an Islamic scholar in his Regensburg speech were also pointed out by supporters, for instance, Abdul El Ayoubi, a member of the Lebanese Muslim Association, was quoted as saying "He [Hilali] keeps harping on the fact that he was quoting some ancient scholar, and he was, and compares it to the situation with the Pope" ("Sheikh Hilaly 'misinterpreted' like Pope," *The Australian*, 27 October 2006).

Appeals to Hilali's personal history, namely his advocacy for women's rights in the Muslim community were also made in attempts to discredit I_A. Hilali himself claimed that he is a "staunch supporter for the rights of women," and so was "saddened that my words have been understood in this way" ("Media statement by Sheikh Taj Alihilali," *Lakemba Mosque*, 26 October 2006 via IslamiSydney.com). Other supporters also invoked his long history of helping and supporting women within the Muslim community in claiming that Hilali could not have meant to imply women who dress inappropriately invite rape (I_A), since such a view would not be consistent with his continued support for women ("Women are treated like jewels," Natalie O'Brien, *The Australian*, 27 October 2006).

A fourth form of accounting used to discredit I_A was that the misinterpretation had been intentionally spread by "malicious" forces for the purposes of defaming Hilali. In doing so, Hilali and his supporters attributed an underlying agenda to the reporting of his sermon in the Australian media. In a press release from Hilali, he claims that small groups within the Muslim community were working in concert with the Australian media to vilify himself in particular, and the Muslim community more generally.

- (9) ("Explanatory statement by the Mufti El-Hilali regarding the recent media campaign," *Lakemba Mosque*, 30 October 2006)
 I am deeply saddened and distressed by the acts of some devious groups which lurk in the dark watching me, and who cannot tolerate the moderate balanced way which I adopt to advocate for women's

issues, national harmony and co-existence, and to hold fast to the love of our Australian home, to protect it from all forms of extreme thoughts and to reject all acts of violence and any act that breaches the rule of law.

Yes, I feel deeply saddened that such an ordinary lesson has been used to slander and defame me after it had been translated with the ill intention of a dubious media that wishes to incite and they present an unfair campaign, the aims of which are very well known.

In this excerpt, Hilali attributes an underlying agenda to those who first reported on his comments. He characterizes them as being “devious” and having “ill intentions,” and claims that they are using the comments in order to “slander” and “defame” him. Similar themes are alluded to by Keysar Trad in his interview with Karl Stefanovic on the *Today* show.

(10) (“Keysar Trad defends Alhilali,” *Today*, Channel 9, 30 October 2006)

1 KT: And ah now it seems to me that so many people are trying to a:h use this against him. Maybe to score some old ah ah ah some old- some old points or some old grudges. And the the poor man is- ah ah has been re:ally made into a living martyr at the moment.

Trad also refers to the existence of certain factions who hold personal “grudges” against Hilali, and so are using the “misinterpreted” comments as a way to get back at him.

In summary, then, a number of different types of accounts were given in attempting to discredit and so reject implicature set I_A , as well as bolster the assertion of implicature set I_B . These accountings included appeals to Hilali’s original intention, and the intended audience of the sermon in an attempt to *normalize* the comments within that context (I_B). Other accounts involved claims that his comments had been misunderstood, mistranslated, taken out of context, and were quotes from another literary figure, as well appeals to Hilali’s personal history of supporting women within the Muslim community, in attempts to *distance* himself from the offensive interpreting of his comments (I_A). Finally, the accusation that the media were intentionally vilifying him was made in attempts to position Hilali on higher moral ground, and thereby garner sympathy for a more charitable interpretation of his comments.

However, while Hilali and his supporters gave various accounts to justify rejecting I_A and supplanting it with I_B as the intended implicatures of the “uncovered meat” comments, many of these accounts were disputed by commentators in the Australian media who continued to argue that

was implied was in fact I_A. In the following section, the ways in which these accountings themselves became the subject of discursive dispute are thus explored.

4. The discursive disputing of accountings

In a number of television and radio interviews with Hilali and his supporters, as well as with his detractors, diverging interpretations of what was implied by Hilali's "uncovered meat" comments became quite entrenched. When Hilali and his supporters attempted to account for the misinterpretation of his comments, others disputed these accounts, and instead argued that Hilali had in fact meant to talk about sexual assault (I_A) in his sermon. Indeed, for every account that was discussed in the previous section, there were corresponding instances where such accounts were disputed or rejected by others in the media.

One of key ways in which Hilali and his supporter's accounts were disputed was by appeals to "what was said." A number of commentators argued that the meaning of Hilali's comments could not be understood in any other way than them implying 'women who dressed inappropriately invite and so deserve to be sexually assaulted' (I_A). In the following excerpt from *60 Minutes*, where Hilali's daughter, Asma al-Hilali, is being interviewed by Ray Martin, reference to "what was said" is made by Martin in disputing what she claims was implied.

(11) ("Defending the faith: Sheik Taj Aldin Alhilali," *60 Minutes*, Channel 9, 12 November 2006)

- 1 AH: I wasn't offended by the remarks (0.5) cause I understood the meaning what what's behind it.
- 2 RM: Well uncovered meat is the problem that's pretty specific. Uncovered meat is the [problem.
- 3 AH: [Yeah. Because that was the analogy that he used.
- 4 RM: Well the- the analogy has a meaning and the meaning is that if you walk around without clothes on then you'll get raped.

While Asma al-Hilali claims she did not interpret the "uncovered meat" comments as implying women can invite sexual assault through their dress (line 1), Martin disputes this by referring to the words used by Hilali (line 2), and then claiming that the meaning of the analogy is clear (line 4). It is notable that in using this unhedged assertion, Martin leaves no space for alternative interpretations, an approach that was common amongst media commentators.

Later in the interview Martin also alludes to Hilali's status as a Muslim leader in Australia, and argues on this basis that what Hilali says carries weight within the Muslim community.

(12) ("Defending the faith: Sheik Taj Aldin Alhilali," *60 Minutes*, Channel 9, 12 November 2006)

- 1 RM: But you're the grand mufti (.) you're the gra:nd mufti. Why would you sa:y something like that which is going to offend everybody?
- 2 H: ((translated)) I say straightaway what is in my heart. I say it.
- 3 RM: I hear what you are saying Sheik Alhilali. But (.) but (0.2) you ca:n't sa:y these things, and then say I was misunderstood, misinterpreted, I meant something else. If you sa:y them they exist. If you say these things about rape, about Jews, about militants and bombers if you sa:y them people believe you.
- 4 H: ((translated)) My words, as correctly understood, I sta:nd behind.

Martin first claims that Hilali's words may be heard by more than just his intended audience in the mosque, indeed they may be heard by "everybody," since he holds a position of authority in the Muslim community (line 1). When Hilali responds in line 2 that he says what he believes, implying that he does not necessarily always say what others want him to say, Martin invokes norms of communication, namely that if one says something then that is what will be communicated (line 3). This stance, however, is implicitly rejected by Hilali in line 4, when he stands behind the "correct" interpreting of what he implied.

A similar point is made by Jenny Brocke in her interview with Keysar Trad on *Insight*, when she disputes Trad's claim that the implied meaning was altered by being heard in a different context or through translation.

(13) ("Asking for it," *Insight*, SBS, 7 November 2006)

- 1 KT: These comments were made in a particular context, and the fact that they don't translate too well into a different conte-
- 2 JB: Keysar it's a BIT RICH to say they don't translate too well. This is not a sentence this is a whole passage, a whole analogy you know a whole metaphor that he's used.

Brocke claims that their claim of there being a translation problem is unconvincing, as a whole passage was translated, not just a few words. This issue of translation is also addressed when Brocke later asks the official translator from SBS whether the context could have affected the meaning. However, while the translator, Dalia Matar, responds that her translation

of the individual words was accurate, she claims the meaning attributed to the words is open to interpretation (line 4), which serves to undermine Brocke's initial claim.

(14) ("Asking for it," *Insight*, SBS, 7 November 2006)

- 1 JB: Okay Dalia, you did the translation of this speech which has caused the *furore* (0.2) Was it- it in a broader context or is it the meaning pretty clear do you think.
- 2 DM: U::m I think the meaning can differ from wha- how individuals would see it. A:nd u:m the meaning as a whole I I I can't comment on the meaning. I can comment on the words that I translated. And these were Sheikh Hilali's words. The English translation is a true reflection of his Arabic words. I ca:n't comment on what his intentions were because this is up to the individual to decide on.

Matar also refuses to comment on what is implied by the "uncovered meat" comments (line 2), as she claims that she could not know what Hilali's (*a priori*) intentions were. In other words, Matar positions herself as being able to translate "words" but not "whole meanings," and it is this position that lies at the heart of the dispute of what was implied by the "uncovered meat" comments, namely, whether an intended meaning can be legitimately understood in different ways.

A second way in which Hilali and his supporter's accounts were disputed was by claiming that Hilali and his supporters were simply trying to present a more palatable interpretation of the sermon for the Australian public, and so accusing them of presenting "spin." In a discussion chaired by Ellen Fanning on *Sunday*, for example, Bronwyn Bishop, a Liberal party senator, accuses Keysar Trad, a spokesperson for Hilali, of being a "spin doctor."

(15) ("Good Muslim/bad Aussie?," *Sunday*, Channel 9, 12 November 2006)

- 1 BB: [YOU are the spi:n doctor, along with the Mufti.
- 2 KT: [We have be:en (0.5) we have been calling, along with the mufti (0.4) that ah- calling upon ah members of our community (0.2) to treat (.) women as equals=>not only as< equals, [but to celebrate
- 3 EF: [So when he-
when he talks
about uncovered me:at, women are uncovered me:at
[going outside

- 4 KT: [He ↑DIDN'T say
women are uncovered meat. This is whe:re so many people step
in to a mos[que
- 5 BB: [Here goes the spin=
- 6 KT: =and snoop onto a conversation and take it out of context.

While Trad is claiming that Hilali and himself believe women to be equal, Bishop talks over him in line 1 and claims that he is a spin doctor, thereby implying that what Trad is saying is not accurately representing Hilali's "real" views. This accusation is repeated in line 5, when Bishop attempts to discredit Trad's reference to the way in which Hilali's sermon was deliberately taken out of context in line 4.

While Trad explicitly rejects the accusation that he is simply a "spin doctor" for Hilali later in the discussion, he appears to be aware that this may be presupposed by viewers even when it is not made explicit. For instance, he attempts to position himself as a "neutral" observer who has no particular agenda in his attempts to explain Hilali's comments in an interview with Karl Stefanovic on *Today*.

(16) ("Keysar Trad defends Alhilali," *Today*, Channel 9, 30 October 2006)

- 1 KT: I'm coming here as a friend. I'm not paid to do this. I'm not his spokesman. I'm not a member of the Lebanese Muslim Association. I used to be the president at ah some point. But I ah- I'm coming here as a friend risking my own popularity because I see an injustice being done. And the man deserves a fair ↑hearing. I'm not defending or criticising, I'm purely explaining that the substance of his talk is about modesty and abstinence.

Trad tries to characterize himself in this excerpt as being rational rather than emotional through his assertion that he is only "explaining" rather than more emotively-charged "defending or criticizing" (lines 6–7). He also tries to position himself in lines 4–5 as lacking any underlying political agenda in claiming his only motivation is to try to right an "injustice." This talk of being "fair" and "injustice" is an attempt to appeal to the oft-repeated claim that Australians believe in a "fair go," as well as positioning himself as an "ordinary" Australian mate rather than being a "politically motivated" spokesperson.

A related way in which Hilali's and his supporter's accounts for their interpretation of the "uncovered meat" comments are disputed is through reference to an alleged "pattern of behaviour." It is suggested by nu-

merous commentators, including in an editorial in *The Australian* (“Editorial: Time to muzzle the outrageous Mufti”, *The Australian*, 27 October 2006), that Hilali has a pattern of claiming his comments have been “misunderstood,” which undermines his claims of being misunderstood. Monica Attard, for instance, makes direct reference to this issue in her interview with Hilali on *Sunday Profile*, when she expresses skepticism about his claimed interpreting in light of his repeated claims of being misunderstood or mistranslated.

(17) (“Sheikh Taj el-Din al-Hilali, Australia’s most senior Muslim cleric, never far from the headlines,” *Sunday Profile*, ABC Radio, 11 March 2007)

- 1 MA: When those comments were published you attacked the media for taking you out of context. It’s something you’ve complained about many times in the past, that you’ve been mistranslated, misunderstood. It seems that every time you make a public comment, there seems to be a <whole range> of people who misunderstand you. ↑How can that be.
- 2 H: ((translated from Arabic by Keysar Trad)) When I say something, I know what I meant.
It’s a- it’s not fair ah- not correct for you to tell me what I meant. There’s many men of God who talk on this issue.
Why are my comments targeted in particular?
- 3 MA: Because they’re quite radical.

Hilali first responds to Attard’s accusation that many people seem to “misunderstand” him time and time again, which implies this defense is not to be trusted, by appealing in line 2 to exclusive knowledge of his own *a priori* intention. In other words, Hilali argues that it is not legitimate for others to be saying what his words meant since he regards what is “meant” by them as belonging to him. Hilali also raises the issue that his comments seem to be “targeted” (line 2), and so implies that his repeated defense of being “misunderstood” is a consequence of repeated accusations being made by the Australian media, which forces him to have to repeatedly defend himself.

A fourth way in which the implicatures are disputed is through invoking societal norms. The attempts by Hilali and his supporters to normalize the “uncovered meat” comments in the context of a religious sermon are resisted through invoking broader social norms. For example, in his interview with Keysar Trad, the interviewer, Karl Stefanovic, frames Trad’s claim that Hilali’s comments have been decontextualized as unacceptable in wider Australian society.

(18) (“Keysar Trad defends Alhilali,” *Today*, Channel 9, 30 October 2006)

- 1 KT: Now to take that (.) into a different context and read it- and really nitpick a speech that’s a really about modesty and abstinence is very
very un[fa:ir.
- 2 KS: [Keysar he described women as me:at. You ca:n’t do
that.
No one accepts that that is acceptable.

While Trad argues that taking the comments out of context is “unfair” (line 1), this is disputed by Stefanovic who invokes implicit social norms when claiming that “describing women as meat” is considered unacceptable. This norm is invoked through reference to “no one” regarding Hilali’s comments as being acceptable (implying that “everyone” thinks they are unacceptable). It is important to note here that it is also presupposed by Stefanovic that societal norms take precedence over more localized norms of religious teaching in a mosque, which, in his view, renders Hilali’s comments “unacceptable.”

Another way in which the accounts of Hilali and his supporters are disputed is the claim that those who are in positions of leadership must take responsibility for their words. It is argued by Phillip Aspinall, the Anglican Archbishop of Brisbane, for instance, that “leaders” are held accountable for how they are understood by the broader community, not just in the context of their followers, when questioned by Jenny Brocke on *Insight*.

(19) (“Asking for it,” *Insight*, SBS, 7 November 2006)

- 1 PA: I think leaders who have high public profile must exercise a responsibility to both ↑communities, we must always be true to our ↑faith but we must always act in the best interests of the community as a who:le.
- 2 JB: And if you don’t?
- 3 PA: (0.4) hhhh. we:ll ah (.) I- I think we are held accountable. I think people are very quick to point out to us the implications of what we’ve said, and if some people are hu:rt by what we’ve said, then we have to be accountable for that.

In this excerpt, then, Hilali is presupposed by Aspinall to be a leader who represents the Muslim community in Australia, and so should be held accountable for offending the general public. However, this presupposition is explicitly disputed by Trad earlier in the program.

(20) (“Asking for it,” *Insight*, SBS, 7 November 2006)

- 1 KT: The Mufti never <e::ver> put himself as a spokesperson for the community. He’s a point of religious reference. As a Mufti, he’s the person that people go to for religious interpretation. What does this verse mean? What does this verse mean? What does this () mean?
- 2 JB: But he’s- but he’s a le:ader, he’s a ↑le:ader? [He’s a] community
- 3 KT: [He’s a-]
- 4 JB: le:ader=
- 5 KT: =he’s a leader because we put him up as a leader (.) because we think that just because he’s the ah (.) religious a:rbiter (0.2) the person who can give interpretations, we all immediately point him in that figure. We as a socie:ty.

Trad attempts here to characterize Hilali as a religious leader rather than a community leader, and thereby reduce his level of accountability to broader Australian society. When pressed by Brocke on whether Hilali is a community leader in line 2, Trad response is somewhat equivocal, although he persists in his characterizing Hilali as a religious as opposed to a community leader. In doing so, it is presupposed by Trad that religious leaders should not be held accountable for offending the public in the same way as community leaders.

Finally, the claim that the comments could only be understood by the “intended audience” is disputed. For example, Ellen Fanning, who is the chair of a discussion held between various Muslim and Australian community leaders broadcast on *Sunday* questions whether the different audiences really made a difference to what was implied when interviewing Keysar Trad’s daughter Sanna Trad.

(21) (“Good Muslim/bad Aussie?,” *Sunday*, Channel 9, 12 November 2006)

- 1 ST: What we are taught is that whenever you look at a:ny source of a:ny kind you look at motive and you look at audience. Who were his ↑audience, and what were his motives.
- 2 EF: And you think that makes a difference? He says [one thing-
- 3 ST: [IT IT
MAKES A
DIFFERENCE to- like what he said was ↑wrong. He made an error of judgment in the way he ↑said it. Yes it was wrong. But we know what his motives were. WE- (0.2) we know what his motives ↑were, and we know who his audience ↑were, and when we take it in that con↑text, what he said was completely different (0.2) and-

In this excerpt, Sanna Trad, while admitting that what Hilali said the way in which delivered his message was “wrong,” claims his intended meaning was clear in light of his intended audience and the context. When Fanning expresses some skepticism of this account in line 2, Sanna Trad’s response in line 3 becomes emotionally-charged, as her disputing of Fanning’s skepticism not only interrupts Fanning at a point that is clearly not a transition relevance place, but her volume also increases. This heightened level of emotivity on the part of both supporters and detractors of Hilali was evident throughout this broadcast discussion, and is indicative of the high stakes involved in this dispute over what was implied by Hilali.

In summary, then, while Hilali and his supporters forwarded various accounts to support their claim that the “uncovered comments” implied a message of modesty and abstinence (I_A) rather than blaming inappropriately dressed women for inviting sexual assault (I_B), these accounts themselves became the subject of discursive dispute. These disputes often involved underlying tension between different interpretive and sociocultural norms, such as the assumption that what is said can be equated with what is communicated versus the claim what is meant should ultimately be under the control of the speaker, for instance. In the following section, the roles these interpretive norms and sociocultural presuppositions played in the co-constitution of diverging interpretations of implicature are considered.

5. Interpretive norms, sociocultural presuppositions and deep misunderstanding

While previous research on misunderstandings in (intercultural) communication has established how differences in underlying norms or presuppositions can give rise to miscommunication or discursive dispute over meanings (for example, Berger 2001; Fitch 2003; Hopper 1981; House, Kasper & Ross 2003; Keysar 2007; Rehbein 2006; Schegloff 1987), many of these studies have only touched upon the issue of whether such differences in underlying norms and presuppositions can be resolved. In this section, it is argued that Rancièrè’s (1995, 1999) distinction between “simple or wrong misunderstanding” and “misunderstanding on a deeper level” is pertinent to the dispute over what was implied by Hilali.

One has to distinguish, says Rancièrè, between a simple misunderstanding (French: *malentendu*, or *méconnaissance*, i.e. a wrong understanding, or even a lack of understanding) and a misunderstanding on a deeper level (French: *mésentente*), where understanding is not only difficult, but even impossible, because

there is not, and cannot be, any common platform where all the involved parties can meet . . .

In politics as in daily life, it frequently happens that one person does not understand what the other is saying, not because the words are not clear or the phrasing ambiguous, but simply because the one interlocutor doesn't *see* what the other is talking about, or because she or he interprets that which the other is talking about as something entirely different. (Mey 2001: 217)

In the preceding discussion of the discursive dispute over the various (moral) accounts forwarded, a number of differences in the underlying interpretive norms and sociocultural presuppositions have been alluded to. It appears, then, that the ongoing dispute over what was implied by the "uncovered meat" comments may be symptomatic of a deeper level of misunderstanding, where those holding to the view that Hilali implied women are to blame for rape (I_A) are not able to see, or refuse to see, how the same analogy could be understood as implying a message of modesty and abstinence (I_B), and vice versa. This claim gives rise to the question of why this deeper level of misunderstanding occurs.

One potential source of this ongoing divergence in interpretations of implicature appears to be the dynamic tension between different interpretive norms that arise from folk or lay conceptualizations of communication as the "transfer of meaning" (Reddy 1993). For instance, one folk interpretive norm invoked in these interactions privileges "what is said" in positing that meanings depend on words, are clear and unambiguous, and are not controlled by the speaker. However, in contrast to this, we also find the view that meanings can also depend on what speakers *intend* them to mean, and such meanings are only legitimately controlled by the speaker. In other words, a second folk interpretive norm can also be invoked, which privileges the "speaker's intention" in determining "what is communicated." In the case of what is implied by the "uncovered meat" comments, those holding to the view that Hilali is suggesting women are to blame for sexual assaults (I_A) appear to be invoking the first folk interpretive norm, while those claiming Hilali is suggesting men and women practice modesty and abstinence (I_B) appear to be invoking the second folk interpretive norm. In essence, discursive dispute between participants has arisen in regards to which interpretive norm is relevant in the case of Hilali's comments. The borderline between "what is said" and "speaker meaning" is therefore not simply of theoretical interest as it can in fact become the subject of discursive dispute by interactants.

However, while dispute over whether the speaker's intentions can be legitimately invoked in accounting for implied meanings lies at the heart of the diverging interpretations of implicature arising in this incident, there are other interpretive norms that are also invoked in the course of this dispute

(cf. Richland 2006). This second set of folk interpretive norms relates to the assumption that the “truth” of what is communicated depends to some extent on the participants involved. On the one hand, it is assumed that some interpretations are reliable because the speaker is judged to be trustworthy or sincere, while on the other hand we find the view that some interpretations are not reliable because the speaker is assumed to have an underlying agenda and so is not trustworthy or sincere. In other words, through this discursive disputing of accountings for what was implied by the “uncovered meat” comments, it becomes apparent that “what is communicated” depends, in part, on the participants’ perceptions of the speaker. In the case of Hilali and his “uncovered meat” comments, Hilali and his supporters invoke Hilali’s personal history of “supporting women” in claiming what was meant was I_B , while Hilali’s detractors invoke Hilali’s personal history of “claiming he is misunderstood” in claiming I_A was meant. There is discursive dispute, therefore, in regards to whether Hilali’s words can be “trusted” and his underlying degree of sincerity. The “sincerity condition” invoked in Speech Act Theory (Searle 1969) is therefore not just a matter of theoretical interest, but once again can be the subject of discursive dispute by interactants.

A third set of folk interpretive norms underlying the discursive disputing of Hilali and his supporter’s accounts is the notion of accountability, and the assumption that what certain people say can represent the views of many. In other words, the degree to which an individual is held accountable or responsible for his or her words depends on his or her perceived position within a group. While the words of “public figures” are assumed to represent the group they represent, the words of those who are not perceived to be in positions of leadership cannot be attributed to the whole group to which they belong in the same way. The question of whether Hilali’s comments are representative of the Muslim community in Australia is critical to the discursive dispute as to whether Hilali should be held responsible for those comments. The notion of accountability can itself also become the subject of discursive dispute by interactants.

Finally, in carefully examining the discursive disputing of the accounts posited to reject I_A in favor of I_B , a number of differences in underlying sociocultural presuppositions emerged. For example, one presupposition invoked in supporting the assertion that I_B was what would have been understood by the intended audience became apparent when Keysar Trad claimed that “It’s a specific message to a specific audience that already understands that our religion condemns sexual violence in the strongest possible terms” (“Sheikh Hilaly issues statement through spokesman,” *The World Today*, ABC Radio, 27 October 2006). In other words, Trad

argues that Hilali could not have implied that women who dress inappropriately deserve rape (I_A), since Hilali would have been safe in presupposing that his audience would know that rape is regarded as a serious crime in Islam.

Yet in invoking these kinds of sociocultural presuppositions, the underlying tension between the assumption that sexual assaults are the exclusive responsibility of men, versus the view that women and men share responsibility for immoral sexual relations (including sexual assaults) also emerged. Those who were most critical of Hilali's comments appeared to hold to the presupposition that women should never be considered sexual objects and men who think of or treat women in that way are at fault no matter how women dress. Hilali and his supporters, on the other hand, appear to presuppose that while women can be viewed as sexual objects if they dress inappropriately, engaging in sexual relations with such women is immoral. However, the responsibility for such immorality is shared, since women who act or dress immodestly and so encourage such immorality can be considered to be at fault, while at the same time men who are attracted to such women are also considered to be at fault.

However, it is important to note that the latter presupposition of shared responsibility was explicitly rejected by some within the Muslim community. Abdullah Saeed, an academic at the University of Melbourne, for instance, characterized Hilali's views as reflecting "cultural norms" belonging to Muslim societies outside of Australia which are distinct from what he terms "Islamic norms."

- (22) ("Abdullah Saeed: Rantings not Muslim ideals," Abdullah Saeed, *The Australian*, 27 October 2006)

The cultural norms—quite distinct from Islamic norms—that may exist in certain Muslim societies somewhere else cannot be used to justify sex crimes . . .

Practices and norms that may exist in a particular Muslim community in some part of the world, and values and ideas relating to the treatment of women in that specific community's culture, should be confined to that culture. We do not need to import those norms and values here.

The cultural norms that Saeed refers to here relate, in particular, to the perceived lower status of women in Muslim societies, a viewpoint echoed by a number of commentators in the Australian media. However, Hilali and his supporters repeatedly disputed such views of women being attributed to Hilali himself, citing his efforts for the rights of women in the Muslim community.

This assumption that Muslim women in Australia do not enjoy equal rights became the subject of discursive dispute in a heated exchange between Bronwyn Bishop and Sanna Trad in the following excerpt from *Sunday*. While Sanna Trad, Keysar Trad's daughter claims that as a Muslim woman she is not a prisoner but rather is free, her claim is explicitly rejected by Bishop.

(23) ("Good Muslim/bad Aussie?," *Sunday*, Channel 9, 12 November 2006)

- 1 ST: So for- so I don't- I'm sick of everybody thinking that Muslim women (.) are prisoners, we're liberated. I GET TO CHOOSE who looks at
↑me ((gestures at herself)) [a lot of people don't
- 2 BB: [If you if YOU beli:eve tha:t, in a sla:ve society a slave can believe they're [↑free
- 3 ST: [So you're calling me a slave now?
- 4 BB: ()
((voices in background arguing))
- 5 ST: I LIVE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. I LIVE IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY. I was BORN here, I was rai:sed here. I went to an Austra:lian school=
- 6 BB: =But you [choose to limit your freedom
- 7 ST: [I LIVE IN A DEMOcratic> socie↑ty. My BEST friends are from Anglo-Christian-European backgrounds.

In response to Sanna Trad's claim that she is free (line 1), Bishop implies that Trad is blind to the fact she is a slave (line 2). This comment elicits strong argument from various members of the group, over which Trad has to shout in response. Yet once again, while Trad aligns herself with mainstream Australian society (line 5), Bishop argues that Trad actually is not free (line 6), to which Trad once again responds by aligning herself with mainstream society (line 7). It is apparent from this excerpt, that while Sanna Trad attempts to establish "common ground" in relation to their presuppositions about the status of women, Bishop explicitly denies there is such common ground. In this instance, then, Bishop "interprets that which the other is talking about as something entirely different" (Ranci re 1995: 13), and the dispute over underlying sociocultural presuppositions reaches a stalemate.

In this section, it has been argued that this discursive dispute over what was implied by the “uncovered meat” comments points to deeper, perhaps even unresolvable differences in the interpretive norms invoked as well underlying sociocultural presuppositions held by the various stakeholders in this dispute. This indicates that the way in which Hilali’s comments were shifted by the media from a specific audience in the Muslim community to wider Australian society, a “scale-jump” from a local and situated context to a translocal and general context (Blommaert 2007), is what engendered discursive dispute over Hilali’s intentions, and thus gave rise to diverging interpretations of what was implied by Hilali. The implications of this position for intention-based theories of implicature are next considered.

6. Implications

In the course of this analysis of the diverging interpretations of what was implied by Hilali’s “uncovered meat” comments that emerged in the days following the initial reporting of these comments in *The Australian*, it has become apparent that appealing to the speaker’s intention in determining what is implied gives an impoverished account of implicatures. It appears that what is implied depends not only what intentions are attributed to the speaker, but also on which folk interpretive norms are invoked, and what kinds of sociocultural presuppositions are assumed by interactants. To label the “uncovered meat” incident as simply an instance of miscommunicated intentions would thus be a gross oversimplification.

In particular, it has emerged that neither the speaker’s *a priori* intention, nor the recipient’s attribution of a particular *a priori* intention to the speaker can in themselves be held to determine what is implied. Instead, we have found that the speaker’s intentions can become in themselves the subject of *post facto* discursive dispute. Building a model of the communication of implicatures must therefore move beyond the received view that it involves “correctly” inferring the intentions of speakers, to encompass a broader view where both converging and diverging interpretations of implicatures emerge through their conjoint co-constitution in interaction (Haugh 2007). Critical to this work is the understanding, following from Arundale’s (1999, 2006: 196) Conjoint Co-Constituting Model of Communication, that implicatures arise from inferences which may be *influenced* by participants, but are not controlled as such by either the speaker or the hearer. It is suggested here, then, that a theory of implicature needs to account not only for convergent or complimentary interpretations, but

also for the way in which diverging interpretations of implicature may arise in some instances, and the role of discursive disputes about intention underlying such diverging interpretations.

From this incident it is also apparent that the “miscommunication” of implicatures can have potentially devastating effects, particularly in intercultural contexts where there are serious ongoing tensions (Reboul 2006). However, resolving such issues is not necessarily a matter of understanding what speaker’s “really” mean, as deeper—perhaps even unresolvable—discursive disputes may underlie such “miscommunication.” In the case of this present analysis, then, the aim has not been to establish what was “really” implied by Hilali in his sermon, but rather to illustrate how diverging interpretations can and do arise in communication. It is suggested that such findings pose a very real challenge to intention-centred theories of implicature, and raise the question of whether (neo-)Gricean or Relevance Theoretic accounts of implicature in their present incarnations can accommodate incidents that are as complex as the diverging interpretations of implicature arising from the “uncovered meat” sermon. Perhaps when we can come to acknowledge that what is intended may be legitimately contested we will come to acceptance that we do not have to always agree about what is implied, and so realize that theories of implicature need to be able to account for such phenomena.

Appendix

Transcription conventions

CAPITALS	higher pitch volume
◦	markedly soft speech
<u>underlining</u>	stressed word or part of word
↑↓	marked rises or falls in pitch
hhh	hearable aspiration or laugh particles
[]	overlapping talk
=	talk “latched” onto previous speaker’s talk
:	stretching of sound of preceding letter
><	talk that is compressed or rushed
<>	talk that is markedly slowed or drawn out
(.)	micro-pause
(0.2)	timed pause
-	cut-off of prior sound in a word
()	blank space between brackets indicates unintelligible speech
((cough))	transcriber’s description of non-verbal activity

Notes

1. The corpus of media reports primarily draws from the period of the 26th of October through to the 19th of November 2006 when the story was no longer reported, and includes more than fifty articles from major daily Australian newspapers (*The Australian*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*), radio broadcasts (*ABC Radio*), interviews with Hilali or his associates broadcast on national Australian television channels (*ABC*, *SBS*, *Channel 7*, *Channel 9*), as well as statements released by Hilali and associates through the Lakemba mosque website (formerly IslamicSydney.com, now renamed MuslimVillage.net). This corpus is supplemented by three interviews with Hilali broadcast on the 25th of January (Channel 7), 11th of March (ABC Radio), and the 18th of May 2007 (Al-Jazeera).
2. A translation of the whole sermon was published two days afterwards in *The Australian* ("Revealed: the mufti uncut," *The Australian*, 28 October 2006), but this had little effect on resolving the diverging interpretations of what Hilali had implied in his sermon amongst members of the Australian community.
3. In relation to the third implicature, there was some initial hint that provocative behavior included prostitution in statements attributed to al-Hilali ("Muslim leader blames women for sex attacks," Richard Kerbaj, *The Australian*, 26 October 2006), Keysar Trad ("Cleric in sex sermon uproar," *Al-Jazeera*, 27 October 2006), and a member of the Muslim Council of Britain Abduljalil Sajid ("Britain backs imam in 'uncovered meat' row," *The Times*, 28 October 2006), but this interpretation was soon dropped from the discourse of Hilali and his supporters.

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