Obligatory presupposition

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Contents

2.1 Contrast

2.1.1 Emphasis on similarity

- "I suggest that the obligatoriness of *too*, in a construction of the form *S1 and S2 too*, stems from *too*'s discourse function, which is to emphasize the similarity between members of a pair of contrasting items. The variability of *too*'s obligatoriness is a function of the degree of prominence given to the pair of contrasting constituents, concerning which predication is made by *too*. The greater the prominence, the greater the need for *too* to state the unity between the contrasting elements."

  (Kaplan, 1984, p.516)

2.1.2 Distinctiveness constraint

(1)   Peter invited Pia for dinner, tòo   *(Krifka, 1999)*

- Two elements for Krifka (1999)'s proposal:

  1. the distinction between two types of accent, the focus accent, and the contrastive topic accent (following Büring (1998)'s work and the classical distinction from Jackendoff (1972) between A and B accents in English)
  2. the existence of an implicature, derived from a distinctiveness constraint

(2)   a.   A: What did Peter eat?
       b.   B: Peter ate pàsta
       c.   B′: ∗ Péter ate pasta

(3)   a.   A: What did Peter and Pia eat?
       b.   B: ∗ Peter ate pàsta
       c.   B′: Péter ate pàsta

Büring (1998) has shown that answers in which there is a topic accent are answers which leave open a number of questions. So for instance, in (3), the question of what Pia ate is left open. According to Büring (1998), such uses of the topic accent are subject to a constraint called condition of *disputability*. Krifka claims that another constraint comes with contrastive answers, that he calls the distinctiveness constraint, which is defined as follows:

(4)   If $[\ldots T \ldots C \ldots]$ is a contrastive answer to a question, then there is no alternative T' of T such that the speaker is willing to assert $[\ldots T' \ldots C \ldots]$.

- "contrastive topics are topics: they refer to something about which information is required. But they are also contrastive, that is they come with alternatives: there are other things about which information is required."   *(Krifka, 1999)*

A sketch of the reasoning

- There are 2 (contrastive) topics in the context.

  (5)   What dit Peter and Pia eat ?

- The utterance of a simple sentence with a CT accent on the subject triggers a distinctiveness constraint:

(6) a. — Péter ate pàsta
     b. ∴ there is no $T' \neq$ Peter such that T' ate pasta.

- the utterance of a 2nd simple sentence with a CT accent is in contradiction with the previous implicature

(7) a. ... and Pía ate pàsta
     b. ∴ there is a $T' \neq$ Peter such that T' ate pasta.

- The stressed additive particule acknowledges the violation of the constraint : "the semantics of *too* is such that it allows the violation of distinctiveness by explicitly stating a discourse relation" (Krifka, 1999)

(8) Péter ate pàsta, and Pía ate pasta, tòo

2.2 Maximize Presupposition

2.2.1 Antipresupposition

- Maximize presupposition!   Heim (1991)
  Implicated Presuppositions   Sauerland (2008)
  Antipresupposition   Percus (2006)

2.2.1.1 Excursus: Quantity (scalar) Implicatures

(9) a. John ate some cookies.
     b. ∴ John didn't eat all the cookies.
     c. *some = some & possibly all*
     d. *some ≈ some & not all*

- The setence contains is a lexical item belonging to a (Horn-)scale:

$$\langle \text{ some, } \overbrace{\text{many, most, all}}^{\text{stronger alternatives}} \rangle$$

- Sentences formed with stronger alternatives would be more informative:

(10) a. John ate all the cookies.
      b. John ate most cookies.
      c. → John ate some of the cookies

- A more informative sentence is relevant (in general) and more cooperative (Grice's maxim of quantity).

- The choice of a less informative sentence by the speaker leads to the conclusion that the speaker is reluctant to use a stronger sentence.

- [Epistemic step] the speaker is well-informed : if he is reluctant to use a sentence, that might be because it's not true.

- Implicature: (on the addressee's part):

(11)   John didn't eat many/most/all cookies.

2.2.1.2   Heim's motto

(12)   a. #A wife of John's is intelligent
        b.   The wife of John's is intelligent
        c. #A father of the victim arrived at the scene
        d.   The father of the victim arrived at the scene   *(Heim, 1991; Sauerland, 2003)*

(13)   **"Scalar alternatives"**
        a.   ⟨ some, all ⟩   assertion
        b.   ⟨ a, the ⟩   presupposition   *(Hawkins, 1978)*

- Maximize Presupposition!:
  make your contribution presuppose as much as possible

2.2.1.3   Antipresupposition (Percus, 2006)

(14)   Mary knows that Jane is pregnant.
        presupposes that Jane is pregnant

(15)   John is repairing the chair in Mary's living room.
        presupposes that Mary has exactly one chair in her living room

(16)   John assigned the same exercise to both of Mary's students.
        presupposes that Mary has exactly two students

(17)   Mary believes that Jane is pregnant.
        antipresupposes that Jane is pregnant

(18)   John is repairing a chair in Mary's living room.
        antipresupposes that Mary has exactly one chair in her living room

(19)   John assigned the same exercise to all of Mary's students.
        antipresupposes that Mary has exactly two students

- Is *believe* a presupposition trigger?

⇒ No: what is actually predicted is much weaker

(20)   General structure of the mecanism
        a.   Situation: A speaker utters a sentence S_1. S_1 has an alternative sentence S_2, constructed via one of the lexical scales given above so that: (i) the presupposition p_2 of S_2 is stronger than the presupposition p_1 of S_1, (ii) their assertions are equivalent.

b. Predicted inference: S_2 is infelicitous, i.e. the constraints on its presupposition p_2 are not met. *(Chemla, 2008)*

- Informally:

  – S believes that p is not in the common ground

  – if S thought that p is true, s/he would want to have it added to the CG (via accommodation)

  – To add a proposition to the CG, one has to "convince" the addressee, i.e. to have "competence" and "authority".

(21) a. — I was happier before I stopped smoking.
   — So you used to smoke?
 b. — I was happier when the earth was flat.
   — Wait a minute !

(22) Prediction of the Maximize Presupposition principle:

Situation: a speaker s utters a sentence S_1. S_2 is an alternative sentence to S_1; S_2 asserts what S_1 asserts, but additionally presupposes p.

Predicted inference: $\neg B_S[p] \vee \neg B_s[\text{Auth}_s[p]]$

(Chemla, 2008, (24))

(23) Competence Assumption:
 The speaker s is opinionated about p.
 Technically: $B_S[p] \vee B_S[\neg p]$.

(24) Authority Assumption:
 The speaker S believes in her authority about p.
 Technically: $B_S[\text{Auth}_s][p]]$.

2.2.1.4 Sauerland's version

Implicated Presuppositions :

- non factivity of *believe*

  (25) John believes that 313 is prime.

- non singularity of the plural

  (26) Tom's children must be well-behaved.

  (27) All parents are requested to check that their children have put their life jacket.

- non uniqueness and non duality of universal quantifier

  (28) a. #Every nose of Kai's is runny.
    b. #Every cheek of Lina's is rosy.

  (29) a. The nose of Kai's is runny.

b.   Both cheeks of Lina's are rosy.   *(Sauerland, 2008, ex(36))*

- Tense and other features (person, number, gender)

2.2.2   A proposal

2.2.2.1   Hypothesis

- Extention of antipresupposition domain to new scales:

(30)   a.   ⟨a, the⟩, ⟨each, the⟩, ⟨all, both⟩   *(Percus, 2006)*
       b.   ⟨ believe, know ⟩, ⟨ too, ∅ ⟩, ⟨ again, ∅ ⟩, ⟨ whether, that ⟩ ...

2.2.2.2   Implementation

(31)   a.   John is sick, Mary is sick too
       b.   Mary is sick too → Mary is sick
       c. $(A \wedge P) \to A$
       d. $A \rightsquigarrow \neg(A \wedge P)$
       e. $\neg P$ = No one else than Mary (in the appropriate context) is sick

- Sketch of the reasoning:

(32)   John is sick, Mary is sick (too).

John is sick	∅		Mary is sick	∅	→ *antipresupposition* → *rejected*
not available	~~too~~	,	*available*	too	→ *expected form*
not available	~~again~~		*not available*	~~again~~	
	⋮			⋮	

2.2.2.3   Discussion

Behavior under negation

(33)   a.   Joe is sick, and Sam (# believes / knows) it
       b.   Joe is sick, and Sam does not (believe / know) it

(34)   a.   Pam believes that Mary is pregnant.
            <u>antipresupposes that</u> Mary is pregnant
       b.   Pam does not believe that Mary is pregnant
            ~~antipresupposes that~~ Mary is pregnant

Enumeration, contrast: other discourse relations?

(35)   Jean est malade, Marie est malade, Paul est malade, tout le monde est malade alors !

(36)   Il était là hier, il est là aujourd'hui

(37)   a. #Il est là aujourd'hui, il était là hier.
       b.   Il est la aujourd'hui, il était déjà là hier.

(38)   Jean est malade. Est-ce que Marie est malade (# ∅ / aussi / elle) ?

(39)   a. #Jean est malade. Tu es malade?
        b. Jean est malade. Et toi, tu es malade ?

(40)   a. #J'ai mal dormi cette nuit. T'as bien dormi ?
        b. J'ai mal dormi cette nuit. T'as bien dormi, toi ?

2.3 Obligatory implicature

Grammatical approach to implicatures (Chierchia *et al.* , 2012)

- Scalar implicatures and exhaustivity implicatures are triggered by a covert exhaustivity operator.

- The operator Exh has the same semantics as the adverb *only*: exclusion of (almost all) the alternatives. (Spector, 2016; Chierchia *et al.* , 2012)

(41)   a. Only $[\text{John}]_a$ knows the code.
        b. $[\text{John}]_f$ knows the code. = Exh(John) knows the code
        c. ALT = { Max, Mary, Lea, us}
        d. $K(j) \wedge \forall (x \in ALT \wedge x \neq j \rightarrow \neg K(x))$

Bade's proposal

- Presupposition triggers fall into two classes with respect to their obligatory insertion (Bade & Tiemann, 2016; Bade, 2016): the first set of triggers, including definites, is better captured by Maximize Presupposition; the second set of triggers, including additives and iteratives, is better captured by Obligatory Implicatures.

(Renans et al. *, 2017)*

(42)   Context: John came to the party.
        a. #Bill came to the party.
        b. Bill came to the party, too.

- Obligatory Implicatures predicts the sentence in (42a) to be obligatorily exhaustified with regard to the question "Who came?" due to the obligatory focus on Bill. The resulting exhaustive implicature that Bill and no one else came to the party is the most informative answer to "Who came?" and yields a contradiction with the context, i.e., that John came (which, crucially, is not entailed by Bill came).

(Renans et al. *, 2017)*

- Obligatory Implicatures further predicts a connection between exhaustivity implicatures and the insertion of triggers, in particular, additive particles. Namely, the presupposition trigger should be more obligatory if an exhaustive inference is made prominent by the context; however, if no contradiction arises, the trigger is predicted to be superfluous.

(Renans et al. *, 2017)*

- better prediction for the behavior under negation
- relies heavily on a focus analysis
- do not generalize easily to all presupposition triggers
- not to mention other cohesiveness devices

2.4   Research Programme

Taking stock

- What's obligatory
  - (some) presupposition triggers
  - (some) discourse particles
  - (some) temporal adjuncts
  - pronouns (in some cases)
  - definite descriptions (in some cases)

- What purpose do they serve?
  $\Rightarrow$ Anaphora (in a wide sense) *i.e.* reference to previously introduced discourse referent(s)

- What do they have in common?
  $\Rightarrow$ They don't bring new (asserted) content.

- Linguistic items that establish **identity or difference** with previously introduced material,   and serve **only** this purpose,
  are **obligatory**
  when their conditions of use are met.

- **Maximize cohesion!**
  Instead of saying that one must obey a "Maximize Presupposition!" principle in order to avoid unwanted antipresuppositions, we claim that one must obey a "Maximize Cohesion!" principle, in order to avoid a range of inferences which share with antipresuppositions a reasoning taking into account competition between alternative expressions that differ on their cohesion effect.

- Many open issues
  - List of relevant cohesive devices (anaphora, presupposition, repetition, hypo/ hyperonymy, syntactic parallelism...)
  - What does it mean to be obligatory, and how can we figure out what the competition is at one point?
  - Should we generalize the notion of antipresupposition or are we in fact dealing with (varieties of) quantity implicatures?
  - . . .

- Cf also Eckardt & Fränkel (2012)'s notion of *meta-information about text production*

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