Elizabeth Coppock   Seminar on Presupposition
coppock@phil.hhu.de   Heinrich Heine University
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Homework 8: Context Change Potentials

Read: Heim (1983), *On the Projection Problem for Presuppositions*, sections 1-2.

1. (i) What is what Heim calls the "content property" of *if*? (ii) The "presupposition property"? (iii) The "heritage property"? Explain in your own words. (Look up *material implication* if you are not familiar with that term.)

2. What is Gazdar's critique of Karttunen and Peters's theory? Explain in your own words.

3. How does Gazdar explain the fact that *If the king has a son, the king's son is bald* does not presuppose *The king has a son*? See the last paragraph before section 1.2. (Look up *conversational implicature* if you don't remember what that is.)

4. What are the false predictions of Gazdar's theory that Heim discusses in section 1.2?

5. What is a free variable? (Look this up if you don't know.)

6. Why is it that *Every nation cherishes its king* contains a presupposition that is not a proposition? Why is this a problem for Gazdar's theory?

7. How does Heim construe the notion of 'context'?

8. How does Heim define the notion of 'admittance'?

9. How does Heim recast the projection problem using the admittance relation (following Karttunen)?

10. What are the admittance conditions predicted by (10) in conjunction with (11) for *If there are elves living on the construction site, then the elves are hiding*? Assume that *the elves* presupposes the existence of elves. Explain using analogous reasoning to that given by Heim pp. 399–400.

11. (i) Under Heim's theory, how many properties of a lexical item need to be specified in order to capture its content, presuppositions, and heritage property? (ii) What are they?

12. Suppose that the context C consists of the following worlds: $\{w_1, w_2, w_3, w_4, w_5\}$ and in the following worlds it is raining: $\{w_2, w_4\}$. What is the result of updating C with the CCP of the sentence "It is raining?"

13. When Heim says "by specifying the CCP of an expression, the need for a separate specification of its heritage property is obviated," what does she mean?
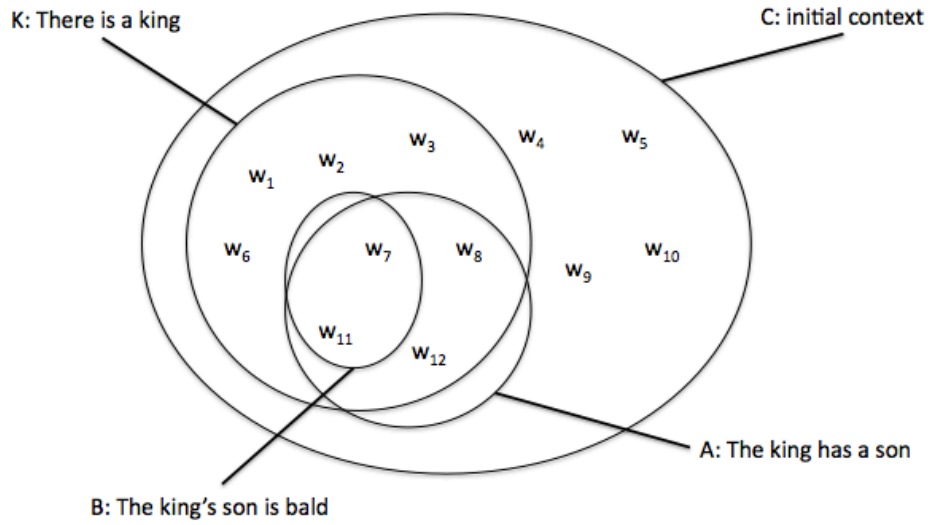
K: There is a king

C: initial context

w_3 w_4 w_5

w_2

w_1

w_6 w_7 w_8 w_{10}

w_9

w_{11}

w_{12}

A: The king has a son

B: The king's son is bald

Figure 1: Example propositions

14. Refer to Figure 1. Does C admit *If the king has a son, then the king's son is bald*? Why or why not? Does K admit it? Why or not? Explain using Heim's definition of admittance, and assume that the result of updating a context with *The king has a son* is the intersection of A with the context *if the presuppositions of 'The king has a son' are satisfied*; undefined otherwise.