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Seminar on Presupposition
Heinrich Heine University
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Homework 6: Karttunen (1973)

Read: Karttunen (1973), *Presuppositions of Compound Sentences*

1. What does it mean to say that "the truth of B is a condition for the bivalence of A"?

2. What is the semantic notion of presupposition? In other words, fill in the blank: A semantically presupposes B if and only if _____.

3. What is the pragmatic notion of presupposition? In other words, fill in the blank: A pragmatically presupposes B if and only if _____.

4. Fill in the blank: "Fred has stopped beating his wife" *semantically* presupposes "Fred has been beating his wife" because: _____.

5. Fill in the blank: "Fred has stopped beating his wife" *pragmatically* presupposes "Fred has been beating his wife" because: _____.

6. What is the *projection problem* (p. 171–172)?

7. What is the "cumulative hypothesis" (p. 172)?

8. What does the cumulative hypothesis predict about example (4), "If Jack has children, then all of Jack's children are bald." Why is that incorrect?

9. Why does the cumulative hypothesis fail to distinguish between cases like (5), "Bill ordered Fred to stop beating Zelda," and (6), "Bill forced Fred to stop beating Zelda"?

10. Choose a "verb of saying" that Karttunen doesn't use in any of his examples and show, in a manner analogous to Karttunen's (7a-c), that it is a plug.

11. What does Karttunen mean when he says that "all the plugs are leaky"? What is his example of a "leaky plug" and in what sense is it "leaky"?

12. The following questions are about (9a-f). The verb *stop* is a hole because:

    - the complement of (9c) is __
    - (9b) presupposes __ , and
    - (9c) also presupposes __

13. The verb *hesitate* is a hole because:

    - the complement of __is __

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- _presupposes _and _, and
- _also presupposes _and _

14. The verb *stop* is factive because

  - the complement of _is _, and
  - _implies _

15. The verb *hesitate* is non-factive because

  - the complement of _is _
  - _does not imply _

  (Thus not all holes are factive!)

16. Fill in the blank: Conditionals are filters because sometimes the presuppositions of the consequent clause are presuppositions of the conditional as a whole (as in _and _), and sometimes the conditional as a whole does not presuppose what the consequent clause presupposes (as in _).

17. Under what circumstances are the presuppositions of the consequent clause voided by the antecedent, according to Karttunen?

18. Give another example of a conditional where the antecedent clause semantically entails a presupposition of the consequent clause. (A list of presupposition triggers can be found on the course website.) Is the presupposition filtered out in your example, as Karttunen's theory would predict?

19. Conjunctions are filters too. Make up examples analogous (15) and (16) that could be used to show this, using different presupposition triggers.

20. Under what circumstances does "A or B" presuppose what "B" presupposes, according to Karttunen in section 7?

21. Why is example (25), "Either Geraldine is not a Mormon or she has given up wearing her holy underwear," problematic for the filtering condition Karttunen gave for disjunction in section 7 (cf. your answer to the previous question)? [extra credit]

22. Explain Karttunen's revised filtering condition for disjunction (24b′) in your own words, without any mathematical symbols. [extra credit]

Glossary

complementizable predicate: a verb (usually) that introduces a clause (something containing a subject and a verb), e.g. *say*: in "John said that you came", the verb *say* introduces the clause "(that) you came". This also includes verbs that introduce non-finite clauses such as *promise*: "John promised to come" introduces the non-finite clause "to come".

complement clause: the clause introduced by a complementizable predicate

matrix sentence: when one sentence is embedded in another, the larger, containing sentence is called the matrix sentence

propositional attitude: an attitude that an agent has toward a proposition, such as belief, knowledge, fear, doubt, surprise, etc.

factive verb: a verb that presupposes the truth of its complement, e.g. *know*: "Does he know that you cheated?" presupposes "You cheated". Note that presupposing the truth of the complement clause is different from being a hole, and allowing the presuppositions *inside* the complement clause to percolate up.

aspectual verb: a verb that has to do with the way an activity is distributed over time (aspect). Examples include *stop* and *continue*.

modal: having to do with alternative possible worlds or states of affairs; e.g. *it is possible that,* verbs like *may, must, ought, could,* etc.

$\cup$**:** set union

curly brackets $\{\ \}$**:** the set containing

corner quotes $\ulcorner\ \urcorner$ **(a.k.a. "Quine corners"):** quotes that are used for logical formulas

the special turnstile $\Vdash$**:** *semantically entails*: A semantically entails B if and only if B is true whenever A is true. An older variant of $\vDash$, I believe.