Lecture 17

LCD 306: Semantics & Pragmatics

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Outline

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Presuppositions

- A speaker has presuppositions
- An utterance has entailments

Differences

- Entailment
  - Whenever A is true, B is true
- Presupposition
  - B must be taken for granted or assumed in order to interpret A

Entailment Test

- If there is any situation where A can be true, and B might not be true, then A does NOT entail B.
- If there is no such situation, then A entails B.

Entailment Test

1. Assume that A is true.
2. Assume that B is NOT true.
3. Check for contradiction.
   - If there is a contradiction, then A entails B.
   - If not, then A does not entail B.

Presupposition Test

- A presupposes B if it is inappropriate (odd, anomalous, out-of-place) to assert A without assuming that B is true.

Presupposition

Presupposition, unlike entailment, survives under...

- Negation
- Subordination (under modals, antecedent of if clause)
- Questioning
- Factive Verbs

Presupposition Triggers

- Some words trigger (imply) a presupposition
- Conventional Implicature

Presupposition Triggers

- Definiteness of a noun presupposes the nouns existence
- Possessives, Proper Names
- Existential Presupposition

Presupposition Triggers

- Possessives $>>$ Possession
- Like $>>$ Know
- Answer
- Only, again, manage, third, continue, win, another, lie

Presupposition Triggers

- Meaning of certain verbs
    - stop >> used to
    - know that
    - regret
    - forgot to >> supposed to
    - scare X >> X is animate

Presupposition Cancellation

- the presupposed statement can be denied or canceled.
- Presupposition cancellation often feels extremely odd, but it is not a total contradiction.
- entailment cancellation impossible: results in logical

Entailment and Presupposition

Does A presuppose/entail B?

A. Julio realized that Xochitl is a ghost
B. Xochitl is a ghost.

Entailment and Presupposition

Does A presuppose/entail B?

A. Julio doesn't realized that Xochitl is a ghost

B. Xochitl is a ghost.

Entailment and Presupposition

Does A presuppose/entail B?

A. Jorge sees a boy

B. Jorge sees a person

Entailment and Presupposition

Does A presuppose/entail B?

A. Karen steals a car.
B. Karen takes a car.

Entailment and Presupposition

Does A presuppose/entail B?

A. The shah of Iran doesn't play tennis.

B. There is a shah of Iran.

Entailment and Presupposition

Does A presuppose/entail B?

A. Does every Tejana in the room smoke?

B. There is a Tejana in the room.

Entailment and Presupposition

Does A presuppose/entail B?

A. It bothers Jorge that Carlos wants a baby.

B. Carlos wants a baby.

Entailment and Presupposition

Does A presuppose/entail B?

A. It doesn't bother Jorge that Carlos wants a baby.

B. Carlos wants a baby.

Presupposition Triggers

What is the presupposition? What is the trigger? Why?

A. Alicia didnt see the snake with two heads
B. "...the snake with two heads"
C. Definite referring expressions (singular terms)

Presupposition Triggers

What is the presupposition? What is the trigger? Why?

A. Maria Elena didn't die in misery

B. "Maria Elena..."

C. Definite referring expressions (singular terms)

Presupposition Triggers

What is the presupposition? What is the trigger? Why?

A. Chuy began drafting the brief

B. "...began..."

C. Change of state verbs

Presupposition Triggers

What is the presupposition? What is the trigger? Why?

A. Estas guapo

B. "Tu"

C. Honorific terms

Presupposition Triggers

What is the presupposition? What is the trigger? Why?

A. He is a a Mexican, therefore he is brave.

B. "therefore"

C. Consequence

Presupposition Triggers

What is the presupposition? What is the trigger? Why?

A. Even the old man could use the computer.

B. "Even"

C. Unexpected