PRESUPPOSITIONS AND SEMANTIC TYPOLOGY OF PROJECTIVE MEANINGS[*]

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The notion of presupposition is the most important notion that came into linguistics from logic.

Common Ground approach to presuppositions is not-at-issue

The history of presuppositions begins with Strawson 1950 (which refers to Frege 1892), where it is said: P is a PRESUPPOSITION of S, if P must be true for S to be either true or false; i.e., if S has a false presupposition it is semantically deviant.

R.Stalnaker (1974) paved the way from the truth of presuppositions to PROJECTION UNDER NEGATION, and then linguists themselves found many other projection diagnostics for presuppositions: conditionals, question, modals, etc.

In Karttunen 1974, Heim 1983 a PRAGMATIC DEFINITION of presupposition was put forward, based on the so called Common Ground condition. This approach is duly criticized in Roberts e.a. 2009.

Back to Frege-Strawson approach to presuppositions

Thus, we return to the definition of presupposition based on projection tests. However, it was noticed by several authors (Chierchia & McConnell-Ginet 1990; Beaver 1997; Potts 2007; Roberts 2006; Roberts e.a. 2010) that some words and constructions successfully pass the projection tests but are not comfortably categorized as presupposition-triggers: non-restrictive relative clauses (*Bob, who was in Baku, missed our last seminar*); nominal appositives (*John, as a conscientious colleague, came in time*); parenthetical sentences and parenthetical adverbials (*By chance, John was at home*) and some others.

In a breakthrough paper Potts 2007 these meanings were called CONVENTIONAL IMPLICATURES (CIs). The term is misleading. In Roberts e.a. 2009 they are called BACKGROUND IMPLICATIONS, which is also infelicitous. I suggest the term SECONDARY ASSERTION: in Russian grammatical tradition the corresponding syntactic constructions are called SECONDARY PREDICATIONS.

Two other types of projective meanings which are also not readily identified as presuppositions were discussed in Roberts e.a. 2009, one triggered, e.g., by the word *discover*, another connected with *only*. Semantic typology of projective meanings is, in fact, an intriguing field of exploration.

In Roberts e.a. 2009, 2010 projection was related to the notion of BEING (NOT)-AT ISSUE. And this is a useful path to pursue.

Projection and being not-at-issue

"<…> projection is a consequence of the scope of sentential operators such as negation, conditionals and modals typically being limited roughly to what is understood as the main point, or, in the terminology we will use, the at-issue content of the utterance. Whatever does not belong to the main point — the not-at-issue content — is left out of the scope of the operator, and hence projects." (Roberts e.a. 2009)

"Our hypothesis claims that material projects if and only if it is actually not-at-issue" (Roberts e.a. 2010).

The relationship between not-at-issue-ness (no matter how defined) and projection is not strait forward. First of all, negation, though being at the heart of the very idea of projection, is a special kind of sentential operators: a sentence with a presupposition-trigger may have no natural negation – as, e.g., (A) *Even Lucy came*. In fact, *even* is the highest operator in the semantic structure of this sentence, i.e. it introduces the contents at issue. But the meaning of *even* consists of nothing but presupposition, and <u>it is natural to define negation in natural language as presupposition-preserving operation</u>. Thus, (A) has no negation.

According to other projection tests, *even*-proposition projects: in (B) *Even Lucy came?* the fact that all the rest came is not questioned. And semantically, *even*-proposition remains at issue. So, an *even*-proposition projects (if not under negation), being semantically at issue and thus contradicting the claim that "material projects <…> only if it is actually not-at-issue".

In (A) projection under negation test gives a result different from other types of projection tests because its highest semantic operator doesn't constitute <u>an assertion syntactically</u>, and the sentence has no negation. On the other hand, a sentence may also have no natural negation if there is <u>more than one assertion</u> in its semantic structure. Take Russian sentences (1a) and (1b).

(1) a. *Soldaty gromko pazgovarivali*
    'The soldiers loudly spoke';
  b. *Soldaty pazgovarivali gromko*
    'The soldiers spoke loudly'.

Sentence (1b) has a negative counterpart *Soldaty pazgovarivali ne gromko*, with a negative particle before the asserted *gromko*, while sentence (1a) has no natural negation. The explanation is that sentence (1a), because of its word order and syntactic structure, has <u>two assertions</u>: 'the soldiers spoke' (ordinary component) and 'the conversation was loud' (MODIFYING component).

Sentences with conjunctions as *and* or *but* also have no natural negation – exactly because they contain more than one assertion; the negated meaning (containing a lot of disjunctions) is too indeterminate (cf. Horn 1989):

(2) IT IS NOT THE CASE THAT (Mary is nasty and wise) ≈
    'either Mary is not nasty, or not wise, or both'.

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But in example (2) negation test agrees with other projection tests: general question is not felicitous for *Mary is nasty and wise* and even for (1a) *Soldaty gromko pazgovarivali*, as opposed to (1b) *Soldaty pazgovarivali gromko*.

Thus, in (2), as well as in (1a), the sentence as a whole is at issue, but it cannot constitute the scope of a sentential operator such as negation.

The relationships between being not-at-issue and being able to project are now as follows.

– For a proposition it is <u>necessary</u> to be semantically at-issue in order to constitute the scope of negation or other operators. But it is <u>not</u> <u>sufficient</u>. This was demonstrated both by example (A) *Even Lucy came* and (1), (2).

– For a proposition in order to project it is <u>necessary</u> to be not-at-issue. But it is <u>not sufficient</u>, see example (3):

(3) Ivan, k sožaleniju, otkazalsja ot priglašenija
    'Ivan, unfortunately, refused the invitation'.

In fact, in (3) the component 'sožalenije' is in parenthesis and, thus, <u>syntactically</u>, not-at-issue, but it doesn't project under negation; in fact, negation doesn't apply to (3). Neither does general question or conditional. The same is true about other parentheticals expressing propositional attitudes.

They express a secondary, and, thus, syntactically not-at-issue proposition, but do not project – either under negation or in other contexts.

Potts 2007 on semantic difference between secondary assertions (CIs) and genuine presuppositions

In Potts 2007 it is maintained that SEMANTIC INDEPENDENCE is a feature that differentiates CIs (= secondary assertions) from presuppositions. CIs are logically independent of what is asserted, i.e., of the at-issue entailments, see example (4).

(4) Lance Armstrong, an Arkansan, has won the 2002 Tour de France!

Potts 2007: "I know that Armstrong is a Texan; the CI is false. But I can still recover from (4) the information that Lance won this year's Tour. I need not accommodate the CI proposition to do this."

While sentence (5) is undefined if the presupposition 'her coat is on fire' is false:

(5) Ali doesn't realize her coat is on fire.

Presuppositions can be arguments of operators that constitute assertive components, CIs cannot. In example (3) there is a predicate-argument connection between its two propositional components; and this is why *k sožaleniju* 'unfortunately' does not project as other

secondary predications do (NRRCs, NAs, parentheticals of 'by chance' type). Semantically, *k sožaleniju* remains at-issue (= assertive), in spite of its syntax.

Potts 2007 on different kinds of deixis in presuppositions and secondary assertions

Stalnaker's definition of presupposition mentions the speaker who believes that Q both in her assertion or denial that P. Sentence (A) *Even Lucy came* asserts that Lucy came and presupposes 'Lucy is among the least likely to have come'. But the meaning of *likely* is egocentric: *likely* requires the subject of the opinion. And in the semantic representation of a sentence I have to make it clear that it is the speaker's presupposition – otherwise I won't be able to give an account of the fact that in the embedded position the presupposition changes its bearer. In fact, in sentence (C) *Mother is happy that even Lucy came* it is the presupposition of the Mother. (Perhaps, the speaker should agree with the Mother, otherwise some kind of quotation marks around *even* would have been inserted.) Thus, in the case of a genuine presupposition the presupposing subject undergoes HYPOTACTIC PROJECTION (Paducheva 2011).

It is observed in Potts 2007 that in the context of CI the speaker remains the subject of the projected proposition, and this is the second distinction between CIs and genuine presuppositions.

A proposition can project being neither presupposition nor Potts' CI

An implication can projects under negation being neither a presupposition nor a CI of the sentence in question. For sentence (6a), in its neutral reading, the most natural negation is (6b):

(6) a. Ivan priedet v Moskvu / dlja učastija v konkurse Čajkovskogo \ 'Ivan will come to Moscow to take part in Čajkovskij competition';

   b. Ivan ne priedet \ v Moskvu dlja učastija v konkurse Čajkovskogo 'Ivan won't come to Moscow to take part in Čajkovskij competition'.

The meaning of sentence (6a) includes two propositions (Paducheva 2004: 126).

(i) 'Ivan will come to Moscow';

(ii) 'the purpose of Ivan's <expected> arrival in Moscow is taking part in Čajkovskij contest'.

Proposition (i) is an assertion of (6b); in fact, it constitutes the scope of negation in (6b). But (ii) definitely is not a presupposition of (6b) in Frege-Strawson sense. At the same time it is a component of the meaning of (6b), which is the negation of (6a), i.e. it projects under negation. Syntactically, it is a modifying component, the same as in (1a). If the TR-structure were different, namely, if the finite verb had no stress, (i) would have been a presupposition and (ii) – an assertion. But with the given TR-structure, i.e. with the stressed verb, component (ii) is not at issue, and this is why it projects under negation.

Note that (1a) cannot be negated in the same way. In Boguslavskij 1997 not-at-issue-ness of (ii) in (6) was explained by SEMANTICS OF EXPECTATION – it is only with this aim that Ivan's arrival in Moscow is considered.

Presupposition cancellation

The notion of presupposition is sometimes reproached of being non-well-defined because presuppositions can be cancelled. This reproach isn't substantial, for cancellation can always be accounted for as a well defined phenomenon.

A non-factive interpretation may become possible, e.g., for verbs of inner state causation – as the result of a specific assumption arising in the context of discourse. Look at example (7).

(7) Ivan ne poradoval nas svoim vozvraščeniem 'Ivan didn't make us happy by returning'.

Sentence (7) has an interpretation (i) corresponding to its lexico-syntactic structure; in other words, it allows an ordinary factual reading of its subordinate proposition 'Ivan returned'. On the other hand, a non-factive reading (ii) may also become possible – due to the contextual assumption 'for Ivan to return IS to make us happy'. In the context of this assumption the only way for Ivan not to make us happy is not to return (i.e. not to commit the action of returning):

(i) 'that Ivan returned didn't make us happy';

(ii) 'Ivan didn't return and, thus, didn't make us happy'.

It is only in this context that the factive presupposition can be canceled – the presupposition that is triggered by lexical semantics of the verb *poradovat'* 'make happy'.

The meaning of the verb *повезло* 'was lucky' in sentences (8a) and (8b) differs in that in (8a) the component 'the event Y happened to X' is a presupposition, while in (8b) it is an assertion (example discussed in V.Apresjan 2010).

(8) a. Emu *povezlo*, čto on vstretil molčalivuju žensčinu 'he was happy to meet a silent woman';
    ne povezlo = 'event Y happened to X' 'Y was bad';

  b. Emu *povezlo* rodit'sja bogatym 'he was happy to be born rich';
    ne povezlo = 'event Y didn't happen to X'.

The explanation is that in (8b) the verb doesn't denote any separate event: its semantics is that of an adverb, cf. *On pospešil vyjti* 'he hurried to go away' = *On vyšel pospešno* 'he went away in a hurry'.

To resume, projection is the unique method for detecting presuppositions, though not all that projects is presupposed. Presuppositions are a privileged kind of projective meanings and semantic typology of projective meanings remains an intriguing field of exploration.

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