

# Gestural co-suppositions within the transparency theory<sup>\*</sup>

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Schlenker 2008 argues that the presupposition *d* of a (predicative or propositional) trigger *dd'* is just a normal entailment that 'wants' to be articulated as a separate conjunct, in accordance with (1). If possible, then, one should say ... *it is raining and John knows it...* rather than ...*John knows that it is raining....* (Grice 1981 develops a related intuition).

(1) **Be Articulate**

In any syntactic environment, express the meaning of an expression ... *dd'* ... as ...(*d and dd'*)... (unless independent pragmatic principles rule out the full conjunction).

*Be Articulate* is controlled by a Gricean principle of manner, *Be Brief*, which prohibits unnecessary prolixity, as in (2), *and takes precedence over Be Articulate* – ruling out, for instance, *If it is raining, it is raining and John knows it.*

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(2) **Be Brief - Incremental Version**

Given a context set  $C$ , a predicative or propositional occurrence of  $d$  is infelicitous in a sentence that begins with  $a$  ( $d$  and if for any expression  $g$  of the same type as  $d$  and for any sentence completion  $b'$ ,  $C \models \mathbf{a (d \text{ and } g) b'} \Leftrightarrow \mathbf{a d b'}$ ).

In the end,  $\underline{d}d'$  is acceptable in a sentence  $a \underline{d}d' b$  just in case the attempt to be 'articulate' satisfies the boldfaced equivalence in (2), and thus violates *Be Brief*. Schlenker 2008 claims that *the theory of presupposition projection reduces to the interaction between these two principles*, and Schlenker 2007 proves that they derive the results of Heim 1983 for a fragment with generalized quantifiers, *modulo* some technical assumptions.

(1)-(2) are tailored to the case of 'articulated' competitors of the form  $\dots(d \text{ and } \underline{d}d')$  .... We argue that (i) for gestural presuppositions (Schlenker 2015a,b), illustrated in (3)a, the 'articulated' competitor takes a different form, akin to  $\dots(d d')$ ..., where  $d'$  is a post-verbal modifier; and that (ii) this explains why gestural presuppositions are conditional in nature. (*Notation*: the gesture co-occurs with the expression that immediately follows the picture).

(3) a. None of these 10 guys \_punished his son.

$\Rightarrow$  none of these 10 guys punished his son; but for each of them, **if he had punished his son**, slapping would have been involved

b. None of these 10 guys punished his son like \_this / by slapping him.

(3)a triggers a universal inference that *for each of these 10 guys, if he had punished his son, slapping would have been involved*. Given standard results about presupposition projection under *none* (Chemla 2009), this is explained if  $x$  \_punished  $x$ 's son triggers a conditionalized presupposition (called a 'cosupposition' in Schlenker 2015b) that *if  $x$  punished  $x$ 's son, slapping was involved*. But why this conditionalization?

We suggest that this because the natural 'articulated' competitor comes with a post-verbal modifier, as in (3)b.

Schematically, in 'standard' cases, ...dd'... competes with ...(d and dd')..., but here ...Gd... (where G is a gesture co-occurring with the expression d – e.g.  ...punished...) competes with ...d g ..., where g is a post-verbal modifier with the same content as G (e.g. *punished ... like*  this). If d' g is conjunctively interpreted, dynamic semantics predicts that g is trivial in its local context (and violates *Be Brief*) just in case the local context c' of d' guarantees that c'[d'] entails g, i.e.  $c' \models d' \Rightarrow g$  – hence the conditionalized presupposition we observe.

Within the Transparency theory, the post-posed nature of the modifier<sup>1</sup> explains why the gestural presupposition is conditional, *modulo* the extension of (1)-(2) sketched in (4)a-b. (4)b rules out the articulated competitor ...*punished his son like*  this... just in case no matter which further modifier is added, no matter how the sentence ends, the *like*-phrase can be eliminated without affecting the truth conditions. This means that the post-verbal modifier must be trivial *after* the verbal meaning has been computed.

- (4) Consider a sentence of the form  $a G\_d' b$ , where G is a gesture co-occurring with a (modifier-compatible) expression d'.
- a. **Modified *Be Articulate*:** Say  $a (d' g) b$  rather than  $a G\_d' b$ , unless this is in violation of (b).
  - b. **Modified *Be Brief* – Incremental Version:** Given a context set C, do not say  $a$

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<sup>1</sup> We follow Schlenker 2007, 2008 in framing the discussion in terms of linear order, but more structural notions could be used instead – as long as they are independently motivated. Languages in which the modifier can come pre-verbally (e.g. German) might well cause problems for a simple-minded analysis based on linear order alone.

$(d' g) b$  if  $g$  is incrementally trivial, in the sense that for any modifier  $g'$ , for any sentence completion  $b'$ ,  $C \models a ((d' g) c') b' \Leftrightarrow a (d' c') b'$ .

Assuming that the modifiers are intersective, (4)b is equivalent to the acceptability conditions predicted by (1)-(2) for  $a (d' \text{ and } gd^*) b$ , where  $d^*$  is an arbitrary assertive component:

- (5) Predictions of (1)-(2) for the acceptability of  $a (d' \text{ and } gd^*) b$   
 For any  $g$  of the same type as  $d$ , for any sentence completion  $b'$ ,  
 $C \models a (d' \text{ and } (g \text{ and } c')) b' \Leftrightarrow a (d' \text{ and } c') b'$ .

As shown in Schlenker 2015b (Appendix I), (5) predicts the same result as a conditional presupposition  $d' \Rightarrow g$  in the propositional case and under *[No NP]* – but slightly weaker inferences in other cases.

(One could ask - following suggestions by Kennedy and Szabolcsi - whether our analysis extends to verbs that encode manner modifications, as in (6)a, which might compete with (6)b.

- (6) a. None<sub>F</sub> of these 10 guys drove / swam to the bridge.  
 b. None<sub>F</sub> of these 10 guys got to the bridge by driving / got to the bridge by swimming.

Extending *Be Articulate* to (6)a would predict an inference that *for each of these 10 guys, if he had gone to the bridge, he would have done so by driving / swimming*. It is unclear that this holds.)

## References

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