

# LING2006 Semantics

## Tutorial: Sentence semantics II

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Based on tutorial handouts by Dr. Zhuo Chen

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For each of the following propositions, determine what the presupposition trigger is and state what the presupposition is.

- Batman used to live in Causeway Bay.
- If Superman had been to the new Med Can, he would have loved it.
- Joker blamed Batman for having caused him to miss yesterday's tutorial.
- Thor took a selfie with the Queen of Singapore.



For each of the following propositions, determine what the presupposition trigger is and state what the presupposition is.

- Batman **used to** live in Causeway Bay.
  - Aspectual predicates
  - Presupposition: Batman does not live in Causeway Bay now.
- If Superman had been to the new Med Can, he would have loved it.
  - Adverbial clauses (counterfactuals)
  - Presupposition: Superman has not been to the new Med Can.
- Joker **blamed** Batman for having caused him to miss yesterday's tutorial.
  - Factive predicates
  - Presupposition: Batman has caused Joker to miss yesterday's tutorial.
- Thor took a selfie with **the Queen of Singapore**.
  - Definite descriptions
  - Presupposition: Singapore has a Queen.



Projection test (also called P-family test):

- If  $p$  presupposes  $q$ , the presupposition  $q$  is inherited by “not  $p$ ”, “ $p?$ ”, “if  $p$ , then  $r$ ”, “perhaps  $p$ ”.
- If  $p$  entails  $q$ , the entailment  $q$  is NOT inherited by “not  $p$ ”, “ $p?$ ”, “if  $p$ , then  $r$ ”, “perhaps  $p$ ”.



Projection test (also called P-family test):

- $p$ : It will surprise the doctor that Hulk never eats breakfast.
- Presupposition: Hulk never eats breakfast.
- Entailment: The doctor will be surprised.
- not  $p$ : It will not surprise the doctor that Hulk never eats breakfast.
- $p?$ : Will it surprise the doctor that Hulk never eats breakfast?
- if  $p$ , then  $r$ : If the doctor will be surprised that Hulk never eats breakfast, then he probably will ask him to eat more regularly.
- perhaps  $p$ : Perhaps the doctor will be surprised that Hulk never eats breakfast?



Projection test (also called P-family test):

- $p$ : 医师會對浩克從唔食早餐感到驚訝。
- Presupposition: 浩克從不食早餐。
- Entailment: 醫生會感到驚訝。
- not  $p$ : 医师唔會對浩克從唔食早餐感到驚訝。
- $p?$ : 医师會驚訝于浩克從唔食早餐咩？
- if  $p$ , then  $r$ : 如果医师會驚訝于浩克從唔食早餐，咁佢可能會要求佢更規律咁食。
- perhaps  $p$ : 或者医师會驚訝于浩克從唔食早餐。



Please try to identify the presupposition trigger in each of the following (a) sentences, and use at least one of the projection tests (p-family tests) to determine, between (b) and (c), which one is presupposed by (a) and which one is entailed by (a).

- a Yesterday at 5pm, Thor met Hulk again at the new Med Can.
- b Yesterday at 5pm Thor and Hulk were both at the new Med Can.
- c Thor had met Hulk before.



- a Yesterday at 5pm, Thor met Hulk **again** at the new Med Can.
- b Yesterday at 5pm Thor and Hulk were both at the new Med Can.  
**Entailment**
- c Thor had met Hulk before. **Presupposition**
- d If the speaker asks “ $p$ ?”, i.e., “Did Thor meet Hulk again at the new Med Can?”, it would still be true that Thor had met Hulk before, but it may not be true that Yesterday at 5pm Thor and Hulk were both at the new Med Can.





Please try to identify the presupposition trigger in each of the following (a) sentences, and use at least one of the projection tests (p-family tests) to determine, between (b) and (c), which one is presupposed by (a) and which one is entailed by (a).

- a It will surprise the doctor that Hulk never eats breakfast.
- b Hulk never eats breakfast.
- c The doctor will be surprised.



Please try to identify the presupposition trigger in each of the following (a) sentences, and use at least one of the projection tests (p-family tests) to determine, between (b) and (c), which one is presupposed by (a) and which one is entailed by (a).

- a It will **surprise** the doctor that Hulk never eats breakfast.
- b Hulk never eats breakfast. **Presupposition**
- c The doctor will be surprised. **Entailment**
- d If the speaker says “perhaps  $p$ ”, i.e., “Perhaps it will surprise the doctor that Hulk never eats breakfast”, it would still be true that Hulk never eats breakfast, but it may not necessarily be true that the doctor will be surprised.



Please try to identify the presupposition trigger in each of the following (a) sentences, and use at least one of the projection tests (p-family tests) to determine, between (b) and (c), which one is presupposed by (a) and which one is entailed by (a).

- a Hulk starts drinking a lot of bubble tea.
- b Hulk drinks bubble tea.
- c The action of Hulk drinking a lot of bubble tea did not happen before.



Please try to identify the presupposition trigger in each of the following (a) sentences, and use at least one of the projection tests (p-family tests) to determine, between (b) and (c), which one is presupposed by (a) and which one is entailed by (a).

- a Hulk **starts** drinking a lot of bubble tea.
- b Hulk drinks bubble tea. **Entailment**
- c The action of Hulk drinking a lot of bubble tea did not happen before. **Presupposition**
- d If the speaker says “if  $p$ , then  $r$ ”, i.e., “If Hulk starts drinking a lot of bubble tea, then he will put on some weight pretty quickly”, then it would still be true that the action of Hulk drinking a lot of bubble tea did not happen before, but it may not necessarily be true that Hulk drinks bubble tea.



Please try to identify the presupposition trigger in each of the following (a) sentences, and use at least one of the projection tests (p-family tests) to determine, between (b) and (c), which one is presupposed by (a) and which one is entailed by (a).

- (a) The person who stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP was Joker.
- (b) Someone stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP.
- (c) Joker stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP.



Please try to identify the presupposition trigger in each of the following (a) sentences, and use at least one of the projection tests (p-family tests) to determine, between (b) and (c), which one is presupposed by (a) and which one is entailed by (a).

- a The person **who stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP** was Joker.
- b Someone stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP. **Presupposition**
- c Joker stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP. **Entailment**
- d If the speaker says “not *p*”, i.e., “The person who stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP was not Joker”, then it would still be true that someone stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP, but it may not necessarily be true that Joker stole some paper towels from PARKnSHOP.



- **Homework 2 due next Wednesday (April 3)**
- **No lecture this Friday (March 29)**
- Please scan the QR code and complete the attendance form