Referring Expressions

Referring expressions are intended to identify a particular individual or location. A non-referring expression might be used to denote a category or type but not a particular referent.

1. John is *a teacher*
John is a referring expression: as the nominal refers to a particular person
a teacher on the other hand is non-referring as it refers to a category/group of people who are teachers

2. Joh is **a teacher**, who works in a Delhi college
In this case, a teacher, who works in a Delhi college' refers to a particular person. Hence in this example **a teacher** is in fact a referring expression. John is also a referring expression

3. a. She was looking for *a teacher* to study with (but couldn't find any): non referring
   b. She was looking for **a teacher** I had recommended (but couldn't find him): referring

Entailment & Presupposition

Entailment:
P: The anarchist assassinated the emperor
Q: The emperor died.

P entails Q, i.e.,

P		Q	Reason
T	→	T	If the anarchist assassinated the emperor, the emperor is dead.
F	→	T or F	If the anarchist did not assassinate the emperor, the emperor might be (a) alive (making Q, False), or dead due to other reasons, such as disease or other things (making Q, True)
T or F	←	T	If the emperor is dead, it might be due to (a) illness of any kind, or other reasons (making P, False), or (b) assassinated by an anarchist (making P, True)
F	←	F	If the emperor is not dead, that means the anarchist did not assassinate him.

So, what are the other kinds of sentences which show entailment?
Let us take a simple sentence,
P: I am going to LH316.
Q: I am going to LHC.

In the above sentence, Q is a location in IIT, and P is a location inside the place where Q is present. (LH316 is a classroom in LHC.)

P		Q	Reason
T	→	T	If you are inside the classroom LH316, you are definitely inside the LHC building.
F	→	T or F	If you are not in the class LH316, it does not necessarily mean that you are not in the LHC building, you might (a) either be in another classroom (making Q, True), or (b) you are outside, in Amul or hostel (making Q, False)
T or F	←	T	If you are inside the LHC building, you are either (a) in class LH316 (making P, True), or (b) you are in another class (making P, False)
F	←	F	If you are not inside LHC, you cannot be in classroom LH316.

Presupposition: prioritise two things:
- Assumption
- Context

P: I stopped drinking coffee.
Q: I used to drink coffee.

P presupposes Q.

P		Q	Reason

T	→	T	If I have stopped drinking coffee, that means, I used to drink coffee.
F	→	T	If I have not stopped drinking coffee, that means, I still drink coffee.
T or F	←	T	If I used to drink coffee, I might (a) have stopped drinking coffee now (making sentence P, true),
X	←	F	If I didn't drink coffee, I did not need to stop drinking coffee.

Difference between entailment and presupposition

Negation test helps distinguish between entailment and presupposition. If we negate an entailing sentence, then the entailment fails. But negating a presupposing sentence allows the presupposition to survive

1. a. Everyone passed the examination
   b. No-one failed the examination

No one passed the examination (if evaluates to True), then No one failed the examination (must evaluate to False). Hence the above **pair** is an entailment not a presupposition

2. a. Mr Singleton has resumed his habit of drinking beer
   b. Mr Singleton had a habit of drinking beer

Mr Singleton has not resumed his habit of drinking beer (if evaluates to True)
Mr Singleton had a habit of drinking beer (still evaluates to T)
Hence the above pair is a presupposition not an entailment