Pragmatics Homework #1: Presuppositions

Exam Number B018520

January 23, 2015

Part I

1. **Propositions b. and c. are presupposed**, while **proposition d. is entailed**, assuming

$$\forall x. \Diamond scared(x) \rightarrow animate(x)$$

My reasoning for **b.** is as follows: consider the negation test, i.e.

That John was assaulted did not scare Mary. (1)

as applied to an inanimate object, e.g.

That John was assaulted did not scare the table.[1] (2)

Sentence 2 implies a table capable of being scared. To support this, a context can be constructed which in my evaluation triggers accommodation of the table being animate, e.g.

> Bursts of light erupted from Mickey's wand as he made the broomsticks dance; this did not scare the table.

My reasoning for **c.** stems primarily from the negation test as performed in (1): John's assault survives negation. The contrapositive test can be used to show **a.**'s entailment relationship with **d.**. Given

> That John was assaulted did not cause fear in Mary.

Mary was also not scared by John's assault, assuming causing fear in and being scared are roughly synonymous.

2. **Proposition b. is presupposed; proposition c. is entailed.** The presupposition relationship of **a.** to **b.** can be demonstrated using a denial test: contrast

> That's false; Carmen still works at the University of Edinburgh.

with

> # That's false; Carmen never worked at the University of Edinburgh.

Contraposition holds for **c.** and **a.**, demonstrating an entailment relationship:

[1] The symbol # throughout this work is used to indicate my own evaluation.

It's not the case that Carmen is not working at the University of Edinburgh.
∴
It's not the case that Carmen is no longer working at the University of Edinburgh.

3. **Proposition b. is presupposed; proposition c. is entailed.**

Part II

4. **Proposition a. entails b.**, and vice-versa. Simply stated,

$$\neg\forall x.\, one(x) \rightarrow try(x, kill(Templeton, x))$$

is equivalent to

$$\exists x.\, one(x) \wedge \neg try(x, kill(Templeton, x))$$

following from the well-established equivalences

$$\neg\forall x.\, P(x) \equiv \exists x.\, \neg P(x)$$

and

$$\neg(p \rightarrow q) \equiv p \wedge \neg q$$

5. **Proposition b. entails a.**

6. **Proposition a. presupposes b.**

Part III

8. (a)