

I don't know if projection is categorical. Did Mandelkern et al. 2020 discover that it is?

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Abstract

Presuppositions are taken to typically project out of entailment-canceling environments like the scope of negation (e.g., Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 1990). While projection is often characterized as categorical (that is, content either typically projects or not), there is mounting empirical evidence that projection is gradient, with content being more or less projective (e.g., Karttunen 1971, Xue and Onea 2011, de Marneffe et al. 2019, Tonhauser et al. 2018, Degen and Tonhauser 2022). Mandelkern et al. 2020 critically evaluated the inference rating measures on which this empirical evidence is based and claimed that a different measure, namely naturalness ratings in explicit ignorance contexts, provides support for categorical projection and distinguishes presuppositions from nonpresuppositions. This paper presents the results of an experiment designed to investigate Mandelkern et al.'s 2020 claim for factive predicates (presumed presupposition triggers) and nonfactive ones (nontriggers). The results do not support Mandelkern et al.'s 2020 claim and rather align with Degen and Tonhauser's 2022 result that there is no evidence for a categorical distinction between factive and nonfactive predicates.

Keywords: Presuppositions, categorical vs. gradient projection, inference ratings, naturalness ratings in explicit ignorance contexts.

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