Lieber Andreas,

danke für die Hotel-Info! Meinen Abstract habe ich unten angehängt.

Freue mich!

Judith

Projective content: On the roles of grammar, discourse and world knowledge
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(based on joint work with Judith Degen, Stanford University)

It is well-known that speakers may be taken to be committed to the truth of utterance content even when the content is contributed by an expression in the scope of an entailment-canceling operator. For instance, if Rahim utters the negated sentence "Carla didn't discover that Julian dances salsa", Rahim may nevertheless be taken to be committed to the truth of the content of the complement clause, that Julian dances salsa, even though this clause is realized under negation. That is, the content of the complement may project over negation and, therefore, is considered projective content.

Formal analyses of projective content have traditionally assumed that grammar codes whether content is projective: the content of the clausal complement of "discover" is analyzed as a presupposition, which means that a speaker who uses "discover" presupposes the truth of the content of the complement. Other clause-embedding predicates, like "think" or "say", are not assumed to trigger a presupposition. The discourse in which a presupposition trigger is used may result in the local accommodation of the presupposition. For instance, in the naturally occurring example in (1), the writer is not taken to be committed to the truth of the complement, that they like stormwater.

(1) [When did you discover that you liked storm water?]
    I didn't discover that I liked stormwater, I discovered that I liked fly-fishing for trout.

Research over the past decade has begun to re-assess the roles of grammar and discourse in the analysis of presuppositions (e.g., Abrusán 2011, 2016; Simons et al 2010, 2017; Tonhauser et al 2013, 2018). In this talk, the roles of grammar, discourse and world knowledge in the projection of utterance content are considered more generally, namely for the content of the complement of 20 clause-embedding predicates, including factive ones (like "discover" and "know"), non-factive ones (like "think" and "say"), and optionally factive ones (like "acknowledge" and "announce"); see Kiparsky & Kiparsky 1970. I show that the content of the complement of most of these predicates is projective, albeit to varying degrees, which challenges the view that grammar codes which content is projective. I then present empirical evidence for Tonhauser, Beaver & Degen's 2018 hypothesis that utterance content projects to the extent that it is not at-issue with respect to the Question Under Discussion (QUD) addressed by the utterance: participants' at-issueness ratings predict the projectivity of the content of the complement of the 20 predicates. Finally, I show that the prior probability of the content of the complement influences projectivity, but not at-issueness. This finding suggests that prior probability and at-issueness are independent predictors of projectivity.

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