

3 - Presupposition

Definition

Something that the speaker assumes to be the case prior to making an utterance

Example

Mary's brother bought 3 horses

- A person exists named Mary
- Mary has a brother

If we say that the sentence contains the proposition p and the sentence contains the proposition q , we can represent the relationship as $p \gg q$

Example

- Mary's dog is cute (p)
- Mary has a dog (q)
- $p \gg q$

Consistency Under Negation

Definition

The presupposition of a statement will remain constant (still true) even when the statement isn't negated

Example

- Mary's dog is not cute (NOT p)
- Mary has a dog (q)
- NOT $p \gg q$

Types

Potential Presupposition

- Can only become actual presuppositions in contexts with speakers

Existential Presupposition

- Is not only assumed to be present in possessive constructions, but more generally in any definite noun phrase

Factive Presupposition

- With structure similar to "Everyone knows that q "
- Verbs like know, realize, regret, be, aware, glad, odd

Non Factive Presupposition

- Verbs like dream, imagine, and pretend