

Pragmatics

Thomas Wagner

Presuppositions and entailments



Presuppositions and entailments

- [Pragmatics] explores how a great deal of what is **unsaid** is recognised as part of what is communicated.

Yules, 1996, p. 3

- [...], such information will generally not be stated and consequently will count as part of what is communicated but **not said**.

Yules, 1996, p. 25

Presuppositions and entailments

presupposition and entailment

=

types of what is **not** said

Presuppositions and entailments

presupposition and entailment

=

more being communicated
than being said

(Yule, 1996, p. 34)

Presuppositions and entailments



*The King of
France is not
wise.*

(in 2026)

Presuppositions and entailments

- Pragmatics? Even Prof Wagner can teach that.
- Have you seen the mistake in the PowerPoint presentation?
- Have you seen the student cheating?
- What will you be cooking tonight for us?
- Have you stopped smoking?
- Are you still beating your girlfriend?
- Judge: Do you regret having poisoned your wife?

Presuppositions and entailments

- Pragmatics? **Even** Prof Wagner can teach that.
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Presuppositions and entailments

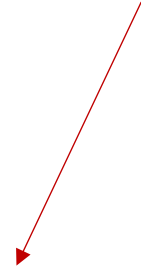
- *suppose*
- *pre-suppose*

presupposition

=

something the speaker assumes to be the case **prior**
to making an utterance

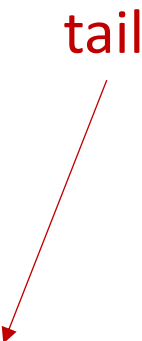
pre-



Presuppositions and entailments

- *tail*
- *en-tail*

entailment
=
something that logically **follows**
from what is asserted in the utterance



$\neg$ $\wedge$ $\vee$ $\rightarrow$ $\forall$ $\exists$

Presuppositions and entailments

- John **regrets** that he kissed Mary
- John **returned** to Cambridge
- John **managed** to give up smoking
- **If** I were Superman, I would be bulletproof

Presuppositions and entailments

[2] a. Mary's dog is cute. (*p*)

Presuppositions and entailments

- [2] a. Mary's dog is cute. (p)
 b. Mary has a dog. (q)

Presuppositions and entailments

- [2] a. Mary's dog is cute. (p)
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$$p \ll q$$

Presuppositions and entailments

[2] a. Mary's dog is **not** cute. ($\neg p$)

Presuppositions and entailments

- [2] a. Mary's dog is **not** cute. ($\neg p$)
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Presuppositions and entailments

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- $\neg p \ll q$

Presuppositions and entailments

$$p \ll q$$

$$\neg p \ll q$$

constancy under negation

Presuppositions and entailments

- John **regrets** that he kissed Mary
- John **returned** to Cambridge
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Presuppositions and entailments

presuppositions are **constant** under negation

- John does **not** regret that he kissed Mary >> John kissed Mary
- John did **not** return to Cambridge >> John has been to Cambridge before
- John did **not** manage to give up smoking >> John tried to give up smoking
- If I were Superman, I would **not** be bulletproof >> I am not Superman

Presuppositions and entailments

- we can presuppose...

- the **existence** of sth. / sb.

(Prof Wagner is an ...)

- that some **event** occurred

(Have you stopped ...)

- that some **property** exists

(Linguistics is more interesting than ...)

Presuppositions and entailments

	type	example	presupposition
1	existential	he left	>> he exists

Presuppositions and entailments

	type	example	presupposition
1	existential	he left	>> he exists
2	factive	he regrets leaving	>> he left

Presuppositions and entailments

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Presuppositions and entailments

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Presuppositions and entailments

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5	structural	when did he leave?	>> he left

Presuppositions and entailments

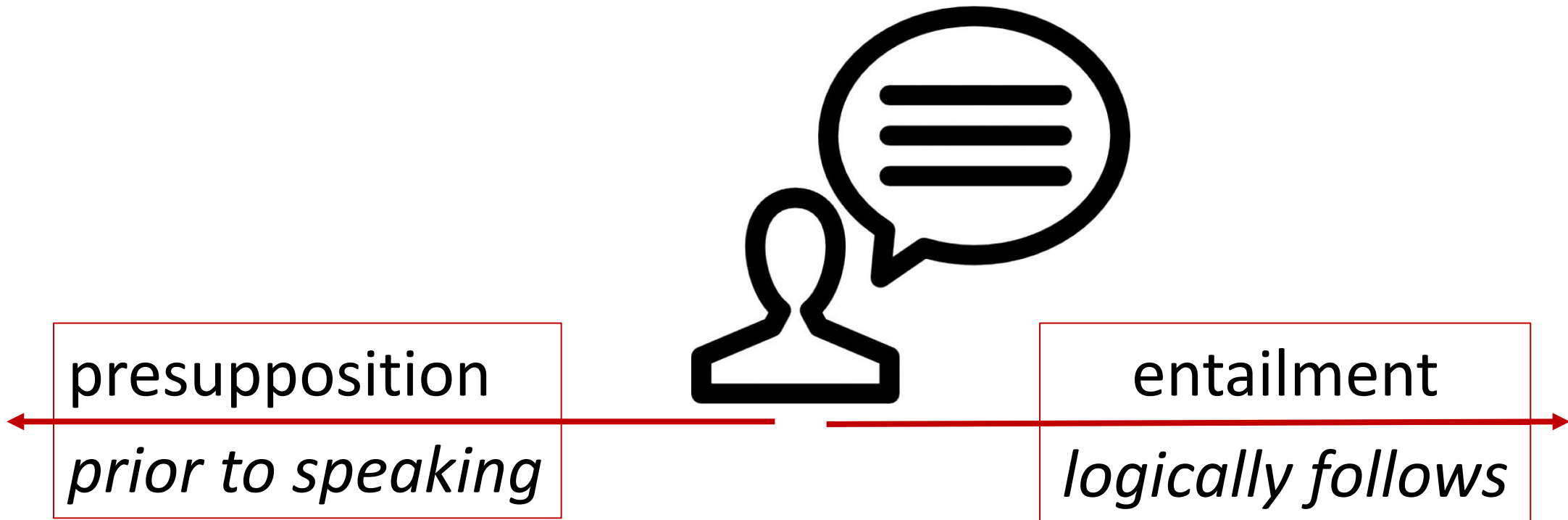
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5	structural	when did he leave?	>> he left
6	counterfactual	if he had left, ...	>> he is still there

Presuppositions and entailments

- **entailment** $\models$ - or sometimes $\models$
- A entails B ($A \models B$); whenever A is true, **then** B must also be true.
- Mary broke the window $\models$ The window is broken
- Sue and Fred went to the party $\models$ Sue went to the party

Presuppositions and entailments

- What is the difference between **entailments** and **presuppositions**?



Presuppositions and entailments

to manage

managed is conventionally interpreted as
entailing „succeeded“ and **presupposing** „tried“.

(Yule, 1996, p. 28)

Presuppositions

- What is the difference between **entailments** and **presuppositions**?



Presuppositions

- What is the difference between **entailments** and **presuppositions**?



Presuppositions and entailments

entailments are **not constant** under negation

• John is human $\models$ John is a mammal

• John is **not** human $\not\models$ John is a mammal

Presuppositions and entailments

- *John managed to stop in time*

a) John stopped in time *presupposition or entailment ?*

b) John tried to stop in time *presupposition or entailment ?*

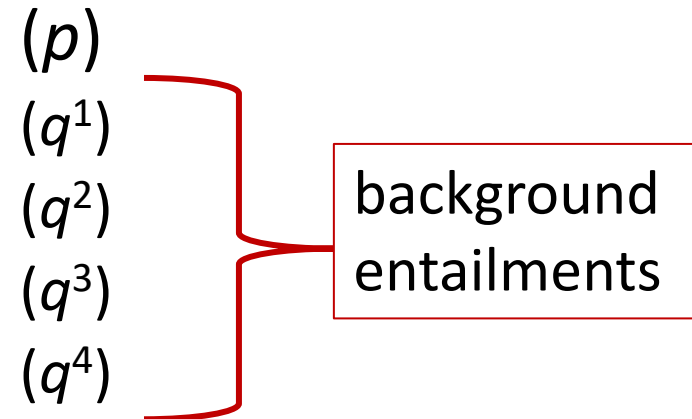
Presuppositions and entailments

- John managed to stop in time
 - $\models$ John stopped in time
 - $\gg$ John tried to stop in time
- John did **not** manage to stop in time
 - $\not\models$ John stopped in time
 - $\gg$ John tried to stop in time

only presuppositions survive

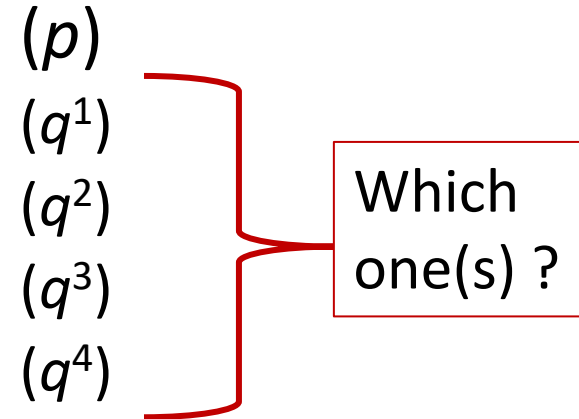
Presuppositions and entailments

- **Ordered** entailments
- Rover chased three squirrels
 - Something happened
 - Something chased three squirrels
 - Rover chased three of something
 - Rover did something to three squirrels



Presuppositions and entailments

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Presuppositions and entailments

- **Ordered** entailments

- Rover chased three squirrels (p^1)

Presuppositions and entailments

- **Ordered** entailments

- Rover chased **THREE** squirrels (p^1)
- **ROVER** chased three squirrels (p^2)
- **It was Rover who** chased three squirrels (p^2) **cleft**

$$p^2 \models q^2$$

something chased three squirrels