Beyond Obligatory Presupposition

Pascal Amsili\textsuperscript{1} & Claire Beyssade\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1} Université Paris Diderot, Laboratoire de Linguistique Formelle
\textsuperscript{2} Institut Jean Nicod, Paris, CNRS, ENS, EHESS

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Outline

1. Background: obligatory presupposition triggers
   - Data
   - Analysis
   - Discussion

2. Let’s go further
   - New data
   - Proposal: Ensure Cohesion!
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Additives

Too and the other additives have been known to be “obligatory”:

(1) Jo had fish and Mo did *(too).  (Green, 1968; Kaplan, 1984)

(2) [Context: John, a teacher with a very bad hand writing, has just written an exercise on the blackboard. When he is finished he reads it aloud to make sure everyone can copy it down properly. A student may not hear it all very well and ask:] Can you read that word #(again)?  (Chemla, 2008)

(3) Léa a fait une bêtise qu’elle ne #(re-)fera pas.  
Lea did a silly thing that she won’t (re)do.

(4) Two days ago John was cooking. He is #(still) cooking.  
(Ippolito, 2004)

Alternatives: \( \langle \text{too, } \emptyset \rangle, \langle \text{still, } \emptyset \rangle, \ldots \)
Factive verbs I

(5)  a. Paul knows that the earth is flat.
    ⇒ factive presupposition (the earth is flat)

    b. Paul knows whether the earth is flat.
    ⇒ no presupposition

⇒ know whether = know that \[\text{minus}\] factive presupposition

\(\text{know whether}\) is not allowed when the factive psp is satisfied:

(6) Jill has gone to Africa, and Paul tells no one, even though
    he knows (that/# whether) she’s gone there.

Alternatives: \(\langle (\text{know}) \text{ that}, (\text{know}) \text{ whether} \rangle\)
Factive verbs II

Similar with other verbs subcategorising both questions and propositions

- In French: *savoir* (to know) *ignorer* (not to know/be unaware), *vérifier* (check), *comprendre* (understand)

(7) Jean est revenu de vacances. Mais comme il n’a téléphoné à personne, au bureau, tout le monde ignore ( ? si / que ) il est chez lui.

*John has come back from vacation. But since he called no one, at his office everybody ‘ignores’ ( whether / that ) he is at home.*
Cleft constructions

Jean est entré = C’est Jean qui est entré \textbf{minus} existential psp

Jean came in it is John who came in

The non presuppositional form is not allowed when the presupposition is satisfied:

\begin{enumerate}
\item [a.] #Quelqu’un a préparé le dîner. Jean ne l’a pas fait.
\item [b.] Quelqu’un a préparé le dîner. Ce n’est pas Jean qui l’a fait.
\end{enumerate}

\textit{Someone fixed the dinner. Jean did not do it / It is not Jean who did it}

\begin{enumerate}
\item [9] Someone fixed the dinner.
\item [9] (It is John who/JOHN/#John) did it.
\end{enumerate}

\begin{flushleft}
Alternatives: \langle NP VP, c’est NP qui VP \rangle
\end{flushleft}
Definite descriptions

\[ a = \text{the } \text{minus} \text{ existence and uniqueness presupposition} \]

(10) \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \#\text{A wife of John's is intelligent} \\
\text{b. } & \text{The wife of John's is intelligent} \\
\text{c. } & \#\text{A father of the victim arrived at the scene} \\
\text{d. } & \text{The father of the victim arrived at the scene}
\end{align*}

(Heim, 1991; Sauerland, 2003)

Alternatives: \[ \langle a, \text{the} \rangle \]
Class of triggers

- What’s obligatory
  - additive particles
    - too, again, still, anymore, re-
  - (some) factive verbs
  - cleft and focus constructions
  - definite descriptions

These presupposition triggers are **obligatory** when their conditions of use are met.
Class of triggers

- What do all these triggers have in common?

\[
\text{John came} \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{l}
\text{Jean came} \quad \text{(Assertion)}
\end{array} \right. \quad \text{(Presupposition)}
\]
Class of triggers

• What do all these triggers have in common?

John came **too**  \{ Jean came  

Someone came  

(Assertion)  

(Presupposition)
Class of triggers

- What do all these triggers have in common?

John came too \{ Jean came \quad (Assertion) \\
Someone came \quad (Presupposition) \\

⇒ They don’t contribute to the asserted content (by contrast with presupposition triggers \textbf{with} asserted content, like \textit{regret}, or \textit{only})
Explanations on the market:

- Proposals based on the presence of a **contrast**
  (Kaplan, 1984; Krifka, 1999)
  ⇒ account for a subset of the additive cases
- Proposals based on “Maximize Presupposition!”
  (Amsili & Beyssade, 2006)
  ⇒ More on this later
- Proposal based on exhaustivity
  (Bade, 2013, *this parallel session*)
Our version of MP!

We formulate our proposal in terms of antipresupposition
(Percus, 2006; Chemla, 2008)

Our claim is that presupposition triggers, as soon as they don’t have an asserted contribution, are obligatory —when their conditions of use are met— because their absence would give rise to antipresuppositions.
Our version of “Maximize Presupposition!”

- Extension of antipresupposition domain to new data:

  \[(11)\]
  a. \(\langle a, \text{the}\rangle, \langle \text{each, the}\rangle, \langle \text{all, both}\rangle, \langle \text{believe, know}\rangle\) \((\text{Percus, 2006})\)
  b. \(\langle \text{too, } \emptyset\rangle, \langle \text{again, } \emptyset\rangle, \langle \text{that, whether}\rangle\)  
  \[\ldots\]
  \((\text{Amsili & Beyssade, 2010})\)

- Sketch of the reasoning:

  \[(12)\] John is sick, Mary is sick (too).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>John is sick</th>
<th>Mary is sick</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not available</td>
<td>available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not available</td>
<td>again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|              |              | \(\rightarrow\) antipresupposition \(\rightarrow\) rejected

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mary is sick</th>
<th>John is sick</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>available</td>
<td>not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>again</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|              |              | \(\rightarrow\) expected form
Unresolved issues

1. What is the empirical definition of obligatoriness?
2. Some occurrences are more obligatory than others
3. Some occurrences don’t seem to be obligatory at all
4. Some items that are not presupposition triggers seem to be obligatory
What does it mean that, say, *too*, is obligatory?

- **Weak version:** *too* cannot be removed from a discourse where it appears felicitously. 
- **Strong version:** there are contexts where the speaker is obliged to use *too*.
Obligatoriness is not a boolean property
(results about *too*/*aussi*)

There is a positive correlation between the degree of reduction of the additive host and the degree of obligatoriness:

(13) John showed a way out to Jane, and...

a. Max *did* ###(too)

b. Max showed *her* a way out ##(too)

c. Max showed a way out to Jane #(too)

(Amsili et al., 2012)

⇒ Any explanation should account for this fact.
In some cases, triggers do not seem to be obligatory at all

(14) Jean est malade, Marie est malade, Paul est malade, tout le monde est malade alors !

*John is sick, Marie is sick, Paul is sick, everybody is sick then!*

(15) Il était là hier, il est là aujourd’hui.

*He was there yesterday, he is there today*

⇒ Role of discourse structure

Similar findings in (Eckard & Fränkel, 2012): when asked to produce a narrative, subjects tend to produce many additive markers, whereas they don’t produce any when asked to produce a “spy report”.
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Tense and temporal adjuncts

(16)  
a. A: Where’s John?  
b. B: He was at home an hour ago,  
    he’s in his office #(now).  
   \hspace{1cm} \textit{from Keshet (2008)}

(17)  
a. The fugitive is #(back) in jail.  
b. That bachelor is #(now) married.  
c. The employees are #(currently) unemployed.  
   \hspace{1cm} (Keshet, 2008, ex(45))

(18)  \hspace{1cm} \textit{Context: The 26th is the last Tuesday of the month. The  
utterance time is, say, the 27th:}
   
a. #Every Tuesday this month, I fast.  
b. Every Tuesday this month, I fasted.  
   \hspace{1cm} (Singh, 2011, ex(5))
Discourse particles I

Zeevat (2003) makes a list of what he calls “discourse particles”:

- Again
- Indeed (≈ Dutch *immers*)
- Instead
- *Doch / Toch* (German/Dutch)
- Too

(19) A: Bill is ill.
   B: He is *(indeed).*  \(^{(Zeevat, 2003)}\)

- “Corpus studies by Tim Kliphuis and myself suggest that omitting [discourse particles] nearly always lead to awkwardness, or to difference in implicature.”

\(^{(Zeevat, 2003)}\)
Discourse particles II

- Discourse/dialogue particles in French

(20)  
  a. Jean est malade. Est-ce que Jill est malade aussi ?
  b. Jean est malade. Est-ce que Jill est malade, elle ?
  c. #Jean est malade. Est-ce que Jill est malade ?

  John is sick. Is Jill sick (too/ her/∅)?

(21)  
  Jean est malade. #(Et toi,) Tu es malade?

  Jean is sick. (And you), you are sick?

(22)  
  J’ai mal dormi cette nuit. T’as bien dormi #,( toi) ?

  I haven’t slept well this night. Did you sleep well (, you)?
Pronouns (vs. Definite NPs/Proper names) I

- Once an entity has been introduced, it’s compulsory to refer to it by cohesive devices:

  \[(23)\]
  a. #Jean a fait une erreur que Jean n’avait jamais faite.
  b. Jean a fait une erreur qu’il n’avait jamais faite.

  Jean made a mistake that Jean/he never made.

- Except when this would lead to ambiguity:

  \[(24)\]
  a. #Léa introduced a guest to John, and he didn’t behave properly.
  b. Léa introduced a guest to Marie, and he didn’t behave properly.
The pronoun is obligatory when its conditions of optimal resolution are met
[to avoid an unwanted inferential effect (25)],
⇒ a proper name (or a definite description) is required otherwise
[to avoid an ambiguity (26)]

(25) Sam came in and Sam went out.
∴ There are two Sams

(26) Jo_i introduced Mo_j to Max_k, and he_i/j/k smiled.
Taking stock

- What’s obligatory
  - (some) presupposition triggers
  - (some) discourse particles
  - (some) temporal adjuncts
  - pronouns (in some cases)

- What purpose do they serve?
  ⇒ Discourse cohesion (in a wide sense)

- What do they have in common?
  ⇒ That’s the only thing they do.
Research Programme

Linguistic Generalization

Linguistic items that establish **discourse cohesion** and serve **only** this purpose, are **obligatory** when their conditions of use are met.

Explanation

**Old version**
the speaker must **Maximize Presupposition** so as to avoid unwanted antipresuppositions

**New version**
the speaker must **ensure cohesion** so as to avoid unwanted inferences based on a competition between expressions which differ (only) on their cohesion effect
What is the empirical definition of obligatoriness?
Still to be solved. But if we can make a list of cohesion devices available, we could end up with a predictive notion of obligation.

Some occurrences are more obligatory than others
Not explained here. We claim that the degree of obligatoriness depends on the perceived similarity of what’s in the discourse.

Some occurrences don’t seem to be obligatory at all
When discourse cohesion is not a stake; or when it is achieved by other means (intonation, for instance), cohesive devices are no longer obligatory.

Some items that are not presupposition triggers seem to be obligatory
What’s obligatory is to achieve discourse cohesion, not necessarily by means of presupposition.
Open issues

1. List of relevant cohesive devices (anaphora, presupposition, repetition, hypo/hyperonymy, syntactic parallelism...)
2. Should we generalize the notion of antipresupposition or are we in fact dealing with (varieties of) quantity implicatures?
Thank you!

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Grégoire Winterstein
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Regine Eckardt

for inspiration
Jean a montré sa voiture à Paul, et Léa...

Jean has shown his car to Paul and Lea...

full... a montré sa voiture à Paul aussi
... a montré sa voiture à Paul
... has shown her car to Paul (too)

cpt... l’a montré à Paul aussi
... l’a montré à Paul
... it has shown to Paul (too)

opl... lui a montré sa voiture aussi
... lui a montré sa voiture
... him has shown her car (too)

pro... la lui a montré aussi
... la lui a montré
... it him has shown (too)

vpe... l’a fait aussi
... l’a fait
... it has done (too)

vid... aussi
...
... (too)
Mean Judgments of Acceptability normalized by participant: 0 denotes average answer, positive values indicate higher acceptability with 1 being one standard deviation better than the average sentence.
Gradability of obligatoriness (experiment) III

- Linear Mixed Model:
  - Degree of reduction mapped to a value between 0 and 6.
    - Presence / absence of aussi.
    - Random effects on participants and items.
  - No effect of the Reduction factor alone.
  - However: a strong interaction between Reduction and Aussi:
    - In the conditions with aussi, higher reduction led to a higher acceptability.
    - In the conditions without aussi, higher reduction led to a lower acceptability.

Amsili et al. (2012)
(28) Mary \textit{knows} that Jane is pregnant. \\
\textit{presupposes that} Jane is pregnant \\

(29) Mary \textit{believes} that Jane is pregnant. \\
\neg Jane is not pregnant \\
\textit{antipresupposes that} Jane is pregnant \\

\textit{(Percus, 2006)}
The trigger \textit{know} carries the following “instruction”:

- \textit{know (that) p} (presupposition trigger): is to be used by the speaker (S) if
  - S believes p, \textbf{and}
  - p is part of the common ground, \textbf{or}
  - S believes S has enough authority to make the addressee accommodate p.

- The choice of \textit{believe}, in contrast, says that the previous conditions are not met, namely
  - the speaker (S) does not believe p, \textbf{or}
  - p is not part of the common ground, \textbf{and}
  - S doesn’t have enough authority to make the addressee accommodate p

References

Antipresupposition II
most of the time, when $S$ has “competence” (knows whether $p$ or $\neg p$) and has “authority”, this leads to the conclusion that $p$ does not hold.

Prediction of the Maximize Presupposition principle:

**Situation:** a speaker $s$ utters a sentence $S_1$. $S_2$ is an alternative sentence to $S_1$; $S_2$ asserts what $S_1$ asserts, but additionally presupposes $p$.

**Predicted inference:** $\neg B_S[p] \lor \neg B_s[\text{Auth}_s[p]]$ (Chemla, 2008, (24))
Factive verbs III

Alternatives: \langle \text{know} (\text{that}), \text{believe} (\text{that}) \rangle

(30) a. Paul \textit{knows that} the earth is flat.
   \[\Rightarrow \text{factive presupposition (the earth is flat)}\]

b. Paul \textit{believes that} the earth is flat.
   \[\Rightarrow \text{no presupposition}\]

\[\Rightarrow \text{believe} = \text{know } \boxed{\text{minus}} \text{ factive presupposition}\]

\textit{believe} is not allowed when the factive psp is satisfied:

(31) a. [Mary has been cheating on John for years...]

b. *...and he believes it.

c. ... and he knows it. \quad (\text{Chemla, 2008, ex(10)})
In some cases, triggers do not seem to be obligatory at all

- Corpus study: we removed *too* in litterary samples, and asked subjects to decide whether it was obligatory (or not).
  \[\Rightarrow\] very bad inter-annotator agreement \((\kappa \approx 0.22)\)
  \[\Rightarrow\] in more than half of the cases, *too* is optional
  \((Winterstein \text{ } & \text{ } Zeevat, 2012; \text{ } Amsili \text{ } et \text{ } al., \text{ } 2012)\)

- “Discourse exceptions”

  (32) Jean est malade, Marie est malade, Paul est malade, tout le monde est malade alors !

  (33) Il était là hier, il est là aujourd’hui.

  *He was there yesterday, he is there today*


