Factives

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Readings

"Fact." Paul Kiparsky and Carol Kiparsky, pp. 345–369, Semantics. An Interdisciplinary Reader in   Philosophy, Linguistics and Psychology. D. D, Steinberg and L. A. Jakobovits (eds.), Cambridge, 1971.

"The Logic of English Predicate Complement Constructions." Lauri Karttunen, IULC, 1971.

"Simple and Phrasal Implicatives." Lauri Karttunen. pp. 124–131, *SEM: The First Joint Conference on Lexical and Computational Semantics, Montréal, 2012.

"The Deep Lexical Semantics of Event Words." Jerry R. Hobbs and Niloofar Montazeri. To appear in Concepts, Types and Frames. R. Osswald (ed.).

Outline

Two of the papers under discussion are from the same period. My paper is mostly about implicative constructions. It is simple, mostly just descriptive. I will augment that with some new observations about phrasal implicatives

The "Fact" paper presents data that was novel at the time. It links factivity of verbs and adjectives to presupposition. There is a large literature on presuppositions, fundamental differences on how they should be understood. I will not try to explain presupposition in this talk but one has to know something about it to see the K&K paper in its proper setting.

Types of complement clauses

The papers on factives and implicatives are about the semantics of complement constructions.

Examples of complements:

that he has been found guilty   that-clause
that we are drifting apart

his being found guilty   gerund
having agreed to the proposal

to accomplish even more   infinitive
to see Mary with Bill

Syntactic roles of complements

A 'matrix clause' contains a complement as ...

Subject

His being found guilty <u>is tragic</u>.
That he has been found guilty <u>suffices</u>.
Having agreed to the proposal <u>bothers</u> me.

Object

I <u>regret</u> having agreed to the proposal.
<u>Bear in mind</u> that the has been found guilty.
Kim was <u>annoyed</u> to see Mary with Bill.

Extraposed subject

<u>It</u> is tragic that he has been found guilty.
<u>It</u> suffices that you let yourself go.
<u>It</u> bothers me that we are drifting apart.

What is the issue?

Given a <u>matrix</u> clause

It bothers me ...

and a <u>complement</u>

that we are drifting apart.

the author is obviously committed to the truth matrix clause but is he committed to the truth of the complement clause?

In this case the author/speaker is committed to both the matrix and the complement. It would be incoherent/contradictory to say

It bothers me that we are drifting apart # but luckily we are as close as ever.

Committed in what way?

From the hearer's perspective the author/speaker of S may be seen as meaning (= being committed to, intending to convey) or not meaning that P in different ways, for different reasons.

The <u>Cambridge Grammar of the English Language</u>. Rodney Huddleston and Geoffrey K. Pullum (eds.), Cambridge University Press, 2002 distinguishes four different kinds of semantic relations (pp. 33–40, Chapter 1, §5):

entailment   (Aristotle ≈350 BC, necessary consequence)
conventional implicature   (Frege 1892, 1918, Grice 1989)
conversational implicature   (Grice 1989)
presupposition   (Frege 1892, Russell 1905, Strawson, 1950)

There is a broad agreement among linguists that these are the right distinctions but no consensus on how to define the last three.

Semantic Relations

as characterized by Huddleston and Pullum

ENTAILMENT   semantic   truth-conditional

Kim broke the vase.   ⇒   The vase broke.

CONVENTIONAL IMPLICATURE   semantic   non-truth-conditional

Alfred still has not come.   ⇒   Alfred's arrival is expected. (Frege 1918)

CONVERSATIONAL IMPLICATURE   pragmatic   non-truth-conditional

Some people left.   ⇒   Some people didn't leave.

PRESUPPOSITION   pragmatic?   non-truth-conditional?

Kepler died in misery.   ⇒   There was a person named Kepler. (Frege 1892)

The present King of France is (not) bald.   ⇒   There is a king of France. (Russell, Strawson)

She has stopped crying.   ⇒   She has been crying.   (Huddleston & Pullum)

I regret that we have no tables available.   ⇒   We have no tables available. (Kiparsky)

The kinds of 'presupposition triggers' discussed by philosophers 70 years were very limited. When linguists seized upon the idea in the late 1960s, early 1970s there was an explosion.

The Zoo of presupposition triggers

Proper names	Kepler
Definite descriptions, possessives	my bicycle
Aspectual verbs	start, continue, stop
Factive verbs and adjectives	regret, tragic
Simple and phrasal implicatives	manage, fail
Repetitive verbs	renew, again
Reason clauses	since, because, as
Temporal adverbs	still, already, yet
Anaphoric particles	too, either, also
Focus particles	only, even
Wh-questions	who, where, why ...
Comparisons	as ... as ...
Non-restrictive adjectives, relative clauses	the N, who VP, ...
Appositives	Lance, a cyclist, ...

What went wrong

In the space of a few years linguists had assembled in the early 1970s a zoo of presupposition-like phenomena, all supposedly of the same species.

That was a fundamental error. Separate cages should have built for different types of 'presupposition triggers.' The quest of an all-encompassing theoretical account of presupposition has been a failure.

Our own suspicion, if we may end on an opinionated note, is that these first attempts to separate presupposition types from each other may turn out to be too cautious. There are several philosophically and linguistically interesting dimensions along which the set of presupposition triggers can be partitioned, such as referentiality, anaphoricity, ease of accommodation, ease of cancellation, and maintenance of truth under presupposition failure. So perhaps what will eventually emerge is not a straightforward dichotomy, but a more complex taxonomy of different types of trigger. And at that point, perhaps we may re-ask the question of whether the things that the different so-called "presupposition triggers" are triggering are in fact presuppositions, in any of the theoretical senses of the term "presupposition" that we have considered in this article."

Presupposition, David Beaver and Bart Geurts, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2011

The "Fact" by C. & P. Kiparsky

Written in the late 1960s. My 1971 paper on implicatives dates "Fact" to 1968. At the time the field was advancing very rapidly. Papers were circulated in mimeographed form long before getting in print.

There are many papers from the same period on the topic of presupposition (Jerry Morgan, Laurence Horn, George Lakoff, and others). It is not clear to me who to credit for each particular discovery. The K&K paper on "Fact" stands out. Of all the papers from that period, it is the one to read.

It presents for the first time the idea of factive vs. non-factive verbs and adjectives. It makes a link between factivity and presupposition. It introduces three standard tests for distinguishing between presupposition and entailment. It recognizes the "projection problem:" the presupposition triggered by an embedded clause may end up as presuppositions of the matrix clause.

factives

significant   counts

odd   makes sense

tragic   suffices

exciting   amuses

relevant   bothers

matters

nonfactives

likely   appears

sure   happens

possible   chances

true   turns out

false

seems

It is odd that John is ill. presupposes that John is ill.

It bothers me that John is ill. presupposes that John is ill.

It is true that John is ill. asserts that John is ill.

It appears that John is ill. no commitment to the proposition that John is ill.

factive   non-factive

regret   ignore   suppose   believe
be aware (of)   make clear   assert   conclude
grasp   mind   allege   conjecture
comprehend   forget (about)   assume   intimate
take into   deplore   claim   deem
     consideration   charge   fancy
take into account resent   maintain   figure
bear in mind   care (about)

Tom regrets that John is ill. presupposes that John is ill.

The speaker presupposes that John is ill.

The speaker asserts that Tom regrets John being ill.

Presupposition projection

(1) Presuppositions are constant under (ordinary) negation.

   She doesn't regret that he left. presupposes that he left.

(2) Presuppositions are retained in questions, assertions are not.

   Is it odd that John is ill? presupposes that John is ill.

   Is it true that John is ill? does not assert or presuppose that John is ill.

   Does it seem that John is ill? carries no commitment to whether John is ill.

   (3) Presuppositions of embedded clauses may end up as presuppositions of the matrix clause.

   Bill does not grasp that Tom regrets that John is ill.

      presupposes that John is ill and that Tom regrets it.

Is this a presupposition?

An odd example in Kiparsky&Kiparsky, bottom of p. 351:

They deprived him of the visits to his parents.
   asserts that they did not allow him to visit his parents.
   presupposes that he wanted to visit his parents.

Did they deprive him of the visit to his parents?
   questions whether they allowed him to visit his parents.
   presupposes that he wanted to visit his parents.
This does not fit the pattern of the other examples in the paper that are about the veridicality of the complement clause. No place for the noun <u>fact</u> here.

Frege and Grice most likely would have classified this aspect of the meaning of deprive as a conventional implicature, not as a presupposition.

Presupposition projection in conditionals

Not mentioned in the "Fact" paper but it became important topic later.

Presuppositions that originate in the antecedent part of a conditional project to the main clause:

   If Kim's spouse is in town, we will invite both of them.
      presupposes that Kim has a spouse.

Presuppositions that originate in the consequent clause are projected upwards unless they are entailed by the antecedent.

   If Kim was at the party, Kim's spouse must have been there too.
      presupposes that Kim has a spouse.

   If Kim is married, we must also invite Kim's spouse.
      does not presuppose that Kim has a spouse.

   "Presuppositions of Compound Sentences." Lauri Karttunen. Linguistic Inquiry 4:2, 169–193, 1973.

What is outdated

The view that K&K have about factivity is neither pragmatic nor truth-conditional as later theories. It is syntactic in the tradition of the then popular trend of generative semantics. The idea was that surface sentence arise by a chain of transformations from underlying syntactic representations that directly encode meaning, through transformations that might, for example, delete the noun <u>fact.</u>

The assumption that factive sentences have more underlying structure than their non-factive counterparts seemed to provide an explanation to some syntactic observations discussed in the paper. Some of the recent work on these lines takes the opposite view: non-factive sentences are seen as syntactically more complex than factive structures.

This has become an esoteric debate. Ignore it.

Dubious generalizations

p.346 Extraposition is obligatory for non-factive <u>that</u> clauses.

That there was positive opposition seems unlikely, but indifference certainly existed.

p. 347 Only factive predicates can have as their objects the noun <u>fact</u> with a gerund or a <u>that</u> clause.

He did not believe the fact of snow ever having been seen on these mountains.

These other parents might believe the fact of being a teenager constitutes probable cause.

Do you believe the fact that the earth's temperature has not risen in 15 years?

p. 348 Only non-factive predicates allow accusative and infinitive construction.

I know him to have been an incapable brute. (Dickens, David Copperfield)

Are factives all alike?

significant
odd
tragic
exciting
counts
suffices

regret
be aware
comprehend
forget
mind
deplore

discover
find out

speaker-oriented

speaker+protagonist

coming-to-know

Counter-examples

Dream worlds
  I dreamed that I was Napoleon and that nobody knew it. (Jerry Morgan)

Mistaken beliefs
  John believes, mistakenly, that he caused an accident. He deeply regrets it.
  Before 1980 everyone knew that ulcers were caused by stress.

Uncertainty of future events (coming to know vs. knowing)
  If our company discovers that we have overcharged a client, we will
  reimburse her immediately.
    Not an admission of culpability but a promise to accept the result of the
    discovery process as a fact. What is the presupposition/conventional
    implicature here? Whatever is discovered is in fact the case. Contrast with
  If our company regrets that we have overcharged a client, ...