

Let us now return to the questions that arose above. What sort of range of presuppositional phenomena is there? We may begin by listing some of the constructions that have been isolated by linguists as sources of presuppositions, i.e. by constructing a list of known **presupposition-triggers**. Karttunen (n.d.) has collected thirty-one kinds of such triggers, and the following list is a selection from these (the examples provide positive and negative versions separated by '/' to allow the reader to check the inferences; the presupposition-triggers themselves are italicized; the symbol >> stands for 'presupposes'):

1. *Definite descriptions* (see Strawson, 1950, 1952):
 - (37) John saw/didn't see *the man with two heads*
>> there exists a man with two heads
2. *Factive verbs* (see Kiparsky & Kiparsky, 1971):
 - (38) Martha *regrets/doesn't regret* drinking John's home brew
>> Martha drank John's home brew
 - (39) Frankenstein was/wasn't *aware* that Dracula was there
>> Dracula was there
 - (40) John *realized/didn't realize* that he was in debt
>> John was in debt
 - (41) It was *odd/it wasn't odd* how proud he was
>> he was proud
 - (42) some further factive predicates: *know; be sorry that; be proud that; be indifferent that; be glad that; be sad that*
3. *Implicative verbs* (Karttunen, 1971b):
 - (43) John *managed/didn't manage* to open the door
>> John tried to open the door
 - (44) John *forgot/didn't forget* to lock the door
>> John ought to have locked, or intended to lock, the door
 - (45) some further implicative predicates: *X happened to V >> X didn't plan or intend to V; X avoided Ving >> X was expected to, or usually did, or ought to V, etc.*
4. *Change of state verbs* (see Sellars, 1954; Karttunen, 1973):
 - (46) John *stopped/didn't stop* beating his wife
>> John had been beating his wife

- (47) Joan *began/didn't begin* to beat her husband
 >> Joan hadn't been beating her husband
- (48) Kissinger *continued/didn't continue* to rule the world
 >> Kissinger had been ruling the world
- (49) some further change of state verbs: *start; finish; carry on; cease; take* (as in *X took Y from Z* >> Y was at/in/ with Z); *leave; enter; come; go; arrive*; etc.
5. *Iteratives* :
- (50) The flying saucer came/didn't come *again*
 >> The flying saucer came before
- (51) You can't get gobstoppers *anymore*¹¹
 >> You once could get gobstoppers
- (52) Carter *returned/didn't return* to power
 >> Carter held power before
- (53) further iteratives: *another time; to come back; restore; repeat; for the nth time*
6. *Verbs of judging* (see Fillmore, 1971a):
 This kind of implication is, arguably, not really presuppositional at all; for, unlike other presuppositions, the implications are not attributed to the speaker, so much as to the subject of the verb of judging (see Wilson, 1975).
- (54) Agatha *accused/didn't accuse* Ian of plagiarism
 >> (Agatha thinks) plagiarism is bad
- (55) Ian *criticized/didn't criticize* Agatha for running away
 >> (Ian thinks) Agatha ran away
7. *Temporal clauses* (Frege, 1892 (1952); Heinämäki, 1972):
- (56) *Before* Strawson was even born, Frege noticed/didn't notice presuppositions
 >> Strawson was born
- (57) *While* Chomsky was revolutionizing linguistics, the rest of social science was/wasn't asleep
 >> Chomsky was revolutionizing linguistics
- (58) *Since* Churchill died, we've lacked/we haven't lacked a leader
 >> Churchill died
- (59) further temporal clause constructors: *after; during; whenever; as* (as in *As John was getting up, he slipped*)
8. *Cleft sentences* (see Halvorsen, 1978; Prince, 1978a; Atlas & Levinson, 1981):
 Sentence (60) exhibits what is known as the *cleft construction* (cf. unclefted *Henry kissed Rosie*), (61) what is known as the *pseudo-cleft construction* (cf. unclefted *John lost his wallet*). Both constructions seem to share approximately the same

¹¹ In British English *anymore* is a negative polarity item, i.e. can only generally occur in negative declarative sentences, hence the lack of a positive exemplar in (51).

presuppositions, and share in addition – it has been claimed (see Halvorsen, 1978) – a further presupposition that the focal element (*Henry* in (60) and *his wallet* in (61)) is the only element to which the predicate applies.

- (60) It was/wasn't Henry that kissed Rosie
 >> someone kissed Rosie
- (61) What John lost/didn't lose was his wallet
 >> John lost something
9. *Implicit clefts with stressed constituents* (see Chomsky, 1972; Wilson & Sperber, 1979):
 The particular presuppositions that seem to arise from the two cleft constructions seem also to be triggered simply by heavy stress on a constituent, as illustrated by the following examples where upper-case characters indicate contrastive stress:
- (62) Linguistics was/wasn't invented by CHOMSKY!
 >> someone invented linguistics
 (cf. It was/wasn't Chomsky that invented linguistics)
- (63) John did/didn't compete in the OLYMPICS
 >> John did compete somewhere (cf. It was/wasn't in the Olympics that John competed)
10. *Comparisons and contrasts* (see G. Lakoff, 1971):
 Comparisons and contrasts may be marked by stress (or by other prosodic means), by particles like *too*, *back*, *in return*, or by comparative constructions:
- (64) Marianne called Adolph a male chauvinist, and then HE insulted HER
 >> For Marianne to call Adolph a male chauvinist would be to insult him
- (65) Adolph called Marianne a Valkyrie, and she complimented him *back/in return/too*
 >> to call someone (or at least Marianne) a Valkyrie is to compliment them¹²
- (66) Carol is/isn't a *better linguist than Barbara*
 >> Barbara is a linguist
- (67) Jimmy is/isn't *as unpredictably gauche as Billy*
 >> Billy is unpredictably gauche
11. *Non-restrictive relative clauses*:
 Note that there are two major kinds of relative clause in English – those that restrict or delimit the noun phrase they modify (**restrictive** as in *Only the boys who are tall can reach the cupboard*) and those that provide additional parenthetical information (**non-restrictive** as in *Hillary, who climbed Everest*)

¹² But perhaps the inference is more restricted: 'For someone (or at least Adolph) to call someone (or at least Marianne) a Valkyrie is to compliment them'. See the cautionary note re verbs of judging in 6 above.

- in 1953, was the greatest explorer of our day*). The latter kind is not affected by the negation of the main verb outside the relative clause and thus gives rise to presuppositions:
- (68) The Proto-Harrappans, who flourished 2800–2650 B.C., were/were not great temple builders
 >> The Proto-Harrappans flourished 2800–2650 B.C.
12. *Counterfactual conditionals:*
- (69) *If Hannibal had only had twelve more elephants*, the Romance languages would/would not this day exist
 >> Hannibal didn't have twelve more elephants
- (70) *If the notice had only said 'mine-field' in English* as well as Welsh, we would/would never have lost poor Llewellyn
 >> The notice didn't say mine-field in English
13. *Questions* (see Katz, 1972: 201ff; Lyons, 1977a: 597, 762ff)
 As noted in connection with (36) above, questions will generally share the presuppositions of their assertive counterparts. However, interrogative forms themselves introduce further presuppositions, of a rather different kind, which are what concern us here. It is necessary to distinguish different types of questions: **yes/no questions** will generally have vacuous presuppositions, being the disjunction of their possible answers, as in (71). These are the only kinds of presuppositions of questions that are invariant under negation. **Alternative questions**, as in (72), presuppose the disjunction of their answers, but in this case non-vacuously. **WH-questions** introduce the presuppositions obtained by replacing the WH-word by the appropriate existentially quantified variable, e.g. *who* by *someone*, *where* by *somewhere*, *how* by *somehow*, etc., as in (73). These presuppositions are *not* invariant to negation.
- (71) Is there a professor of linguistics at MIT?
 >> Either there is a professor of linguistics at MIT or there isn't
- (72) Is Newcastle in England or is it in Australia?
 >> Newcastle is in England or Newcastle is in Australia
- (73) Who is the professor of linguistics at MIT?
 >> Someone is the professor of linguistics at MIT

The above list contains perhaps the core of the phenomena that are generally considered presuppositional.¹³ However it is important to bear in mind that any such list is crucially dependent on one's definition of presupposition. For example, taking constancy under negation alone as the definitional criterion one would include phenomena like those immediately below, even though these would

¹³ There are other good candidates, though, which happen to have received less attention. For example, adverbs, and especially manner adverbs, generally trigger presuppositions; thus *John ran/didn't run slowly* will presuppose 'John ran'.