
Coercing propositional anaphora

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Freitag
10.03.2017
11:30 – 12:30
B4 1, 0.07

AG10

The meaning of a clause-embedding predicate is often determined by its complement: *know that* ≠ *know how* (e.g. Grimshaw 1979). The current presentation discusses how meaning is conditioned by the *syntactic category* of the complement: CP (clausal) or DP (nominal), mirroring the contrast between a proposition and an entity. Taking into account predicates that exceptionally coerce anaphoric complements, we are led to a theory of complementation that has consequences beyond clausal embedding.

Definite DP complements are salient in the discourse whereas CP complements serve to introduce a new topic to the discourse. Once this distinction is implemented in the syntax, the resulting system is able to make a number of predictions regarding the factivity, presupposition and interpretation of CP and DP complements (Kastner 2015).

Recently, however, Elliott (2016) has called attention to a set of *propositional anaphora*: nominals with operators whose interpretation depends on another DP in the clause or in the immediately accessible discourse. These include *everything*, *the same NP* and *it*. Strikingly, these DPs can serve as complements to a handful of verbs that do not otherwise take DPs as complements, in particular *think*.

I propose that a clause embedded under propositional anaphors is coerced into an entity whose propositional content must be filled in by an immediately accessible proposition. As far as selection goes, these results imply that *any* verb is compatible with a DP complement as long as the semantics is satisfied. This much is already known from cognate objects, where unergative verbs are able to take a restricted set of internal arguments.

In sum, under specific conditions it is possible to coerce a propositional anaphor DP even if the verb is otherwise incompatible with nominal complements. This supports a theory separating syntactic selection from semantic computation, where a verbal root constrains the latter but not the former.

References: • Grimshaw, J. (1979): Complement Selection and the Lexicon. *Linguistic Inquiry* 10, 279–326. • Kastner, I. (2015): Factivity mirrors interpretation: The selectional requirements of presuppositional verbs. *Lingua* 164, 156–188. • Elliott, P. D. (2016): Explaining DPs vs. CPs without syntax.

In: *Proceedings of CLS 52*.