
Investigating conditional presuppositions and prior beliefs

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Abstract

This study investigates how prior beliefs influence the projection of conditional presuppositions triggered by possessive markers. We conducted two studies to get ratings for (1) the probability of owning an object in entailing, related, and unrelated situations, (2a) the probability of a presupposition embedded in a conditional's consequent after the antecedent is denied, and (2b) the probability of a conditional's antecedent after the embedded presupposition is denied. The results revealed gradual presupposition projection associated with prior beliefs about gradually related situations. Participants accommodated a conditional presupposition only if the antecedent made it highly probable, in line with a probabilistic framework.

Keywords: presupposition, conditional presupposition, prior beliefs

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