

## The meanings of perspectival verbs and their implications on the taxonomy of projective content/conventional implicature

**Author:** David Yoshikazu Oshima

**Institution:** Nagoya University

**Summary:** This work discusses the presuppositional meanings of three kinds of “persepectival (perspective-sensitive)” verbs: (i) motion-deictic verbs (e.g., English *go/come*), (ii) empathy-loaded verbs (e.g., Japanese *yaru/kureru* ‘give’), and (iii) referent-honorific verbs (e.g., Japanese *meshiagaru* ‘eat, drink’), and their implications on the taxonomy of “projective content” ( $\approx$  conventional implicature as broadly understood). The presuppositional meanings of motion-deictic and empathy-loaded verbs optionally project through an attitude predicate, i.e., they can be satisfied either with respect to the local or global context. The presuppositional meanings of honorific verbs, on the other hand, must be satisfied with respect to the global context. Based on these observations, I argue that Tonhauser et al.’s (2013) [ $\pm$ Obligatory Local Effect] feature should be replaced with the finer-grained, three-way distinction of: [Local Context Oriented]/[Global Context Oriented]/[Ambioriented], which, in combination with the [ $\pm$ Presuppositional] feature ( $\approx$  Tonhauser et al.’s [ $\pm$ Strong Contextual Felicity] feature), yields a six-way, rather than four-way, classification of projective content/conventional implicature.

**The taxonomy of “projective content”:** This work discusses kinds of presuppositional meanings that have significant implications on the taxonomy of projective content /conventional implicature. Tonhauser et al. (TBRs; 2013) proposes to classify “projective content” – those components of meaning that roughly correspond to conventional implicature (CI) as broadly understood, and that survive under such operators as negation and question – based on two criteria: (i) whether they are subject to the *strong contextual felicity* (SCF) constraint (whether they must be part of the interlocutors’ common ground prior to the utterance), and (ii) whether they have the *obligatory local effect* (OLE) (whether their projection is necessarily “filtered” by a belief predicate) (Table 1).

Classes	SCF	OLE	Examples
A	+	+	additive meaning induced by <i>too</i>
B	–	–	expressive/appositive/non-restrictive relative clause
C	–	+	prejacent implication of <i>only</i>
D	+	–	salience of alternatives for a focus

Table 1: TBRs’s (2013) taxonomy of projective content

Projective contents that meet both criteria (i.e., Class A) correspond to paradigmatic presuppositions, and include the additive meaning induced by the focus particle *too*. Due to the SCF constraint, (1) can be felicitous as a reply to (2b) but not as a reply to (2a). Due to the obligatory local effect, the utterance of (3) does not commit the speaker to the truth of ‘Somebody other than Ken sang’ (but rather to the truth of ‘Lucy believes that somebody other than Ken sang’).

- (1) [Ken]<sub>F</sub> sang, **too**. (↗ ‘Somebody other than Ken sang’)
- (2) a. I have no idea who sang. Who, if anybody, sang?  
b. I heard that John sang. Who else, if anybody, sang?
- (3) Lucy believes that [Ken]<sub>F</sub> sang, **too**.

A major advantage of this two-dimensional classification is that it provides natural home for so-called “weak”, “soft”, or “informational” presupposition (e.g., Prince 1976, 1986; Abusch 2002; Birner 2013). The prejacent implication of *only*, for example, is projective and is filtered when embedded under a belief predicate, but need not be taken for granted in the local context, as evidenced by the observation that (4) can be a felicitous reply to (2a). Under TBRs’s taxonomy, it can be understood to be a “Class C” projective content.

- (4) **Only** [Ken]<sub>F</sub> sang. (↗ ‘Ken sang’)

Two issues can be pointed out with regard to TBRs’s classification. First, in practice, it is often not a straightforward matter to decide whether a given projective meaning (e.g., the factivity associated with *know*) is (i) (presuppositional but) pragmatically accommodated, or (ii) is not subject to the SCF constraint in the first place. Second, while it takes into account of the “obligatory local” feature, it does not consider the “obligatory *global*” feature. In the following, I address this second issue and propose a more elaborate taxonomy.

**A more elaborate taxonomy:** I propose to classify projective content – which I equate with “conventional implicature” for the current purpose – into six classes, based on the criteria in (5) (Table 2):

- (5) i. **Context-Checking** (presuppositional, uninformative;  $\approx$  [+SCF]),  
**Context-Updating** (nonpresuppositional, potentially informative;  $\approx$  [-SCF])  
 ii. **Local-Context Oriented** (LCO;  $\approx$  [+OLE]), **Ambioriented**, **Global-Context Oriented** (GCO)

	Local-Context Or.	Ambioriented	Global-Context Or.
Context-Checking	(i)	(iii)	(v)
Context-Updating	(ii)	(iv)	(vi)

Table 2: The proposed taxonomy of projective content/conventional implicature

TBRS's Classes A and C quite straightforwardly correspond to my Classes (i) and (ii). (1) and (4) respectively conventionally implicate (6) and (7); when these implicatures do not hold true, pragmatic infelicity (subsuming but not limited to "presupposition failure") arises.

- (6) It is taken for granted in the local context that 'somebody other than Ken sang'.  
 (7) It is the case in the local context that 'Ken sang'.

TBRS's Class D projective contents (e.g., the existence of salient alternatives for a focused item) *always* need to be satisfied in the global (matrix) context of evaluation, and fall under my Class (vi). I am hesitant to consider TBRS's Class D contents as CI, however, as they differ from what has standardly been considered as CI/presupposition in being more concerned with the proper usage of linguistic expressions than with the description of the state of affairs (or, in being metalinguistic rather than descriptive).

The meanings conveyed by appositives, non-restrictive relative clauses, and expressives (TBRS's Class B) are typically understood to be commitments of the external speaker, but in appropriate contexts they can be anchored to the agent of an attitude report, as well (Amaral et al. 2007, Harris and Potts 2009).

- (8) Lucy believes that Ken, who is {an ordinary car sales representative (according to my beliefs)/a trained spy (according to her beliefs)}, is tapping her phone.

They can thus be properly characterized as ambioriented, and classified into Class (iv).

An obvious question that emerges here is whether there exist any CI's that belong to Classes (iii)/(vi), and any *descriptive* CI that belongs to Class (v).

**Motion-deictic verbs and empathy-loaded verbs as Class (iii) CI:** In Oshima (2006a,b, 2012), I argued that the "not-at-issue" meanings of motion-deictic verbs (e.g., English *go/come*) and empathy-loaded verbs (or verbs with specification about *syntactic direction*; e.g., Japanese *yaru* 'give (direct)' and *kureru* 'give (inverse)') make reference to a contextual component – the RP, a set of entities serving as potential Reference Points, for the former, and the ER, a poset of entities based on the Empathy Relation ("a receives a higher degree of empathy than b") for the latter. Furthermore, these components can either be part of the global or local context, implying that these perspectival verbs are "all-purpose indexicals" in Schlenker's (2003) sense. To illustrate with *come*, (9) can convey either (10i) or (10ii) as a CI, so that it can be felicitous either in Situation (11i) or (11ii).

- (9) Lucy believes that Ken **came** to Chicago.  
 (10) The described motion is toward a place where:  
 (i) it is taken for granted in the *global* context that some member of the RP – which is most likely {S(peaker), H(earer)} – is or was located at.  
 (ii) it is taken for granted in the *local* context that some member of the RP – which is most likely {Lucy} – is or was located at.

- (11) (i) Lucy (believes that she) is and was in Austin; S is in Chicago.  
 (ii) S and H are and were in Austin; Lucy (believes that she) is in Chicago.

With data like the following, it can be shown the CI induced by a deictic motion verb is presuppositional, i.e., context-checking (cf. Barlew 2014).

- (12) In the 1990s I would tour all around North America as a stand-up comedian. One day, #(when I was staying in Austin,) my brother, who was then a graduate student, **came** to University of Texas to attend an academic conference.

Analogous observations hold for empathy-loaded verbs in Japanese. The benefactive auxiliaries *kureru* and *yaru*, for example, respectively indicate that the beneficiary outranks and does not outrank the benefactor on the ER. (13b) is infelicitous because (in the global context) the speaker is invariably the greatest element on the ER, and this conflicts with the meaning induced by *kureru*. The observation that either *yaru* or *kureru* can be used in (14) shows that the ER that an empathy-loaded verb refers to can (but need not) be a local one, whose greatest element is the secondary agent (Ken in the case of (14)). The CI of (14a,b) on their relevant readings are as in: (15i,ii). The presuppositional nature of an empathy-loaded verb can be illustrated with data like (16).

- (13) Boku-ga Ken-o tetsudatte {a. **yaru**/b. #**kureru**}.  
 K.-Nom I-Acc help Ben(Dir/Inv).Prs / 'I will help Ken.'  
 (14) Ken-wa [boku-ga tetsudatte {a. **yaru**/b. **kureru**}] to omotte iru.  
 K.-Top I-Nom help Ben(Dir/Inv).Prs Comp believe Ipfv.Prs  
 'Ken<sub>i</sub> believes that I will help (him<sub>i</sub>).'  
 (15) It is taken for granted {(i) in the global context that S is not outranked by Ken on the ER / (ii) in the local context that S is outranked by the local agent (= Ken) on the ER}.  
 (16) (Jim is H's brother. Ken is a close friend of S, but H does not know it.)  
 #Jim-wa mukashi Ken-toiu otoko-o sukutte **kureta**.  
 J.-Top a.long.time.ago K.-called man-Acc save Ben(Inv).Pst  
 'Jim once saved a man called Ken.'

The proposed six-way classification of CI accommodates the meanings induced by these perspectival verbs as Class (iii) content.

**Honorifics as Class (iv) CI:** Japanese honorific predicates (Potts and Kawahara 2004), although deictic in a broad sense (i.e., social-deictic), exhibit an interesting contrast with the two classes of perspectival verbs discussed above. That is, their social meanings (not only optionally but) always project through a belief predicate.

- (17) (S and S's son are socially superior to Abe.)  
 #Abe-wa [ore-no segare-ga Osaka-ni **osumai-da**] to omotte iru.  
 A.-Top I-Gen son-Nom O.-Dat live.Hon.Prs Comp believe Ipfv.Prs  
 'Abe believes that my son (who socially outranks me) lives in Osaka.'

The CI associated with an honorific is presuppositional in nature, as can be shown with the oddity of an utterance like the following.

- (18) (A and B work at the same hotel. A mentions some guy who made a scene at the flower shop next to the hotel, and asks B, "Did you see that guy?". B actually has seen him, and realized that the guy was a teacher of his high school days. B says:)  
 #Hai, **omikake-shimashita**.  
 yes see.Hon.Pst.Polite  
 'Yes I saw him (who socially outranks me).'

These observations imply that the honorific meaning (induced by Japanese honorifics, at least) belong to Class (v).

**Conclusion:** Projective content (CI/“not-at-issue” meaning) can usefully be divided into six classes. It is interesting to ask whether further instances can be added to Classes (iii)–(v), and whether any can be found that belongs to Class (vi). Gender specification of pronouns (e.g., Yanovich 2012), for example, will be a controversial case.

**References:**

- Amaral, Patricia, Roberts, Craige and Smith, Allyn. 2007. Review of *The Logic of Conventional Implicatures* by Chris Potts. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 30, 707–749.
- Abusch, Dorit. 2002. Lexical alternatives as a source of pragmatic presuppositions. In: *Proceedings of SALT 7*, 1–19.
- Barlew, Jefferson. 2014. *Coming to a doxastic agent*. In: *Proceedings of SuB 14*, pages 71–88.
- Birner, Betty J. 2013. *Introduction to Pragmatics*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Harris, Jesse A. and Potts, Christopher. 2009. Perspective-shifting with appositives and expressives. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 32, 523–552.
- Kuno, Susumu. 1987. *Functional Syntax: Anaphora, Discourse, and Empathy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Oshima, David Y. 2006a. Motion deixis, indexicality, and presupposition. In: *Proceedings of SALT 16*, pages 172–189.
- Oshima, David Y. 2006b. *Perspectives in Reported Discourse*. Ph.D. thesis, Stanford University.
- Oshima, David Y. 2012. GO and COME revisited: What serves as a reference point? In: *Proceedings of BLS 32*, pages 287–298.
- Potts, Christopher and Kawahara, Shigeto. 2004. Japanese honorifics as emotive definite descriptions. In: *Proceedings of SALT 14*, pages 235–254.
- Prince, Ellen F. 1978. A comparison of *wh*-clefts and *it*-clefts in discourse. *Language* 54, 883–906.
- Prince, Ellen F. 1986. On the syntactic marking of presupposed open proposition. In: *Proceedings of CLS 22 (Parasession)*, pages 208–222.
- Schlenker, Philippe. 2003. A plea for monsters. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 26, 29–120.
- Tonhauser, Judith, Beaver, David, Roberts, Craige and Simons, Mandy. 2013. Toward a taxonomy of projective content. *Language* 89, 66–109.
- Yanovich, Igor. 2012. *Indexical presuppositions of pronominal gender features*. Ms, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.