

Challenging evidential non-challengeability

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- The discourse status of evidentials
 - at issue or not-at-issue?
 - what kind? - presupposition, NAI assertion, conventional implicature...→ Challengeability can (partially) inform this question
- Bigger question: are there natural language phenomena that are not challengeable at all?
 - rising declaratives
 - evidentials?

Evidentials and challengeability: what we know so far

Theories

Lack of direct challengeability interpreted as

- **presupposition**

[Izvorski(1997), McCready and Asher(2006), Matthewson et al.(2007)]

(2) Assertion: $\Box p$

Presupposition: speaker has indirect evidence for p

Theories

Lack of direct challengeability interpreted as

- presupposition
- **sincerity conditions** [Faller(2002)]

(3) Para-sha-n.
rain-PROG-3
 p = 'It is raining'.

Para-sha-n-**mi**
rain-PROG-3-MI
 p = 'It is raining'.
 ev = Speaker saw that p .

(4) Analysis of (3):
 $ill = \text{assert}_s(p)$

$\text{sinc} = \{Bel(s, p)\}$

$ill = \text{assert}_s(p)$

$\text{sinc} = \{Bel(s, p), See(s, e_p)\}$

[Cuzco Quechua] [Faller(2002)]: 25, (15), (16)

Theories

- presupposition
- sincerity conditions
- **NAI assertion** [Murray(2010)]

(5) Three components of evidential sentences:

- 1 presentation of the at-issue proposition (baseline)
- 2 a non-negotiable update that directly restricts the CG (**evidential**)
- 3 a negotiable update that imposes structure on the common ground (assertion)

[Murray(2010)]: 97

Theories

- presupposition
- sincerity conditions
- NAI assertion [Murray(2010)]
- **AI subjectivity** [Korotkova(2016a), Korotkova(2016b)]

evidentials are AI but non-challengeable because they are subjective predicates:

- (6) A: I have a splitting headache.
 B: #No, you don't.

[Korotkova(2016a)]: (9)

Theories

Lack of direct challengeability interpreted as

- presupposition [Izvorski(1997), McCready and Asher(2006), Matthewson et al.(2007)]
- sincerity conditions [Faller(2002)]
- NAI assertion [Murray(2010)]
- AI subjectivity [Korotkova(2016a), Korotkova(2016b)]
- conventional implicature [Koev(2016)] → see arguments in [Murray(2010)]
- tense [Smirnova(2013)] → see arguments in [Arregui et al.(2018)]

Concerns about the value of the test. (see [Korotkova(2020)])

Indirect challengeability

Indirect challengeability

Indirect challengeability

- can inform these theories in new ways:
 - predictions that indirect challenges are:

possible	impossible
presupposition	NAI assertion
sincerity condition	AI subjectivity

- not tested before

Direct ev

When would an interlocutor refuse to accept that the ev event occurred?

⇒ if it is impossible or at least improbable

Direct ev (witnessing): an event that happened before one was born

- (7) Kogato bashta mi se **rodi**, dyado mi
 when father my REFL be.born. [DIR] grandfather my
posadi darvo pred kushtata...
 planted. [DIR] tree in.front.of house.DEF
 intended: 'When my dad was born, my grandfather planted a tree
 in front of the house.'

Consultant: 'One can't say it this way because one can't have seen
 the birth of one's father.'

Note: direct challenge also not possible:

'That's not true! You didn't see that!'

[Bulgarian]

Direct ev II

Impossible to consciously remember an event as a baby

- (8) _[Son:]
 Kogato **bjax** bebe, **placheh** mnogo.
 when was. DIR baby cried. DIR a.lot
 'When I was a baby, I used to cry a lot.'

Mom: Siakash pomnish kolko problemi
 as.if remember.2SG how-many problems
 suzdavashe
 created.2SG.DIR

'As if you could remember how much trouble you gave us!'

real conversation

Note: direct challenge also not possible:

'That's not true! You didn't see that!'

Direct ev III

Improbable to have been at a highly dangerous place

- (9) [A:]
 Ataki-te **biaha** dosta dobre organizirani i v nikakav
 attacks-DEF were. [DIR] very well organized and in no. ADJ
 sluchai ne **biaha** ot samo 5-6 dushi.
 way not were. [DIR] by just 5-6 people
 'The attacks were very well organized and definitely not by just 5-6
 people, *as I saw.*'
 [B:] '[A] is exaggerating a bit, given that he probably wasn't there...'
 [C:] 'Were you(=A) there, that you know how it was, as if you were
 there with the RPG?'

“using a wrong evidential is one way of telling a lie” [Aikhenvald(2004)]:20

Direct ev: summary

- Direct ev base is not directly challengeable
- But it is **indirectly** challengeable when the ev event is impossible or improbable

Theories predicting that indirect challenges are:

possible	impossible
✓ presupposition	X NAI assertion
✓ sincerity condition	X AI subjectivity

Evidentials and the QUD

Further evidence for the NAI status of evidentials: two tests

test/status	NAI	AI	
address QUD	no	yes	yes
change QUD	yes	no	?
predicted by:	presup.	subjectivity	Sinc.cond.

Evidentials pattern together with presupposition:

test/status	NAI	AI	
address QUD	no	yes	yes
change QUD	yes	no	?
predicted by:	✓ presup.	X subjectivity	X Sinc.cond.

Addressing the QUD: presuppositions and evidentials can't

(10) [Bary and Maier(2020)]:

A: What makes you think that Mary is ill?

B' John told me that she has the flu.

B'' #Allegedly, she has the flu.

B''' #Ze **schijnt** griep te hebben.

she seems flu to have

'She has the flu, *reportedly*'

[Dutch]

Addressing the QUD: presuppositions and evidentials can't

- (11) [A:] Kak nauchi (vchera), che vali?
 how lean.DIR yesterday that rains
 'How did you find out that it was raining?'

[B:] **Evidential**

- (i) #Valja-lo
 rain-rep
 'It was raining, reportedly'

Lexical

- (i') Kazaha mi
 told.3pl.dir me
 'I was told'

- (ii) #Vale-she
 rain.dir
 It was raining, I saw

- (ii') Vidjah
 saw.1sg.dir
 'I saw'

Changing the QUD: presuppositions and evidentials do

Reacting to a presupposition changes the QUD:

(12) [A:] John's sister lives in Paris.

[B:] Wait a minute, John has a sister?!?

[von Fintel(2004)]

Changing the QUD: presuppositions and evidentials do

Reacting to an evidential base changes the QUD - doesn't have to challenge the ev event:

(13) ⚭ Real exchange

A: Nejkov ne **beshe** tam.
 Nejkov not was. DIR there

 'Mr. Nejkov wasn't there, / *saw*.'

B: Znachi ti si bil tam.
 so you be.3SG be.PP there
 'So you were there.'

Evidentials pattern together with presupposition:

test/status	NAI	AI	
address QUD	no	yes	yes
change QUD	yes	no	?
predicted by:	✓presup.	X subjectivity	X Sinc.cond.

Presupposition and modality

- Previous presuppositional accounts of evidentials have also been modal accounts.

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- This doesn't have to be the case:
 - [Faller(2019)] on reportatives
 - direct evidential:

(14) assertion: p

presupposition: $\exists e : [\text{witnessing}(!s : \text{Exemplify}(p)(s))(e)]$

Summary: novel evidence for a presuppositional account of evidentials
(but not necessarily modal)

Bigger picture

Are there natural language phenomena that are not challengeable at all?

- rising declaratives [Gunlogson(2001)]
- evidentials [Murray(2010)], [Korotkova(2016a)]

Are there natural language phenomena that are not challengeable at all?

- rising declaratives [Gunlogson(2001)]

*Gunlogson (2001) proposes that while falling declaratives commit the speaker to some proposition p , **rising declaratives commit the addressee to that proposition**. However, it's not clear what it means to commit one's addressee to something — surely, one has control over what one commits to!*

[Rudin(2018)]: 48

the speaker shouldn't have the authority to commit their addressee to anything

[Rudin(2018)]: 51

- This talk: evidentials do not commit the addressee to anything, either

Thank you!



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