Assignment 7

Review of Class 10

Exercise 1.　　　We learned in class that a negation operator and a question marker are orthogonal to a presupposition. Using this knowledge, we can detect a presupposition in the following steps.

First, we consider the sentence P, and consider whether Q is entailed. Then, we negate the sentence to create Not P, and consider whether Q is also entailed. Since the negation marker is independent of the presupposition, if Q is entailed from both P and Not P, it is surely a presupposition.

Let's do this together with an example:

Example 1:　P:　　*I met **the** boy from Osaka*

　　　　　　Q:　　*There was a boy from Osaka.*

　　　　　　Not P：*It is not the case that I met the boy from Osaka.*

　　　　　　√) *"P" entails "Q": If P is true, then Q is true.*

　　　　　　√) *"Not P" entails "Q": Even if Not P is true, Q is true.*

　　　　　　So, Q is a presupposition of P.

Example 2:　P:　　*I met **a** boy from Osaka*

　　　　　　Q:　　*There was a boy from Osaka.*

　　　　　　Not P：*It is not the case that I met **a** boy from Osaka.*

　　　　　　√) *"P" entails "Q": If P is true, then Q is true.*

　　　　　　*) *"Not P" does not necessarily entail "Q": Even if Not P is true, Q can be false.*

　　　　　　So, Q is NOT a presupposition of P.

Using the test, consider the following pairs. Is Q a presupposition of P?

　(1)　P:　　It is Aki who broke the vase.

　　　　Q:　　Someone broke the vase.

　(2)　P:　　Aki thinks linguistics is fun.

　　　　Q:　　Linguistics is fun.

　(3)　P:　　Aki knows linguistics is fun.

　　　　Q:　　Linguistics is fun.

　(4)　P:　　Only Aki came to the party.

　　　　Q:　　People other than Aki did not come to the party.

(5) P: Only Aki came to the party.

    Q: Aki came to the party.

(6) P: Aki visited the museum again.

    Q: Aki visited the museum.

(7) P: Aki regretted visiting the museum.

    Q: There was a museum.

(8) P: Aki has visited the museum.

    Q: Aki visited the museum.

Exercise 2.   Identify the presupposition and its trigger in each sentence. If a sentence contains multiple presuppositions or triggers, please identify all of them. There is no need to include the presupposition that someone named John exists.

(1) John stopped smoking.
Trigger: _____
Presupposition: _____

(2) John realized that he was late.
Trigger: _____
Presupposition: _____

(3) It was John who broke the window.
Trigger: _____
Presupposition: _____

(4) Have you met John's brother?
Trigger: _____
Presupposition: _____

(5) Again, John ran away.
Trigger: _____
Presupposition: _____

Model Answers

Ex. 1

(1)   Yes
(2)   No
(3)   Yes
(4)   No
(5)   Yes
(6)   Yes
(7)   Yes
(8)   No

Ex. 2

(1)   John stopped smoking.
      Trigger: stop(ped)
      Presupposition: John used to smoke.

(2)   John realized that he was late.
      Trigger: realize(d)
      Presupposition: he was late

(3)   It was John who broke the window.
      Trigger: It was ... who
      Presupposition: Someone broke the window.

      Trigger: the
      Presupposition: There was a window.

(4)   Have you met John's brother?
      Trigger: 's (possessive marker)
      Presupposition: John has a brother.

(5)   Again, John ran away.
      Trigger: again
      Presupposition: John ran away before.