

# Paper 2

Chris Potts, Ling 390a: Controlling the Discourse, Fall 2007

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## Overview

Your task is to **choose exactly one** of the following two questions and write a response to it. The response should be at least four double-spaced pages.

### 1 Pilot study design

(This choice is a first step towards the full experimental write-ups we will do for Paper 3. As such, it's a good warm-up for that final project. It requires less prose than choice #2, below, but it might be the more time-consuming of the two.)

Continue with the experimental study you began for Homework 3. The task are the following:

- (1) **State the hypothesis:** State this clearly, and identify your independent variable and your dependent variable.
- (2) **Contextualize the hypothesis:** Why should we believe it to be true, and what could its truth tell us about the world? (You might also mention concerns you have about the hypothesis.)
- (3) **The crucial examples:** Provide one or two of the examples you are interested in, and explain how they can inform your hypothesis. (You might also mention concerns you have about these examples.)
- (4) **The task and instructions:** Describe the task, and provide the instructions exactly as they would appear on the questionnaire. In addition, explain how the task connects with your hypothesis. Why this particular task? (You might also mention concerns you have about the task.)
- (5) **In conclusion:** Describe how the full pilot study would work and what outcome we should expect if your hypothesis is accurate. If you are feeling bold, you can also suggest some methods we might use for interpreting the data.
- (6) **Appendix (not included in the page count):** Include a copy of the actual pilot study questionnaire, with filler examples. If there is more than one different version of the questionnaire, include them all.

**For Wednesday, October 24**

Bring **four copies of your questionnaire**, for use in in-class group work.

## 2 Presuppositions

(This choice is deliberately open-ended. It is here for people who are eager to rethink, in their own terms, what we have done concerning presuppositions. You have more creative license than you do for choice #1 above.)

Find two or more examples of presuppositions in naturally occurring discourse and produce analyses of them. What is an analysis? That's a difficult question to answer in general. But, in this case, we are looking for a precise description of the examples in which you do at least the following:

- i. Clearly identify the presupposed content.
- ii. Trace the presupposed content to particular words or phrases.
- iii. Describe the context of utterance clearly, and explain what role it plays in our understanding of the presupposition.

You should probably also address some or all of the following questions:

- iv. Is the presupposition true? If not, is it a subtle but deliberate attempt to mislead?
- v. Were the discourse conditions for the presupposition met, or were hearers required to accommodate it?
- vi. What were the overall effects of the presupposition on the discourse?

**For Wednesday, October 24**

Bring **four copies of your examples**, for use in in-class group work.