

Group work: Presupposing

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

Oct 1

1

Make a comprehensive list of all the things that a speaker of (1) presupposes (assumes his addressee will regard as true):

- (1) Sam realized that he couldn't do the homework.

2

Craft a compelling description of the following television set that includes all the features listed for it, but tries to keep (c) in the background (so that it might go unnoticed). The maxim of quality is in effect; no lying!

- (1) Television set
- a. Built-in DVD player.
 - b. 30-inch wide-screen display.
 - c. No volume control.

Bonus points for coming up with a name for this device that reflects all of the above properties but still makes it seem worth buying.

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Make a comprehensive list of all the things that a speaker of (1) presupposes (assumes his addressee will regard as true):

- (1) The dog has not eaten her food yet.

2

For a real estate ad, craft a compelling description of the following house that includes all the features listed for it, but tries to keep (c) in the background (so that it might go unnoticed). The maxim of quality is in effect; no lying!

- (2) House in Amherst
- a. Newly remodeled kitchen.
 - b. Large working fireplace.
 - c. Adjacent to Lambda Epsilon Omega fraternity house.

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Make a comprehensive list of all the things that a speaker of (1) presupposes (assumes his addressee will regard as true):

- (1) Since she knew the material already, Ellen stopped attending class in week 3.

2

Craft a compelling description of the following proposed legislation that includes all information listed for it, but tries to keep (c) in the background (so that it might go unnoticed). The maxim of quality is in effect; no lying!

- (3) Proposed legislation
- a. Free tuition for all UMass Amherst students who are residents of Massachusetts.
 - b. No increase in taxes to people earning less than \$250,000 per year; .01% increase for people earning \$250,000 or more.
 - c. On-campus housing costs \$60,000 per year.

Bonus points for coming up with a name for this piece of legislation that reflects all of the above properties but still makes it seem worth endorsing.