Exclusification in conditional antecedents

McHugh, D.M.

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Evidence from conditional antecedents suggests that semantic content is remarkably fine-grained.

If switch B was up, or switches A and B were up, the light would be on.

Exclusion in conditional antecedents

Dean McHugh
Institute of Logic, Language and Computation, University of Amsterdam

Hurford’s constraint
1. If switch B was up, or switches A and B were up, the light would be on.
2. If John were from Paris or France, he would speak French.

(2) violates Hurford’s constraint
• Typically explained in terms of redundancy (Simons, 2001; Katzir and Singh, 2013; Meyer, 2013, 2014; Claudelli et al., 2017)

Why does (1) not violate Hurford’s constraint?

Exclusion

3. \( P \land Q \in \alpha \) \( \vdash \neg(P \rightarrow Q) \rightarrow \neg Q \)
4. \( \alpha \vdash (B \lor (A \land B)) = (A, B) \)
5. \( \alpha \vdash (B \lor \neg A) \lor (A \land B) \)

(1) If switch B was up, or switches A and B were up, the light would be on.

References

Semantic frameworks

• Possible worlds (Stalnaker, 1968; Lewis, 1973): \( B \lor (A \land B) = [B] \)
• Inquisitive semantics (Ciardelli et al., 2018): \( B \lor (A \land B) = [B] \)
• Alternative semantics (Alonso-Ovalle, 2009): \( (B \lor (A \land B)) \subseteq \{B, |A\cap B| \} \neq \{B\} \)
• Truthmaker semantics (Fine, 2012)

Counterfactual exhaustification

(7) Modal

\[ \text{if (B up, or A and B up)} \]

M-turk experiment

Joint work with Alexandre Cremers

\[ \text{Sentence} \]

\[ \text{Mean acceptability (SE)} \]

\( A \land B \) down > on (False)
\( \neg \neg(A \uparrow \lor B \uparrow) \) down > on (T1)
\( (A \uparrow \lor B \uparrow) \) down > on (T2)
\( (B \uparrow \lor \neg A \uparrow) \) down > on (T3)
\( \neg \neg B \) down > on (Control)
\( \neg \neg A \) down > on (True)

Cumulative link mixed model (N = 192):
• T1 and T3 rated significantly lower than control (both \( z < 0.2, p < 0.01 \))
• T2 was rated significantly higher than control (\( z = 2.1, p = 0.039 \))
• Posthoc comparison of targets T1 and T3 revealed no difference between the two (\( z = 0.5, p = 0.2 \))

M-turk experiment

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