

# Presupposition and Anaphoricity

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Song, Jaegyun. 2001. **Presupposition and Anaphoricity**. *Korean Journal of English Language and Linguistics* 1-3, 457-476. This paper is to reconsider the relation between presupposition and anaphoricity. My proposal goes as follows: First, the anaphoricity view of presupposition is problematic in that it heavily relies on accommodated antecedents, and this will end up depriving the view of much of its content. So, it is suggested that accommodation should be taken as a mechanism to add presupposed new information to the context, like an asserted proposition. Next, I show that, between two prominent theories of presupposition projection, both of which commit themselves to the anaphoricity view, van der Sandt's theory is quite compatible with the revised view of accommodation, but Heim's theory isn't, because anaphoricity is at the heart of its projection mechanism. Finally, I suggest that unaccommodatable presuppositions should be explained not by the properties of presupposition itself, but by the lexical properties of presupposition triggers.

## 1. Introduction

Currently, the most popular and influential accounts of presupposition projection are Heim's (1983) and van der Sandt's (1992) theories. *Prima facie*, these two theories are rather similar in that they are based on Stalnaker's (1973) claim that presuppositions are pieces of information which are taken to be already given in a context. In this paper, I will refer to the theories which share Stalnaker's view as the anaphoricity theory of presupposition, which is taken from van der Sandt's tenet that presuppositions are anaphors.

However, the anaphoricity theory is not universally accepted: it

has been pointed out that the theory has difficulties explaining the fact that presuppositions often introduce new information.

The aim of this paper is to examine to what extent the notion of anaphoricity should be involved in the theories of presupposition and presupposition projection. The rest of the paper is organized as follows: in section 2, the problems for the anaphoricity view are discussed. Then, in section 3, I propose that backgroundedness, in its intended sense, characterizes presuppositions more adequately. Section 4 examines the compatibility of the backgroundedness view with two prominent theories of presupposition projection: Heim's and van der Sandt's, both of which commit themselves to the anaphoricity view. In section 5, an account for unaccommodatable presuppositions is provided. Finally, section 6 summarizes the conclusions.

## **2. Problems for the Anaphoricity View of Presupposition**

In this section, I briefly discuss the problems for the anaphoricity theory of presupposition, which appear in Löbner (1987), Birner and Ward (1994), Chierchia (1995) and Krahmer (1998). Though the criticisms in the literature have been directed towards the case of definite descriptions, they may be equally applied to presuppositions in general.

As noted in the introduction, the anaphoricity theory takes it that presuppositions are pieces of information which are taken to be already given in the context. Stalnaker (1973) and Karttunen (1974) take the defining characteristic of presupposition to be the following:

- (1)  $P$  is a presupposition of  $S$  iff  $S$  can be felicitously uttered only in contexts that contain/entail  $P$ .

In other words, all presupposition triggers must have a suitable

antecedent. This view works fine with some presupposition triggers which obligatorily require antecedents. Consider the following. The presupposition triggers are italicized:

- (2) a. *The woman* whistled.  
 b. Mary is nice, *too*.

Sentences in (2) sound strange when uttered out of the blue, and typically require preceding discourse contexts.<sup>1)</sup>

However, presuppositions often introduce new information, and need no antecedent, as in the following:

- (3) a. We *regret* that children cannot accompany their parents to commencement exercises.  
 b. John lives in *the third brick house down the street from the post office*.  
 c. In her talk, Baldwin introduced *the notion that syntactic structure is a derivable from pragmatic principles*.  
 d. Yesterday, I happened to talk with *the wife of a poor farmer*.

The italicized expressions trigger presuppositions that can be interpreted as new information, without requiring any antecedents to license them. In (3a), for instance, the factive verb *regret* triggers the presupposition that children cannot accompany their parents to commencement exercises, and it is clear that this sentence may be used felicitously in a context in which the presupposition is not yet part of the common ground. The proponents of the anaphoricity view are well aware of the limitations, and propose a mechanism to deal with them: *accommodation*. Accommodation is a strong mechanism, which has its roots in Lewis (1979). Lewis says, "If at time *t* something is

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<sup>1</sup>This phenomenon will be discussed in detail in section 5.

said that requires presupposition P to be acceptable, and if P is not presupposed just before *t*, then—*ceteris paribus* and within certain limits—presupposition P comes into existence at *t*.” (Lewis 1979:339). So, we may say that accommodation is an antecedent-creating mechanism, when an appropriate antecedent is missing. With the strong mechanism of accommodation, the anaphoricity theory can maintain the hypothesis that presuppositions should always be part of the common ground, and all presupposition triggers must have an antecedent. In this way, a presupposition may carry information that is strictly speaking new, although under the *pretence* that it is already given in the context.

However, as pointed out by Chierchia (1995) and Krahmer (1998), among others, it is intuitively clear that certain classes of presuppositions as in (3) above simply do not need to be licensed by an antecedent. Above all, when I utter (3a) or (3d), for example, intuitively I do not *pretend* that the presuppositions are already known by my audience. Massive use of accommodation can get the anaphoricity theory out of this trouble, of course, but at the cost of a loss in explanatory force, and will end up depriving the view of much of its content. Therefore, I conclude that presuppositions are either anaphoric or introduce new information without requiring an antecedent. In the next section, I will elaborate this idea.

### 3. Backgroundedness View of Presupposition

It is well known that presuppositions survive under the presupposition test battery, viz. the question, negation, possibility operator tests, etc. This fact has engendered various interpretations of presupposition: presuppositions are assumptions that are taken for granted (Stalnaker 1974), uncontroversial (Grice 1981), or backgrounded (Levinson 1983). The anaphoricity view is

based on Stalnaker's intuition that presuppositions are assumptions that speakers take for granted. However, it seems intuitively clear to me that survival under the tests does not necessarily mean that presuppositions should be anaphoric.

On the other hand, Levinson and Grice do not commit themselves to the anaphoricity view. Levinson suggests, based on the presupposition test battery, that the basic intuition on presupposition is that presuppositions are all in some important sense *background assumptions* in contrast to what is asserted or what is the main point of an utterance, which does not entail that presuppositions are anaphoric. Grice is more explicit: presuppositions are assumptions that speaker believes are uncontroversial, rather than anaphoric. Considering the problems of the anaphoricity view, I propose that 'backgroundedness' is the better notion than anaphoricity as the licensing condition of presupposition: i.e., presuppositions should be backgrounded. I would like to define Levinson's intuitive notion of backgroundedness as follows:

- (4) A proposition is backgrounded iff,
- (i) it is already given in the context, or
  - (ii) unless given in the context, it is taken that it is plausible or unobjectionable to the extent that it need not be asserted, given our general knowledge.<sup>2)</sup>

The intuitive motivation for definition (4) is: if a proposition is already given, it cannot be realized as an assertion, obviously because it would violate the Informativity Condition — no information is supposed to be redundant; so it should be backgrounded. Also, when a piece of new information is so plausible that it need not be asserted, it would be backgrounded.

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<sup>2</sup>Actually, plausibility and unobjectionability are posited as a restriction on accommodation by Heim (1989).

In a nutshell, (i) a presupposition should be already given in the context, or (ii) unless given in the context, it should be taken to be plausible or unobjectionable to the extent that it need not be asserted. I will refer to this view as the backgroundedness view.

Let me illustrate the two conditions with some examples adapted from Kadmon (2001). Suppose you don't know anything about the animal I keep or don't keep at home. Suppose you are at my house, and we hear some scratching noises outside. Then I say one of the following:

- (5) a. Maybe my dog is at the door.  
       b. Maybe my giraffe is at the door.  
       c. I keep a giraffe here. Maybe my giraffe is at the door.

The possessive NPs *my dog* and *my giraffe* trigger the presuppositions *I have a dog* and *I have a giraffe*, respectively. (5b) sounds stranger than either (5a) or (5c). (5a) is OK because the presupposition *I have a dog* is plausible or unobjectionable, given our world knowledge. So, this presupposition conveys purely new information and adds to the context, just like an asserted proposition, since we dispense with the notion of accommodation as a mechanism to establish an antecedent. (5b) is strange because the presupposition *I have a giraffe* is rather implausible. (5c) is OK, because the presupposition *I have a giraffe* is already given in the discourse.

#### **4. Compatibility of the Backgroundedness View with Heim (1983) and van der Sandt (1992)**

The most successful accounts of presupposition projection available today are Heim's (1983) and van der Sandt's (1992) theories. *Prima facie*, these two theories are rather similar, and it has been suggested that they are essentially equivalent (Heim

1992). Both theories claim that, in principle, a presupposition must be contextually given, and both invoke accommodation as a means to restore givenness when necessary. In this section it will be shown, however, that there are real and important differences between these two accounts, with regard to their compatibility with the backgroundedness view. Let us begin with Heim's theory.

#### 4.1. Heim (1983)

The ideas underlying Heim's theory are traced back to Stalnaker (1973, 1974) and Karttunen (1974), whose ideas were shaped into an explicit theory by Heim (1983), which was subsequently taken up by van Eijck (1993), Heim (1992), Beaver (1994), and Kadmon (2001).

To begin with, take a simple sentence with a presupposition trigger, which I write  $\varphi\{\chi\}$ , where  $\chi$  is the presupposition triggered in  $\varphi$ . According to the Heim, the presupposition  $\chi$  requires that the initial context  $c$  which is being incremented with its carrier sentence  $\varphi$  already contain the information that  $\chi$  is true. More succinctly: if  $\varphi\{\chi\}$  is to be added to  $c$ , then  $c$  must satisfy (=entail)  $\chi$ . If this requirement is met, then  $c$  is an appropriate context for  $\varphi\{\chi\}$ . Heim would say that  $\varphi\{\chi\}$  is 'defined' in  $c$  or that  $c$  'admits'  $\varphi\{\chi\}$ .

The same story can be told about embedded sentences, because they, too, are viewed as context change devices. Let  $c + \varphi$  stand for the result of incrementing  $c$  with  $\varphi$ . Take conjunction  $\varphi \wedge \psi$ , for example. The context change potential of conjunctions is as follows:

$$(6) \quad c + (\varphi \wedge \psi) = (c + \varphi) + \psi$$

That is, in order to interpret a conjunction  $\varphi$  in  $c$ , each sentence embedded in  $\varphi$  must be interpreted in its own local context,

which may but need not coincide with  $c$ . Conjunctions are processed in an incremental fashion, and therefore, if  $c$  is updated with  $\varphi \wedge \psi$ , then  $c$  is the local context of  $\varphi$ , while the local context of  $\psi$  is  $c + \varphi$ . Let us say that a context  $c$  satisfies (=entails)  $\varphi$  iff  $c + \varphi = c$ . Then, the definedness condition of a simple sentence  $\varphi\{\chi\}$  is as in (7):

(7)  $c + \varphi\{\chi\}$  is defined, if  $c$  satisfies  $\chi$ ; undefined, otherwise

The definedness condition for conjunctions is as in (8):

(8)  $c + (\varphi \wedge \psi)$  is defined iff  $c + \varphi$  is defined and  $(c + \varphi) + \psi$  is defined; undefined, otherwise

The definedness condition in (8) follows from the definitions in (6) and (7), and the predictions that Heim's theory makes about presupposition projection follow from definedness conditions. Heim therefore defines the notion of presupposition as in (9):

(9) For any sentence  $\varphi$ ,  $\varphi$  presupposes  $\chi$  iff for all  $c$ ,  $c + \varphi$  is defined only if  $c$  satisfies  $\chi$

In other words, if the initial context  $c$  must contain  $\chi$  in order for a sentence  $\varphi$  to be added to  $c$ , then  $\chi$  is a presupposition of  $\varphi$ . If we take a sentence of the form  $\varphi \wedge \psi\{\chi\}$ , the presuppositional requirement is not that the initial context satisfy  $\chi$ . For,  $c + (\varphi \wedge \psi\{\chi\})$  is defined iff  $c + \varphi$  is defined and  $c + \varphi$  satisfies  $\chi$ , and this is the same as requiring that  $c + \varphi$  be defined and  $c$  satisfy  $\varphi \rightarrow \chi$ . In other word, in order for  $\chi$  to be satisfied in its local context  $c + \varphi$ ,  $c$  must satisfy  $\varphi \rightarrow \chi$ , and thus,  $\varphi \wedge \psi\{\chi\}$  is predicted to presuppose that  $\varphi \rightarrow \chi$ . For example, (10a) presupposes (10b):



- (10) a. There is a king of Japan and the king of Japan is tall.  
 b. There is a king of Japan.  $\rightarrow$  There is a king of Japan.

(10a) is of the form  $\varphi \wedge \psi \{ \chi \}$ . By (7) and (8) above,  $c + \varphi$  must satisfy  $\chi$  for (10a) to be defined, which is equivalent to the requirement that the initial context  $c$  should contain, or entail  $\varphi \rightarrow \chi$ , viz. (10b). Thus, by definition (9), (10b) is the presupposition of (10a). Since (10b) is a tautology, it will be satisfied by any  $c$ , and therefore, will impose no requirements on  $c$  at all. In particular, the satisfaction theory correctly predicts that (10a) doesn't presuppose that there is a king of Japan. Now take the following sentence:

- (11) a. The king of Japan is tall.  
 b. There is a king of Japan.

According to definitions (7) and (9), the presupposition of (11a) is (11b), because the initial context  $c$  must already contain, or entail (11b) in order for (11a) to be defined. Intuitively, this prediction is correct. This in turn means that if  $c$  has not contained (11b) yet, (11b) should be accommodated in  $c$ , i.e., (11b) should be added to  $c$  as if it had been already asserted in the foregoing. The result of accommodation is (12):

- (12) ( $c + (11b)$ ) + (11a)

Now the presupposition of (11a) is contained in the amended context  $c + (11b)$ , and therefore (11a) is defined.

What is crucial about the foregoing discussion of (10) and (11) is that definitions (7) to (9) are essential ingredients of Heim's theory of presupposition projection, and that these definitions demand that the antecedent of a presupposition should always be given in the context for the containing sentence to be

defined. So, when there is no antecedent, it should be created by accommodation. In sum, we have seen in this section that Heim's theory of presupposition projection, as it is, is incompatible with the backgroundedness view of presupposition, since the anaphoricity of presupposition is essential for the predictions of presupposition projection.

#### 4.2. Van der Sandt (1992)

The other leading theory of presupposition projection is van der Sandt's (1992), which is an extension of Kamp (1984) and Kamp and Reyle's (1993) discourse representation theory, and was further developed by Geurts (1999), and Geurts and van der Sandt (1999).

According to van der Sandt (1992), presuppositions are anaphors, and presuppositions should be bound to suitable antecedents, just as ordinary anaphors are bound. Antecedents may be provided by a previous discourse or by accommodation. Just for convenience, I will call binding by a discourse antecedent and binding by an accommodated antecedent 'binding' and 'accommodation,' respectively.

Two main principles of van der Sandt's presupposition projection theory may be formulated as follows:

- (A) Presuppositions must be resolved, i.e., bound, or accommodated.
- (B) Binding is preferred to accommodation.

Before these principles come into play, presuppositions are merely representational structures, and are therefore completely inert. Principle (A) drives away this inertia by requiring that presupposition must be either bound or accommodated. Principle (B) captures the insight, according to van der Sandt, that accommodation is a repair strategy. In principle, a presupposition

wants to be bound, but if it cannot be bound, then it will be accommodated.

We are now ready to show how this theory works with the same examples used to discuss Heim. First, consider (10a), repeated below as (13a), of which initial DRS may be represented as (13b):

- (13) a. There is a king of Japan and the king of Japan is tall.  
 b.  $[x: \text{king-of-japan}(x), u \text{ is tall}, \partial [u: \text{king-of-japan}(u)]]$

$\partial$  in (13b) represents an unresolved presupposition. According to principle (A) above, this presupposition must be either bound or accommodated. But, principle (B) dictates that we should first check whether it can be bound. The answer is yes.  $[x: \text{king-of-japan}(x)]$  is a suitable antecedent. Thus, we obtain (14a), which is equivalent to (14b):

- (14) a.  $[x, u: u=x, \text{king-of-japan}(x), \text{king-of-japan}(u), u \text{ is tall}]$   
 b.  $[x: \text{king-of-japan}(x), x \text{ is tall}]$

This DRS adequately represents the meaning of (13a): there is a king of Japan who is tall. In particular, the presupposition which originates in the second conjunct is bound in the first conjunct, and thus is 'blocked': according to van der Sandt, to say that a sentence is presupposing (or that its presupposition is preserved in a context of utterance) is a special case of accommodation. It tells us that the presupposition has been accommodated at the top level of discourse structure.<sup>3</sup> Presuppositional satisfaction, or filtering out boils down to anaphoric binding at some level of representation. So, (13a) does not presuppose that there is a king

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<sup>3</sup>Accommodated presuppositions do not always end up at the top level, because of constraints on accommodation, such as Consistency, Informativity and Trapping. For details, refer to van der Sandt (1992) and Beaver (1997).

of Japan. Next, consider (11a), repeated below as (15a), of which initial DRS is (15b):

- (15) a. The king of Japan is tall.  
 b. [ : u is tall,  $\partial$  [u: king-of-japan(u)]]

Since no antecedent is available to the presupposition, it will have to be accommodated. Accommodating the antecedent results in the DRS in (16a). Then, the presupposition is bound to the accommodated antecedent in (16b), which is equivalent to (16c):

- (16) a. [x: king-of-japan(x), u is tall,  $\partial$  [u: king-of-japan(u)]]  
 b. [x, u: u=x, king-of-japan(x), king-of-japan(u), u is tall]  
 c. [x: king-of-japan(x), x is tall]

Van der Sandt's theory predicts that (15a) presupposes that there is a king of Japan, since the presupposition has been accommodated at the top level of discourse structure, and this prediction is intuitively correct.

Though both van der Sandt (1992) and Geurts (1999) commit themselves to the anaphoricity view of presupposition and the tenet that accommodation is a mechanism of providing an antecedent, it is clear that these assumptions are never essential to their theory, considering our discussion of (15a). Even if we give up the notion of antecedent accommodation and, instead, assume that accommodation is the mechanism with which presupposed new information just adds or moves to some appropriate DRS like an asserted proposition, it is not incompatible with the projection principles (A) and (B) above. That is, even if we omit the intermediate processes (16a) and (16b), and just assume the backgroundedness view, that will not make any difference. The anaphoricity view is by no means essential to van der Sandt's theory, and therefore can be

discarded without any harm. So, the backgroundedness view can readily be incorporated into van der Sandt's framework. This is, however, not the case with Heim's theory of presupposition projection, as seen in the foregoing section: anaphoricity is at the heart of her projection mechanism. In conclusion, we may say that the backgroundedness view supports van der Sandt's theory of presupposition projection over Heim's.

## 5. Explaining Unaccommodatable Presuppositions

In this section I address the issue of why some presupposition triggers—*too* and incomplete definite descriptions—are typically difficult to accommodate,<sup>4</sup> and obligatorily require contextually given antecedents. Thus, sentences with these presupposition triggers do not make a good start to a discourse without specific linguistic or non-linguistic contexts. Sentences in (17) below show that *too* and incomplete definite descriptions are more difficult to accommodate than factive verbs and complete definite descriptions:

- (17) a. The table is covered with books.  
 b. The center of the Earth is hot.  
 c. John<sub>F</sub> tried to steal Mary's lawn mower, too.  
 (Subscript 'F' indicates an associated-with-too element.)  
 d. Mary doesn't know that someone other than John tried to steal her lawn mower.

(17a) and (17c) are infelicitous when uttered out of the blue, and the presuppositions triggered by *the table* and *too*—*there is a table*

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<sup>4</sup>In this section, if I do not say otherwise, the term 'accommodation' is used in the sense of the backgroundedness view, i.e., the mechanism of adding presupposed new information to the context, as if it were an asserted proposition.

and *someone besides John tries to steal Mary's lawn mower*, respectively—seem to obligatorily require an antecedent to bind them: on the contrary, the presuppositions triggered by definite description *the center of the Earth* in (17b) and factive *know* in (17d), can be easily accommodated, and thus, both (17b) and (17d) make a good start to a discourse out of the blue.

Van der Sandt suggests that accommodatability of presupposition triggers correlates with descriptive richness of presuppositions: semantically attenuate definite descriptions, such as *the thing* and *the animal*, which are usually called 'incomplete' definite descriptions, are not accommodatable, while descriptions like *the President of Germany* have sufficient semantic content to be accommodated. His proposal is based on the assumption that presuppositional expressions will generally contain enough descriptive content of their own to establish an antecedent in case the previous discourse does not provide one. Thus, his reasoning goes as follows: all presuppositions are anaphoric to an antecedent, but presuppositions with insufficient descriptive content cannot establish an antecedent by accommodation. Therefore, they require an antecedent given in the previous context. However, van der Sandt's proposal fails to explain the non-accommodatable nature of *too*: for instance, the presupposition triggered by *too* in (17c) is the same as the factive presupposition of (17d), but nonetheless the latter is easily accommodated, while the former is not.

My suggestion is that the reason for unaccommodatability lies not in the properties of presupposition itself, but in the lexical properties of presupposition triggers. Let us first start with *too*. I propose that *too* is a discourse particle that is interpreted as a relational operator which takes two arguments: So, a sentence like (18) below means sort of like *In addition to x, John is nice*, where *x* is underspecified:

(18) John<sub>F</sub> is nice too.

What *too* does in sentences like (18) is to introduce another argument *John is nice*, in addition to the presupposed underspecified argument, of which value is usually provided by the preceding context like *Mary is nice, (and John is nice, too.)* I represent the semantics of (18) as in (19). The presupposed part is underlined:

(19) John<sub>F</sub> is nice too  $\Rightarrow$  ADD(nice(x), nice(john))  
 Presupposition is  $\exists x[\text{nice}(x) \ \& \ x \neq \text{john}]$

If we assume that (18) is uttered out of the blue, it triggers the presupposition *Someone other than John is nice*, because of the underspecified argument and the semantics of *too*, together with the pragmatic constraint that an utterance should be informative. I argue that in (19), the value of underspecified argument *x*, which is a kind of free variable, cannot be identified with *someone other than John*, i.e., the presupposition cannot be taken as the value of the underspecified argument, because hearers may have no way of knowing what the speaker intends as the value of the underspecified argument. So we need a context to supply the value to *x*: for instance, a preceding utterance like *Mary is nice* will identify the value of *x* as *Mary*. So, the reason why sentences with *too* require a preceding parallel clause can be explained by the underspecified argument status of the preceding clause, together with the fact that we cannot decide what the speaker intends as the argument, out of the blue.

In sum, I claim that presence of a proposition which can serve as the antecedent of the presupposition triggered by *too* is obligatory because it is an argument of *too*. However, this does not guarantee that the presupposition must be bound to the antecedent: according to the backgroundedness view, presuppositions

can be licensed by either the presence of an antecedent or accommodation. So, we seem to need something like van der Sandt's principle (B) in the foregoing section: binding is preferred to accommodation. Van der Sandt motivates this condition as follows: given that accommodation is a repair strategy for mending discourse representation in the face of presupposition failure, it is reasonable to suppose that the hearer will attempt to construe the speaker's utterance in such a way that accommodation is required as little as possible, keeping his representation of the common ground fixed. However, since accommodation is no longer a repair strategy in the backgroundedness view, we need an alternative account for the preference of binding over accommodation. My reasoning goes as follows: we observed in section 3 that some presuppositions are more readily licensed by the presence of an antecedent rather than by accommodation. Consider (20):

- (20) a. ?Maybe my giraffe is at the door.  
 b. I keep a giraffe here. Maybe my giraffe is at the door.

(20a) and the second sentence of (20b) contain the same presupposition *I have a giraffe*, but it is rather difficult for the presupposition to be accommodated in (20a), but it has no difficulty being bound in (20b). So it seems that binding is the more unmarked way than accommodation to license the backgroundedness of a proposition: as mentioned in section 3, if a proposition is already given, it may not be asserted again; otherwise, it would violate the *Informativity Condition*. So, it should be backgrounded. On the contrary, accommodated information is basically new information, though insignificant it may be. So, in principle it can be asserted. In this way, we may say that binding is a preferred way of being backgrounded. Anyway, the preference principle guarantees that the



presupposition triggered by *too* is always bound to an antecedent of which presence is obligatory as an argument of *too*. So, no accommodation can take place.

Next, let us consider the unaccommodatability of incomplete definite descriptions. I assume that definite description *the N'* refers unambiguously to the unique individual that satisfies *N'* within the domain provided by a certain context. Hence, the in *the N'* may be taken as a relational operator of which two arguments are the property denoted by *N'* and a contextually provided domain, or equivalently, we may regard *the* as a partial function from pairs of *N'* and a domain to the unique individual. Let me explain non-accommodatability of incomplete definite descriptions with (17a) above. I represent the semantics of (17a) as in (21):

- (21) The table is covered with books  $\Rightarrow$   
 covered-with-books( $\iota x$  [table( $x$ ) &  $D^c(x)$ ])  
 Presupposition:  $\exists D^c \exists x$ [unique( $x$ ,  $\lambda y$ [table( $y$ ) &  $D^c(y)$ ]])<sup>5</sup>

In (21), contextually provided domain  $D^c$ , the underspecified argument, is like a free variable, and should be contextually identified to satisfy the uniqueness requirement because there are innumerable tables in the world. *The table* will be unambiguous for a hearer, for instance, if there is just one table in her field of vision. In this case, the field of vision provides a proper domain for the uniqueness of *the table*. However, without such a specific context, upon hearing (17a), we would have no way to know what is intended as the value of  $D^c$  by the speaker, and so, (17a) will turn out to be infelicitous. Thus, if we assume, following Kadmon (2001), that an antecedent need not be given by a linguistic context, *the door* in (17a) should be anaphoric to

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<sup>5</sup>This represents that there is a unique table in *some* contextually restricted domain  $D^c$ .

the unique door in the field of vision.

Next, consider (17b), of which semantics is given in (22):

- (22) The center of the Earth is hot  $\Rightarrow$   
 $\text{hot}(\iota x[\text{center-of-the-earth}(x) \ \& \ D^c(x)]);$   
 Presupposition:  $\exists D^c \exists x[\text{unique}(x, \lambda y[\text{center-of-the-earth}(y)$   
 $\ \& \ D^c(y)])]$

In this case, domain  $D^c$  need not be restricted by a specific context to satisfy the uniqueness requirement, because the uniqueness condition is satisfied by description *center of the Earth*. Instead,  $D^c$  may get the whole universe as its value by default. Therefore, the complete definite description can be accommodated without requiring any given antecedent, and so, (17b) sounds felicitous when uttered out of the blue.

In summary, the essential reason for the unaccommodatability of presuppositions triggered by *too* and incomplete definite descriptions lies not in the descriptive deficiency of presuppositions, as van der Sandt suggests, but in the fact that the lexical properties of these triggers require the obligatory presence of antecedents to which the presuppositions can be bound. When the principle that binding is preferred to accommodation comes into play, it is predicted that accommodation is always blocked. This analysis not only provides better empirical predictions than van der Sandt's, but dispenses with any additional restrictions on accommodation.

## 6. Conclusion

In this paper, I discussed to what extent the notion of anaphoricity should be involved in the theories of presupposition and presupposition projection. The conclusions are summarized as follows:

First, the anaphoricity view of presupposition is untenable in that it heavily relies on accommodated antecedents, and this will end up depriving the view of most of its content. Instead, I proposed that the licensing condition of presupposition should be backgroundedness. In this view, accommodation is taken as a mechanism to add presupposed new information to the context, as if it were an asserted proposition. Next, it was shown that van der Sandt's theory of presupposition projection is quite compatible with the backgroundedness view, though it commits itself to the anaphoricity view: the anaphoricity condition does not play any crucial role in his projection mechanism, and so, it can be safely ignored. On the other hand, the anaphoricity condition is indispensable part in Heim's theory of presupposition projection. Finally, it was suggested that unaccommodatable presuppositions should be explained not by the properties of presupposition itself, but by the lexical properties of presupposition triggers.

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