Clause-embedding predicates and the empirical purview of projection analyses
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Projective content is utterance content that the speaker may be taken to be committed to even though the content is contributed by an expression in the scope of an entailment-canceling operator (Simons et al 2010; Tonhauser et al 2013, in print). Classes of projective contents differ on a number of properties (see, e.g., Potts 2005, Tonhauser et al 2013) and, accordingly, there are distinct analyses of the projectivity of different classes of projective content, including presuppositions (e.g., Heim 1983, van der Sandt 1992, Abusch 2010, Abrusán 2011, Romoli 2015), conventional implicatures (e.g., Potts 2005, Murray 2014) and expressive content (e.g., Potts 2007, Gutzmann 2015).

This talk extends the empirical investigation of projective content and properties thereof to the content of the clausal complement of clause-embedding predicates. These predicates have traditionally been divided into 'factive' ones, like "know", "discover" and "be annoyed", and 'non-factive' ones, like "believe", "tell" and "be right", based on whether the content of the clausal complement is analyzed as presupposition (Kiparsky and Kiparsky 1971, Karttunen 1971, van der Sandt 1992, Geurts and Beaver 2014, among many others). We discuss experiments designed to explore the two properties that are assumed to distinguish 'factive' and 'non-factive' predicates, namely projectivity and veridicality. The projection experiment confirms projection variability among 'factive' predicates (Tonhauser et al in print) and provides systematic evidence for the projectivity of the content of the clausal complement of 'non-factive' communication predicates like "inform" and response predicates like "acknowledge" (Schlenker 2010, Anand & Hacquard 2015, Spector & Egré 2015). These findings suggest that the empirical purview of projection analyses includes 'factive' and 'non-factive' predicates alike. The veridicality experiments reveal differences in veridicality between the 20 clause-embedding predicates under investigation, but these differences do not confirm the assumed distinction between 'factive' and 'non-factive' predicates. We discuss the implications of these findings for the assumption that 'factive' predicates presuppose the content of the clausal complement and suggest that more fine-grained distinctions among clause-embedding predicates are needed to account for the strength of the inferences listeners and readers draw from utterances of sentences with clause-embedding predicates.