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A *semantic* account of the selectional restrictions of some (anti-)rogative verbs

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———HANDOUT WITH SUMMARY AND KEY DEFINITIONS———

1 Summary

- When it comes to accounting for selectional restrictions, accounts of clause-embedding that assume **uniform typing** are *not* at an inherent disadvantage vis-à-vis those accounts that assume different types.
- In a uniform account, we can use independently motivated **semantic properties** of embedding verbs and clausal complements to derive selectional restrictions.
- For example:
- **Anti-rogativity via neg-raising (NR):** all NR verbs are anti-rogative. If we capture NR behavior via an **excluded-middle presupposition**, then NR verbs taking interrogative complements yield systematically trivial sentence meanings in the sense of **L-analyticity**.
- **Anti-rogativity via insensitivity to inquisitive content:** If we assume that truth-assessing verbs operate purely on the **informative content** of their complements, these verbs yield systematically trivial sentence meanings when they combine with interrogative complements.
- **Rogativity via semantics of *wonder*:** if we treat *wonder* as "not certain, but want to find out", then *wonder* taking declarative complements yields systematically trivial sentence meanings.

NR and anti-rogativity: Zuber (1982).
EM presupposition: Bartsch (1973); Gajewski (2007).
L-analyticity: Gajewski (2002)

Wonder modality in IDEL: Ciardelli and Roelofsen (2015)

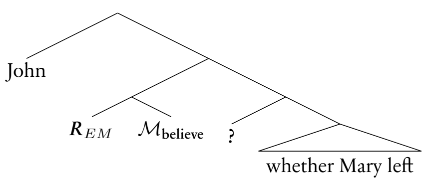
2 Key lexical entries and definitions

(1) $[\![\textbf{be certain}]\!]^w = \lambda P_{\langle st,t\rangle}.\lambda x_e.\, \textsc{dox}_x^w \in P$

(2) $[\![\textbf{believe}]\!]^w = \lambda P_{\langle st,t\rangle}.\lambda x_e : \underline{\textsc{dox}_x^w \in P \vee \textsc{dox}_x^w \in \neg P}.\, \textsc{dox}_x^w \in P$
where $\neg P = \{p \mid \forall q \in P : p \cap q = \emptyset\}$

Algbraic motivation of the inquisitive negation operator: Roelofsen (2013)

(3) LF of *John believes whether Mary left*:



where $[\![\mathcal{M}_{\text{believe}}]\!]^w = \lambda x.\textsc{dox}_x^w$

$[\![R_{\text{EM}}]\!] = \lambda \mathcal{M}_{\langle \text{e,st}\rangle}.\lambda P_{\langle st,t\rangle}.\lambda x : \underline{\mathcal{M}(x) \in P \vee \mathcal{M}(x) \in \neg P}.\, \mathcal{M}(x) \in P$

$\mathcal{M}_{\text{believe}}$ is non-logical.
R_{EM} is logical.

(4) Given a sentence with LF α, we can construct a **logical skeleton** from α by:
  a. Identifying the maximal constituents of α that contain no logical items
  b. Replacing each such constituent with a fresh constant of the same type

(5) A sentence S is **L-analytical** iff S's logical skeleton receives the truth value 1 (or 0) in all interpretations in which it is defined.

(6) S is **ungrammatical** if its LF contains an L-analytical constituent.

(7) $[\![\textbf{be true}]\!]^w = \lambda P_{\langle st,t\rangle}.\{w\} \in P$

(8) $[\![\textbf{wonder}]\!]^w = \lambda P_{\langle st,t\rangle}.\lambda x_e.\, \textsc{dox}_x^w \notin P \wedge \forall q \in \Sigma_x^w : q \in P$

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