

forweb

Presupposition

- Propositions whose truth is taken for granted in the utterance of a linguistic expression
 - It's too bad Nader lost the election.

Existence Presuppositions

- The movie on Cinemax is rated X.
- I've coached Jack's children.

Factive Presuppositions

- Jan knows that Taylor has a 42 inch vertical leap.
- Jan regrets that Taylor has a 42 inch vertical leap.
- Jan forgot that Taylor has a 42 inch vertical leap.
- Jan is glad that Taylor has a 42 inch vertical leap.

Connotative Presuppositions

- Involve words used in particular circumstances
 - Presuppose those circumstances
- Murder
 - Killing intentional
- Assassinate
 - Target has political power

Blame vs. Criticize



- Ralph was blamed/criticized for B
- Both imply
 - Ralph did B
 - B is bad
- Blamed
 - Presupposes
 - B is bad
 - Asserts
 - Ralph did B
- Criticized
 - Presupposes
 - Ralph did B
 - Asserts
 - B is bad

Properties of Presupposition

- Content is taken for granted
- Still there if you negate the main verb
 - He regretted going to the concert the night before the quiz.
 - He didn't regret going to the concert the night before the quiz.
- Can't be denied without contradiction
 - He regretted going to the concert, but he didn't go to the concert. (huh?)
- Can be relative to an assumed world
 - I dreamed the earth was flat, and a lot of people were glad when Columbus fell off the edge.

Presupposition & Memory for Events

- Loftus initiated research on real-world memory
 - Began with study of impact of question phrasing
- Loftus & Zanni (1975)
 - Did you see the broken headlight?
 - Did you see a broken headlight?



Presupposition & Surveys



- Do you get headaches frequently? If so, how often?
 - 2.2/week
- Do you get headaches occasionally? If so how often?
 - .71/week

What causes these effects?

- Questions facilitate experimenter demand effects
 - Hear question about “the” headlight and infer that there must have been a headlight, even though you don't remember seeing one
- Question alters participants' memory for events
 - Misleading information gets combined with the original information and results in a different memory for what happened

Loftus & Palmer (1974)

- Showed people movie of a car accident
- About how fast were the cars going when they
 - hit each other?
8 mph
 - smashed into each other?
10.5 mph



1 week later...

Did you see any broken glass?

- (film contained no broken glass)
- “smashed” people more likely than “hit” people to say YES!
- Loftus & Palmer argued that question caused people to reinterpret accident and brought about a permanent transformation of their memory for the accident



Loftus 1975: False presuppositions & memory



- Was the leader of the 4 demonstrators male?
- Was the leader of the 12 demonstrators male?
- (there were 8)
- 1 week later:
 - How many demonstrators did you see entering the room?

Loftus (1975)

- Watch movie about car traveling along a country road
- How fast was the car going while traveling along the country road?
- How fast was the car going when it passed the barn while traveling along the country road?



A week later...

- Do you remember seeing a barn?
- People who received the first version of the question almost always said “no”
- People who received the misleading version of the question much more likely to falsely remember seeing a barn!

Loftus, Miller & Burns (1978)



- Subjects viewed series of 30 slides; answered 20 questions about them
- Did another car pass the red Datsun while it was stopped at the
 - Stop sign?
 - Yield sign?
- Forced choice recognition test
 - Stop Group: 75% correct
 - Yield Group: 41% correct
 - Lower than chance!
- Exposure to misleading information in questions altered their responses to later questions

Memory for Color

- Slide showed red car passing green car
- Did the blue car that drove past the accident have a ski rack on the roof?
- Did the car that drove past the accident have a ski rack on the roof?
- Answers to questions influenced by the way earlier statements and questions had been phrased.
 - Misled subjects chose bluer shade
- Memory for true color seems to have blended with the color implied by the misleading question



Loftus, 1977

Misinformation Effects

- No hesitation, no lack of confidence
- No effects when people realize info is false while reading it
 - Was the car that drove past the accident blue? (no subsequent misinformation effects)
- People who process misinformation carefully can ignore it
 - Tousignant, Hall, and Loftus (1986)
 - Subjects watch an event, read a misleading text about it, then do recognition test
 - Slow, careful readers:
 - Point out misinformation when it occurs
 - Not subject to subsequent misinformation effects

What causes misinformation effects?

Loftus

- Substitution Hypothesis
 - Later information overwrites established information
 - Consequences for memory:
 - Difficulty discriminating original event and subsequent information about it
 - Original trace is overwritten by later information
 - Controversial because most psychologists believe long-term memories are stored "forever" – not overwritten

McCloskey/Zaragoza

- Biased Guessing
 - Misleading info affects behavior when subjects unable to remember event
 - Doesn't affect original memory
- Lindsay/Johnson
- Blended Memory
 - Misleading info gets combined with original memory (doesn't completely overwrite it)

Logic of Biased Guessing Account

Control Group

- 50% Remember
 - Answer correctly
- 50% Forget
 - 25% Guess Right
 - 25% Guess Wrong

Experimental Group

- 50% Remember
 - Answer correctly
- 50% Forget Original but remember something about the misinformation
 - 20% Guess Right
 - 30% Guess Wrong

Loftus, Miller & Burns (1978)



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Modified Recognition Test



McCloskey & Zaragoza (1985)

Predictions

Loftus

- Control subjects should be more accurate than misled subjects because wrench will overwrite the hammer in memory
- Misled subjects more likely to have to guess randomly between the two pictures

McCloskey & Zaragoza's Biased Guessing account

- Misleading information will have no effect on performance
- This because, misleading info works by biasing subjects to choose the picture consistent with the misleading information (and neither picture qualifies)
- In fact, McCloskey & Zaragoza found similar performance in experimental and control groups

Zaragoza, McCloskey, Jamis



(Verbal)

- "Loftus" Condition: What was on the desk?
- Cued Recall Condition: What brand of soft drink was on the desk?
- Biased Guessing:
 - original memory intact, and question phrasing doesn't bias guessing based on misinformation, so: control and experimental groups perform equivalently in cued recall
- Substitution:
 - original memory overwritten, so experimental group should perform worse than controls in cued recall
- Equivalent performance of control & experimental groups under cued recall condition!

Lindsay/Johnson

- Reverse Misinformation Effect
 - Misleading information presented *before* the pictures also leads to misinformation effects
- Substitution Hypothesis predicts memory for pictures will overwrite memory for misleading questions
- RME consistent w/idea that people form a blended memory of pictures and of misleading information presupposed in questions asked of them

Take-Home Messages

- Misleading questions affect memory because both processes – understanding the questions and the encoding and retrieval of information – involves frames and schemas
- Schema-based reconstructive memory also explains why
 - Memory for verbal communication retains the gist of its meaning
 - Memory for pictures retains meaningful interpretation of picture
 - Memory for meaning lasts longer than for physical details

Take-Home Messages

- Schemas large, complex units of knowledge that encode typical properties of instances of general categories
 - Enable us to infer unseen info from what is seen
 - Lead us to 'remember' things we haven't seen

In a nutshell...

- Comprehension an active process of integrating incoming information with knowledge stored in LTM
- Representation of knowledge something we're still working on...
 - Features
 - Propositions
 - Frames, Scripts, Schemas
 - MOPs, TOPs, TAU's
 - ???