

PRESUPPOSITIONS AND IMPLICATURES IN COUNTERFACTUALS

Past subjunctive counterfactuals do not always talk about the past. Sometimes they talk about the future despite their overt past morphology. Imagine the following scenario. Charlie got married yesterday. Unfortunately, after the ceremony a violent thunderstorm broke out and they had to call off the outdoor reception. I have just heard the forecast on TV: the rain will finally cease tonight. In these circumstances, (1) is felicitous but (2) isn't. Call conditionals like (1) *mismatched past subjunctive counterfactuals* (MPSC), and conditionals like (2) *non-past subjunctive conditionals* (NPSC). Similar facts are discussed in Ogihara (2000).

- (1) If Charlie had gotten married tomorrow, they could have had the outdoor reception.
 (2) If Charlie got married tomorrow, they could have had the outdoor reception.

The pair in (1)-(2) is puzzling for two reasons. (i) The subjunctive conditional in (1) describes a future hypothetical eventuality despite the past morphology. (ii) The non-past subjunctive conditional in (2) cannot be used to talk about a future hypothetical event. Now consider a modification of the above scenario. Charlie had planned to get married yesterday but, having heard about the furious storm that was approaching, decided to postpone the ceremony to a better day. Having just heard the forecast on TV, I can utter (2) but *not* (1). The situation is now reversed. Conclusion: For a MPSC to be felicitous, the event described in the antecedent must be impossible.

Mismatched past counterfactuals cannot be accounted for by the standard view of the role of Past in subjunctive past counterfactuals (e.g. Iatridou 2000), which interprets the Past inside the antecedent: in (1) that would lead to nonsense. Nor can Ogihara's proposal, which I will refute on a principled and empirical basis.

Very briefly, I will provide a *pragmatic account* of the intuition that the antecedent is not true. The account is based on an extension of the classical Gricean theory of scalar implicatures. In building my proposal, I will have to (A) make a specific proposal about the role of Past and (B) provide and defend new presuppositions for subjunctive conditionals.

1. The Interpretation of Past in MPSCs: The Past tense cannot be interpreted in the proposition expressed by the antecedent because it is inconsistent with the time-adverbial. I argue that it applies to the covert modal. In what follows I shall assume Kratzer's analysis of conditionals (1981, 1986, 1991) and a referential analysis of tense (Partee 1973, Enç 1987, Kratzer 1998).

A conditional is true iff for all the worlds w accessible from the actual world and such that the antecedent is true in w , the consequent is true in w . Thus, (2) will have the truth-conditions in (3). w_c and t_c are the actual world and the time of the utterance, respectively.

- (3) $[[\text{(2)}]]^c = 1$ iff $\forall w \in W$ [w is accessible from w_c at t_c and Charlie gets married tomorrow in $w \rightarrow$ they have the outdoor reception in w]

I propose that in MPSCs, the Past constrains the time argument t of the accessibility relation R , whose general schema is given in (4).

- (4) $R = \lambda w. \lambda t. \lambda w'$. w' is accessible from w at t . (type $\langle s, \langle i, \langle s, t \rangle \rangle \rangle$)

Consequently, (1) is true iff for all the worlds w accessible from the actual world *at some contextually salient past time* and such that Charlie gets married tomorrow in w , they have the outdoor reception in w . This is shown in (5), where w_c is the actual world and t_c is the time of the utterance.

