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Evidentiality and Pragmatic Blocking in Gitksan

Maximize Presupposition (MP) (Heim, 1991) has provided an elegant and effective means for explaining a variety of scalar phenomena, such as the use of determiners, quantifiers, attitude verbs, and other kinds of presupposition triggers. More recently, the application of MP has widened both cross-linguistically and to include other kinds of scalar meanings, such as gradable tense (Cable, 2013). In this paper I show how MP can be used to explain how two grammatical evidentials interact in contexts where they are both felicitous, but the choice of one over the other has pragmatic consequences involving the interpretation of modal force. In Gitksan, different evidential meanings are encoded by presupposition. This analysis both complements and extends Faller's recent (2013) analysis of grammatical evidentials in Cuzco Quechua which display similar behaviour, but with different semantic and pragmatic properties. There has been much recent activity in the formal approaches to grammatical evidentials. However, less attention has been given to how different grammatical evidentials in the same language interact with one another in certain kinds of contexts.