

## **Cross-linguistic semantics: The view from research on presuppositions and other projective contents**

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Uttering a sentence like “I sharpened my chain saw last night” typically commits the speaker to i) the proposition that they have a chain saw, and ii) the proposition that they did sharpen said saw last night. Somewhat curiously, if a negated variant of that sentence is uttered, such as “I didn’t sharpen my chain saw last night”, the speaker is still committed to i) the proposition that they have a chain saw, but not to ii) the proposition that they sharpened said saw last night. Semanticists say proposition i) “projects”, since it survives as a commitment of the speaker when the sentence is negated, but proposition ii) does not. To date, formal semantic/pragmatic theories of projective contents, which include presuppositions like that triggered by the possessive noun phrase “my chain saw”, but also e.g. Potts’ (2005) conventional implicatures, are mainly based on English data gathered by native speaker semanticists through introspection, the primary empirical method for data collection in formal semantic/pragmatic research. However, such theories leave largely unaddressed questions about cross-linguistic and language-internal variation among projective contents and their triggers. In this talk, I illustrate how nonintrospective methods can complement introspection in formal semantic/pragmatic research. Drawing primarily on my fieldwork-based research with linguistically untrained native speakers of Paraguayan Guarani, but also on experimental research and corpus studies, I show how data obtained through such methods can be used to explore questions about cross-linguistic and language-internal variation in the domain of projective contents.