

Suspending Factivity: *regret* and *realize* in false-belief contexts (Part II)

Ziling Zhu (Georg-August Universität Göttingen)

Abstract: Verbs of emotion (e.g., *regret*) and discovery (e.g., *realize*) presuppose factivity, but they can felicitously follow false-belief statements that suspend their factivity (Klein, 1975; Gazdar, 1979), in contrast to *know*, as shown in (1).

- (1) a. John falsely believes that Mary got married, and he **regrets/#knows** that she is no longer single.
b. Falsely believing that he killed someone, John **realized/#knew** that he was a murderer.

This puzzle is explained by a *know*-based account, which posits that *regret* and *realize* are lexically encoded with a factive *know* relation. This relation is asserted as a conditional antecedent in the semantics of *regret* and being denied in that of *realize*. In simple-contradiction contexts, accommodating the factivity of *know* locally results in presupposition failure or pragmatic deviance; however, in false-belief contexts, such local accommodation may succeed due to modal subordination (à la Roberts 1989).

References

- Gazdar, Gerald. 1979. *Pragmatics: implicature, presupposition and logical form*. New York: Academic Press.
- Klein, Ewan. 1975. Two sorts of factive predicate. *Pragmatics microfiche* 1(1). B5–C14.