

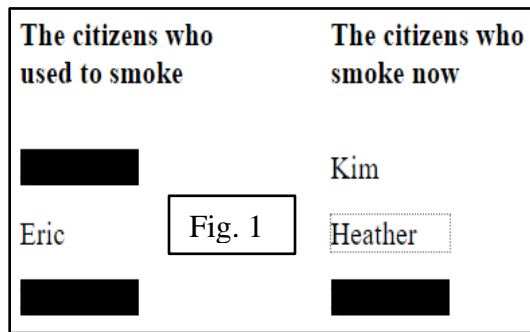
Local Accommodation Continues to be Backgrounded

Presuppositions may fail to project, as in (1) below. To derive such local interpretations, standard semantic local accommodation accounts posit an operation in embedding environments that turns content lexically marked as presupposed into non-backgrounded content and conjoins it with the clause's entailed content (Heim, 1983). Such accounts predict that locally accommodated presuppositions (LocAcc) differ from globally projecting ones (GlobAcc) in lacking the presuppositional property of backgroundedness. (A prominent class of recent pragmatic accounts arrives at a parallel prediction via their central claim that all and only backgrounded material projects (Simons et al, 2010; Tonhauser et al, 2018)). However, an experimental study by Siegel and Schwarz (2023) finds LocAcc to be backgrounded: using a picture-matching task in which reduced cognitive salience serves as proxy for presuppositional backgroundedness (Schwarz, 2016), they find evidence for backgrounding of the presupposition of the additive particle *also* in the scope of *if*. The present study extends this approach both empirically and methodologically by testing, in questions, a trigger of a different type, the change-of-state verb *continue*. In order to meet the challenges of testing embedded material not easily pictured, we introduce a novel methodology. Participants are given a task where they must reveal concealed information in order to answer questions or verify statements. The reduced cognitive salience associated with backgrounded material is reflected in what aspects of the interpretation participants attend to in choosing what information to reveal. We compared the hypothesized backgroundedness of LocAcc *continue* to non-presuppositional controls (see details below). Standard LocAcc accounts predict equivalence among these, given their view of LocAcc as non-backgrounded information. But our results indicate that locally interpreted content contributed by *continue* reflects greater backgroundedness than the controls, parallel to Siegel and Schwarz's findings for *also*. A similar pattern holds for global accommodation conditions, supporting parallel backgroundedness across accommodation and trigger types.

Design. We measure the relative attention paid to identical information in 3 conditions, presented by *continue* via LocAcc (1a), by the explicit, non-backgrounded conjunction paraphrases representing their meaning posited by semantic accounts (Heim, 1983) (b), and by a non-presuppositional elision as a further control more closely matching LocAcc surface forms (c). 6 item variants in both LocAcc and parallel GlobAcc examples (2) were shown (both factors between subjects).

- (1) (a) I'm looking into Rob's health habits, and I have no idea whether he used to smoke. **Is it the case that he continues to smoke now?** [CONT condition]
(b) I'm looking into Rob's health habits, and I have no idea whether he used to smoke. **Is it the case that he used to smoke, and he smokes now?** [CONJ condition]
(c) I'm looking into Rob's health habits, and I have no idea whether he used to smoke. **Is it the case that he did, and he smokes now?** [DOES condition]
- (2) I'm looking into Rob's health habits. I called to find out whether he used to smoke, and **it turns out that he continues to smoke now [CONT] / that he used to smoke, and he smokes now [CONJ] / that he did, and he smokes now [DOES].**

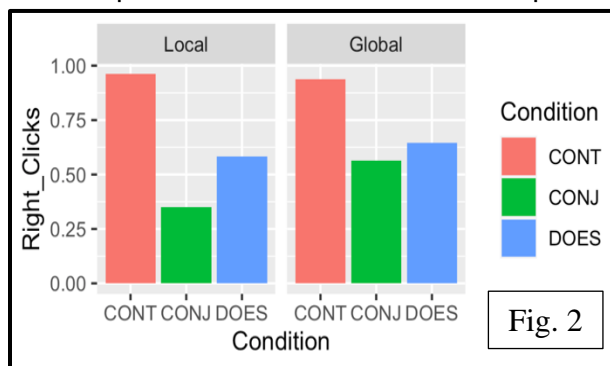
In the critical LocAcc CONT condition (1a), the trigger *continue* conveys presuppositionally that Rob used to smoke, but projection is blocked by the explicit ignorance context in the first clause (Simons, 2001; Abusch, 2010). Control conditions (1b) and (1c) introduce 'Rob used to smoke' as non-presuppositional content: (1b) is the semantic account's conjunctive paraphrase of the local interpretation, differing from (1a) in explicitly mentioning Rob's having previously smoked. (1c) conveys 'Rob used to smoke' implicitly but non-presuppositionally, using ellipsis.



Task. Participants are told that they will be helping town officials check on outside investigators by trying to answer the investigators' questions highlighted in (1) or verify their claims (2). To do this, participants must seek information about Rob (and other citizens) by clicking to uncover up to three of the black boxes in either of two lists of names we provide. Lists are labelled with the presupposed content of *continue* on the left and its entailed content on the right, as in Fig. 1, in which 3 boxes have been clicked to reveal names. If the information that Rob used to smoke is

less salient in (1a), where it is introduced presuppositionally through LocAcc, than in (1b), where it is introduced as an explicit conjunct, we expect more frequent clicks on the righthand column when participants attempt to answer the question in (1a) than when they answer (1b). (1c), in which 'Rob used to smoke' is neither presuppositional nor explicit, controls for potential impact of explicitness independent of backgroundedness. Higher right-click rates for (1a) than for (1c) are thus attributable to *continue's* presuppositional nature, beyond the implicitness also at play in (1c). GlobAcc (2), where backgroundedness is expected across theories, provides a baseline.

Procedure. 155 participants from our university's subject pool participated online via the PCibex platform for course credit. Each participant saw 6 critical items representing the 6 item variants, all in a single condition (CONT, CONJ, or DOES) and 21 fillers, in a randomized order.



Results. Participants failing to give the expected answer for 5 of 6 selected fillers were excluded from data analysis, leaving 134 participants. The number of right clicks exhibited the pattern in Fig. 2, with the presuppositional CONT yielding the highest, the explicit conjunctive paraphrase CONJ the lowest, and the elliptical DOES in between. In a mixed effect model analysis, the CONT condition differed significantly from the two non-presuppositional ones, and patterns were similar for LocAcc and GlobAcc in this respect.

Discussion. Using a novel methodology measuring salience during an information-seeking task, we find that the presupposition of *continue* is less salient than its non-presuppositional, lexically equivalent counterparts. In the context of previous findings for *also*, this indicates that the relevant content introduced by presupposition triggers, whether change of state or additive, is lexically encoded as backgrounded, even when interpreted locally, a finding inconsistent with the strongest versions of pragmatic theories. This is of substantial theoretical importance, severing backgrounding from (non-)projection in a way not captured by any existing accounts. Semantic LocAcc accounts a la Heim might be amended accordingly, e.g., by modeling all accommodation as adding information to the relevant context, global or local, in some way that retains its backgrounded discourse status. Other theoretical perspectives will need to explore alternatives to incorporate the implications of this data as well.

References. Abusch, D. 2010. Presupposition triggering from alternatives. *JoS* 27(1)37-80.
 Heim, I.1983. On the projection problem for presuppositions. *Proc. WCCFL* 2, 114–125. Stanford.
 Schwarz, F. 2016. False but slow. *JoS* 33(1). 177-214.
 Siegel, M.and F. Schwarz. 2023. Local Accommodation is Also Backgrounded. *Proc. SuB* 27, 609-624.
 Simons, M. 2001. On the Conversational Basis of Some Presuppositions. *Proc. SALT* 11, 431– 448.
 Simons, M.,et al. 2010. What projects and why? *Proc. SALT* 20, 309-327.
 Tonhauser, J.,et al. 2018. How Projective is Projective Content? *JoS* 35(3),495-542.