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1. Introduction

This paper argues that languages differ in whether they possess pragmatic presuppositions in the sense of Stalnaker (1974). I will argue for this somewhat radical claim on the basis of data from St'át'imcets (a.k.a. Lillooet, Northern Interior Salish). I will show that St'át'imcets displays no evidence for presuppositions which place constraints on the common ground of the discourse. I will present an analysis according to which St'át'imcets possesses presuppositions only in the sense of Gauker (1998).

1.1 The Problem

What happens when there is presupposition failure? In English, presupposition failures in discourse are often challenged by the addressee. An example of this taken from a real-life discourse is given in (1). Presupposition triggers are highlighted throughout.

- (1) A: Mark phoned **again.**
 - B: Mark? Which Mark?
 - A: Portland Mark.
 - B: Again? I didn't know he phoned in the first place!

The first main goal of this paper is to demonstrate that unlike speakers of English, speakers of St'át'imcets consistently do <u>not</u> react to presupposition failures. A typical example is given in (2). At the time of A's utterance, B had just walked into A's house and there had been no prior conversation apart from greetings. In spite of this, B did not

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challenge A's use of hu7 'more'.1

(2) A: wá7-lhkacw ha xát'-min' ku **hu7** ku tih IMPF-2SG.SUBJ YNQ want-APPL DET **more** DET tea 'Would you like some more tea?'

B: iy 'Yes.'

The second goal of the paper is to present an account of this cross-linguistic variation. The idea involves a fairly radical cross-linguistic difference: I claim that in St'át'imcets, typical presupposition triggers do not place the same restrictions on the common ground as they do in English. In particular, the St'át'imcets presupposition triggers do not involve pragmatic presuppositions in the sense of Stalnaker (1974). Unlike in English, in St'át'imcets a speaker who presupposes something does not necessarily assume anything about the addressee's beliefs.

The paper is structured as follows. In §2 I present some background on presuppositions and on fieldwork methodology. In §3 I provide some English data, and §4 the St'át'imcets data. §5 addresses a potential wrong analysis, and §6 presents the current analysis. The final section briefly addresses the theoretical implications.

2. Background on Presupposition

One of the most influential theories of presupposition is that of Stalnaker (1973, 1974, 1978). The idea is summarized as follows:

A proposition P is a pragmatic presupposition of a speaker in a given context just in case the speaker assumes or believes that P, assumes or believes that his addressee assumes or believes that P, and assumes or believes that his addressee recognizes that he is making these assumptions, or has these beliefs (Stalnaker 1974:573).

In other words, a speaker presupposes P just in case s/he believes that P is in the common ground (the set of propositions representing the shared assumptions of the discourse participants). This has been termed the <u>pragmatic presupposition</u> approach; it places a constraint on possible discourse contexts in which sentences may be felicitously uttered.

2.1 How to Test for Presuppositions

How does one go about detecting presuppositions, or distinguishing them from assertions, in a language for which one does not have native speaker intuitions? To rule

¹ Data are presented in the practical orthography created by Jan van Eijk. APPL = applicative, CAU = causative, CONJ = conjunctive, DEIC = deictic, DET = determiner, DIR = directive transitivizer, FUT = future, HYP = hypothetical, INTR = intransitive, NEG = negative, NOM = nominalizer, OB = object, OOC = out of control, POSS = possessive, SG = singular, SUBJ = subject, YNQ = yes-no question.

out one potential method right away, observe that it would be illegitimate to ask consultants whether a sentence Q takes a proposition P 'for granted'. Such questions in effect ask the consultant to perform analysis. It would be even worse to fall back on the theoretical claim that failed presuppositions give rise to truth-value gaps, and to ask consultants for judgments about those. As discussed by von Fintel (2001; see also references therein), speakers do not have stable intuitions about truth-value gaps.

Luckily, there is hope. The pragmatic presupposition approach predicts that if a presupposition P is not in the common ground at the time of utterance (and if P cannot easily be accommodated), the addressee may feel justified in challenging the speaker. This can be diagnosed by the 'Hey, wait a minute' test (von Fintel 2001:171; henceforth the 'wait-a-minute test'). The test works as follows. A presupposition which is not in the common ground at the time of utterance can be challenged by 'Hey, wait a minute!' In contrast, an <u>assertion</u> which is not in the common ground can<u>not</u> be challenged in this way. This is illustrated in (3), from von Fintel (2001:271). The relevant presupposition here is the existence presupposition of *the*.

- (3) A: **The** mathematician who proved Goldbach's Conjecture is a woman.
 - B: Hey, wait a minute. I had no idea that someone proved Goldbach's Conjecture.
 - B': # Hey, wait a minute. I had no idea that that was a woman.

Another well-known property of presuppositions, which might potentially offer a methodology for detecting them, is that they project through certain operators (see e.g., Soames 1982, Heim 1983, 1992). Projection is illustrated in (4). (4a-d) all contain a presupposition trigger embedded under an operator. Each matrix sentence still carries the relevant presupposition. Presuppositions crucially differ from assertions in this respect.

- (4) a. Ann hasn't stopped smoking. NEGATION
 - b. Has Ann stopped smoking? YES-NO QUESTION
 - c. If Ann has stopped smoking, I'll be happy. ANTECEDENT OF CONDITIONAL
 - d. I hope that Ann has stopped smoking. ATTITUDE VERB

However, the projection property does not in itself provide us with a way to test for presuppositions. Imagine that we are trying to determine in a language L whether the element which translates 'stop' has the same presupposition as the English item. We have already rejected the method of asking consultants whether (5a) takes (5b) for granted:

- (5) a. Ann has stopped smoking.
 - b. Ann used to smoke.

Can the projection facts in (4) help us out? Unfortunately not. The fact that (4a-d) are predicted all to presuppose that Ann used to smoke does not give us any way of

² See Matthewson 2004 for the claim that there are only three legitimate kinds of native-speaker judgments: grammaticality, and truth or felicity in particular discourse contexts.

determining whether (5a) presupposes (5b), beyond asking whether (4a-d) take (5b) for granted. This is the same illegitimate fieldwork technique we rejected for (5a).

In contrast, the wait-a-minute test, at least in theory, provides us with an easy and reliable way to test for presuppositions. If a wait-a-minute response is appropriate in cases of presupposition failure, we can assume that the relevant triggers place restrictions on the common ground of the discourse.

3. Testing for Presuppositions in English

As predicted, the wait-a-minute test can indeed be used as a fieldwork tool for detecting presuppositions. For example, Conti (1999) tested a number of English speakers in real-life discourse contexts. Conti intentionally used sentences containing *the* in contexts where its presuppositions were not satisfied. She obtained many wait-a-minute-style responses. Similarly, Matthewson et al. (2001) tested 25 adult English speakers on cases of presupposition failure with *the*. They obtained 'challenge responses' 62% of the time. Finally, recall that it is easy to hear wait-a-minute responses in naturally-occurring English discourse; see (1) above. (6) provides another example. Here, the issue is the failed uniqueness presupposition of *the*. (Speaker B happened to be three years old.)

(6) A: And then **the** flat car said to the little red caboose ...

B: WHICH flat car?

A: This one.

B: Why not THIS one? (points to second flat car in picture)

I conclude from this that the wait-a-minute test is a reliable method for detecting presupposition failure (and hence, the presence of presuppositions). Now let us turn to St'át'imcets.

4. Testing for presuppositions in St'át'imcets

The situation in St'át'imcets is very different from in English. For this study, the following potential presupposition triggers were tested:

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(7) múta7 'again / more'

tsukw 'stop'

hu7 'more'

t'it 'also'
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A battery of methodologies was utilized to attempt to elicit wait-a-minute responses. (8i) is obviously the most desirable methodology, but is the trickiest to put into practice (given the limited frequency and extent of naturally-occurring St'át'imcets discourses). (8iv) is a last-resort methodology used by a desperate fieldworker.

- (8) i. Intentionally causing presupposition failure in real-life discourse situations
 - ii. Asking consultants to translate English discourses containing wait-a-

- minute responses
- iii. Attempting to construct wait-a-minute responses in St'át'imcets and asking consultants to judge discourses containing them
- iv. Explicitly discussing the test, using English to illustrate, and asking for similar responses in St'át'imcets

We will see that none of these methodologies managed to elicit wait-a-minute responses. Before presenting the data, though, there are some other methodological considerations to discuss.

When constructing the particular presupposition failures to be tested, one must not make the presuppositions too uncontroversial. A very uncontroversial presupposition will be too easy for the consultants to accommodate. If they accommodate the presupposition, then obviously they will not respond with 'wait a minute'. It is also advisable to construct sentences whose presuppositions relate to the addressee. For example, saying 'Have you stopped smoking?' to someone who has never smoked is more likely to elicit a challenge than 'I have stopped smoking.' (The addressee will probably not be willing to accommodate the presupposition that they themselves used to smoke.) Furthermore, the presupposition should ideally concern something of importance to the addressee (such as a missed phone call, as in (1) above).

Finally, it should be observed that the wait-a-minute test depends not only on details of the particular discourse context, but also on subtle matters such as the closeness of the relationship between speaker and addressee.³ For example, if A mentions to B, a relative stranger, that she is on her way to meet her fiancé, B will seamlessly accommodate the presupposition that A is engaged. On the other hand, if A utters the same sentence to her mother, she will likely receive a wait-a-minute response if the mother was previously unaware that A is engaged.

For the current research, I was unable to test discourses within a range of different social relationships. My relationship with the consultants from whom data were obtained is a friendly one, and I have known each of the consultants for between 12 and 14 years.

4.1 St'át'imcets data

The following sentences were all offered in 'out of the blue' contexts to St'át'imcets speakers. In all cases, the presuppositions failed and were not easily accommodatable. The B utterances in each case are the consultants' spontaneous responses to A.

(9) Context: Interlocutors all know that Henry is not a millionaire.

A: t'cum **múta7** k Henry l-ta lottery-ha win(INTR) **again** DET Henry in-DET lottery-DET 'Henry won the lottery again.'

³ Thanks to Irene Heim (p.c.) for discussion of this point and for the following example.

B: o, áma oh good

(10) Context: Addressee has been a teetotaler for several decades.

A: xat'-min'-lhkácw ha ku **hu7** ku qvl s-7úqwa7 want-APPL-2SG.SUBJ YNQ DET **more** DET bad NOM-drink 'Do you want some more alcohol?'

B: káti7. qyáx-kan kélh t'u7
DEIC drunk-1SG.SUBJ FUT just
'No way. I'll get drunk.' (laughs)

(11) Context: Addressee has no knowledge of anyone planning a trip to Paris.

A: nas **t'it** áku7 Paris-a kw s-Haleni lh-klísmes-as go **also** DEIC Paris-DET DET NOM-Henry HYP-Christmas-3CONJ 'Henry is also going to Paris at Christmas.'

B: o áma oh good

(12) Context: No prior discussion of anyone being in jail.

A: wá7 **t'it** l-ti gélgel-a tsitcw k Lisa be **also** in-DET strong-DET house DET Lisa 'Lisa is also in jail.'

B: stam' ku s-záyten-s what DET NOM-business-3POSS 'What did she do?'

(9-12) display the absence of wait-a-minute responses to failed presuppositions. Nor did any of the other elicitation methodologies in (8) above reveal any distinction between unknown presuppositions and unknown asserted material. When consultants are explicitly encouraged to express a response to failed presuppositions, they will do so by either denying or questioning the attempted presupposition. Importantly, however, they will use exactly the same constructions to challenge unknown or disagreed-with assertions. This is shown in (13). The B and C responses challenge the presupposition (with denial and questioning respectively), but the B' and C' responses challenge the asserted material in an exactly parallel manner.

(13) A: plan **tsukw** k-wa-s mán'c-em kw s-Bob already **stop** DET-IMPF-3POSS smoke-INTR DET NOM-Bob 'Bob stopped smoking.'

B: t'u7 kw-en-s-wá zwát-en kw s-tu7 aoz iust DET-1SG.POSS-NOM-IMPF know-dir NOM-then **NEG** DET mán'c-em s-Bob smoke-INTR NOM-Bob 'I didn't know Bob smoked.'

B': aoz t'u7 kw-en-s-wá zwát-en kw s-tsukw-s NEG just DET-1SG.POSS-NOM-IMPF know-DIR DET NOM-stop-3POSS 'I didn't know he stopped.'

C: wa7 ha tu7 mán'c-em kw s-Bob IMPF YNQ then smoke-INTR DET NOM-Bob 'Did Bob used to smoke?'

C': tsukw ha tu7 stop YNQ then 'Did he stop?'

5. A Wrong Analysis: Culture

It is natural to ask whether the apparent total absence of wait-a-minute responses in St'át'imcets could be the result of a cultural difference between English speakers and St'át'imcets speakers. Perhaps it is considered impolite in St'át'imc culture to explicitly challenge infelicitous utterances. This analysis does have some intuitive plausibility. However, I am convinced that that is not what is going on. Instead, the absence of wait-a-minute responses results from a linguistic difference between English and St'át'imcets, along the lines that will be outlined in the following section.

There are two pieces of potential evidence <u>for</u> a culture-based analysis. First, it is true that the St'át'imc place a very high value on listening, rather than on questioning and challenging. For example, if an elder explains something that one does not understand, one is not supposed to ask for further explanation. One is supposed to figure it out for oneself, and to continue listening (Maggie Adolph, p.c.; Albert Joseph, p.c.).

However, there is no converse prohibition against elders challenging younger people. Thus, while it may be inappropriate for me to question my St'át'imcets consultants, it would not be inappropriate for them to challenge me. Indeed, it is almost their duty to challenge younger people and to teach them what is right. Note also that with respect to data gathered within an elicitation context, the consultants are all very familiar with the idea that they can, and should, correct the linguists' errors.

The other potential piece of evidence for a cultural explanation comes from some very preliminary data suggesting that at least one consultant also does not give wait-aminute responses in English conversations. However, this speaker did not learn English until she was 13 years old, so it is difficult to interpret the data conclusively. It could be that her pragmatic parameters were set before she acquired English, and that her

St'át'imcets grammar has affected her English. Further research is required here.

The major argument that culture is <u>not</u> the source of the observed cross-linguistic difference is that St'át'imcets speakers <u>do</u> readily challenge other kinds of infelicitous utterances. For example, discourse-initial utterances with unclear pronoun reference elicit laughter and/or challenge responses. An example of this is given in (14).

(14) # ti nk'yáp-a áts'x-en-as

DET coyote-DET see-DIR-3ERG

'The coyote saw him/her/it.' Consultant's comment: "Who? Incomplete."

Similarly, contradictory utterances easily elicit challenges, as illustrated in (15).

(15) # xwem t'u7 k tsukw kw s-wa7 q'a7, t'u7 cw7aoz kw s-tsúkw-al'ts fast just DET finish DET NOM-IMPFeat but NEG DET NOM-finish-food 'He finished eating fast, but he didn't finish eating.'

Consultant's comment (laughs): "It doesn't make much sense. Sounds impossible. Like I'm contradicting myself."

- (16) is particularly telling. It was an attempt to elicit a wait-a-minute response based on the failed presupposition associated with *t'it* 'also'. While the consultant did not challenge the presupposition, she did challenge the unclear DP-reference:⁴
- (16) A: wá7 **t'it** ta n-snúk'w7-a l-ta qwenúcw-alhcw-a be **also** DET 1SG.POSS-friend-DET in-DET sick-place-DET 'My friend is also in the hospital.'
 - B: swat ku snúk'wa7-su who DET friend-2SG.POSS 'Who is your friend?'

The data in (14-16) show that St'át'imcets speakers are willing and able to challenge infelicitous utterances of various kinds. I conclude from this that their failure to offer wait-a-minute challenges to failed presuppositions does not result from a cultural prohibition against challenges in general. It must be something linguistic.

6. Analysis

The analysis I propose postulates a cross-linguistic difference in the nature of presuppositions. If the analysis strikes the reader as radical, bear in mind that the presupposition-response data vary radically between St'át'imcets and English. The

⁴ B's utterance here is <u>not</u> a wait-a-minute response to a failed familiarity presupposition induced by a definite noun phrase. I have argued elsewhere (Matthewson 1998) that St'át'imcets possesses no determiners which induce familiarity presuppositions.

analysis therefore should make the languages look different in some significant way.

I propose that we adopt Gauker's (1998) analysis of presuppositions for St'át'imcets. Gauker claims that presuppositions are <u>not</u> required to be in the common ground (as in Stalnaker's theory). Instead, Gauker appeals to the concept of the 'objective propositional context'. The objective propositional context contains propositions that are not shared assumptions but 'facts that are particularly relevant to the conversational aims of the interlocutors, whether they are aware of these facts or not' (Gauker 1998:150).

According to Gauker (1998:162), 'the speaker's presuppositions are merely the speaker's own *take* on the propositional context.' As such, the speaker's presuppositions may be informative to the hearer (as in cases of what in the Stalnaker framework are analyzed as accommodation). There is crucially no expectation or requirement that the speaker's presuppositions belong to the hearer's set of assumptions. If the speaker's utterance carries a presupposition P that the hearer did not previously believe to be true, then 'the hearer may accept that something the speaker evidently takes to belong to the objective propositional context really does belong to it' (Gauker 1998:168).

Under Gauker's proposal, then, presuppositions are more similar to assertions in their discourse effects than they are under a Stalnakerian analysis. While presuppositions under both analyses differ from assertions in not being directly asserted (but 'snuck in', so to speak), under a Gaukerian analysis the hearer has no grounds to offer wait-a-minute responses. This is because although the hearer is certainly entitled to disagree with a speaker's presupposition, the hearer is <u>not</u> entitled to object that s/he was presumed to believe the presupposition beforehand. And it is the presumption of hearer knowledge which gives rise to the wait-a-minute effect.

This in turn means that Gauker's analysis predicts a general absence of wait-aminute responses. Of course, this is exactly what we find in St'át'imcets.

What about English? It has been pointed out by von Fintel (2000) that Gauker's analysis has empirical problems for English. Specifically, it over-generates felicitous discourses. Von Fintel observes (2000:14-15) that Gauker incorrectly predicts (17) to be acceptable in an out-of-the-blue context:

(17) John can't come to the meeting tonight. He is having dinner in New York, too.

What is critical about (17) is that within a Stalnakerian theory, accommodation is predicted to be difficult here. *too* triggers a presupposition that a salient person other than John is having dinner in New York tonight. However, the hearer will only be able to accommodate an unspecific proposition that *someone* other than John is having dinner in New York tonight. That unspecific proposition is obviously true, but is not enough to make (17) appropriate out-of-the-blue; *too* requires the more specific presupposition (von Fintel 2000:15; see also Kripke 1990).

For Gauker, on the other hand, (17) is predicted to be good. The hearer infers that

the speaker's take on the propositional context contains a proposition of the form $x \neq John$ is having dinner in New York tonight. The hearer is not expected to know the entire propositional context, so no infelicity is predicted (von Fintel 2000:15).

Strikingly, even sentences containing the equivalent of 'too' do not elicit wait-aminute responses in St'át'imcets. We have seen examples already above in (11,12,16). In this respect, St'át'imcets obeys Gauker's predictions, rather than Stalnaker's. I therefore claim that von Fintel's analysis (a Stalnakerian one) is correct for English, while Gauker's analysis is right for St'át'imcets.

To summarize: in St'át'imcets, an addressee may fail to assume a presupposition in context. The addressee is free to point that out in conversation (see (13) above). Crucially, however, the addressee is predicted <u>not</u> to be able to object that s/he has been assumed to believe the presupposition.

6.1 So What Do They Mean, Then?

The reader may be wondering what the St'át'imcets elements being examined here could possibly mean. Surely a presupposition is part of the basic meaning of a word like 'again'? How can I even claim that *múta7* means 'again' if it is non-presuppositional?

My answer to this is that I am <u>not</u> claiming that *múta7* is non-presuppositional. I am only claiming that its presupposition does not impose the same constraints on the common ground as *again* does. In all other respects, the St'át'imcets elements parallel the English ones. Crucially, for example, their presuppositions project; thus, it is <u>not</u> that the elements of meaning which in English are presuppositions, are part of the assertion in St'át'imcets. This is illustrated in (18). The consultant gave no wait-a-minute response here, but when asked for a judgment in a context where the hearer has not yet eaten any salmon, she replied that one should not say (18) then. (18) therefore does not mean 'if it is the case that you have eaten salmon recently and you want some more, take some'.

(18) lh-xát'-min'-acw múta7 ku ts'wan, kwan láta7 HYP-want-APPL-2SG.CONJ more DET wind.dried.salmon take(DIR) DEIC 'If you want some more wind-dried salmon, take some.'

6.2 A Prediction

So far, we have seen that Gauker's (1998) analysis predicts a general absence of wait-aminute responses. This prediction is incorrect for English, but correct for St'át'imcets. Interestingly, however, Gauker does seem to predict a challenge response in one type of case: where the speaker presupposes something so unusual that the hearer cannot believe that the speaker could believe that proposition to be in the objective propositional context. In that case, we predict – even in St'át'imcets – a wait-a-minute response.

A clarification is in order here. Recall that the important feature of the wait-aminute test is its ability to distinguish between presuppositions and assertions; unknown

presuppositions do, and unknown assertions do not, give rise to wait-a-minute responses. I have just suggested that the use of bizarre presuppositions should elicit wait-a-minute responses even in St'át'imcets. But very bizarre propositions can elicit challenges even when they are part of the assertion. So we must beware of losing the critical contrast between presuppositions and assertions when applying the test.

Although the distinction will by necessity be more subtle than it is in English, I think we can still expect to distinguish presuppositions from assertions using this method. Recall that while presuppositions and assertions have a more similar discourse status under Gauker's theory than under Stalnaker's, they still differ in that the presuppositions are 'snuck in'. The speaker who uses an informative presupposition does not outright assert the proposition, but merely makes clear that s/he takes the proposition for granted. We should therefore expect responses with a greater level of surprise when the bizarre proposition is a presupposition, as opposed to an assertion.

The prediction that challenge responses will emerge with bizarre presuppositions is upheld. There is an element *nukw* in St'át'imcets which I analyze as introducing a presupposition of non-maximality (Matthewson 2005). An example is given in (19).

(19) cúy'-lhkan nas-ts i **núkw**-a sk'wemk'úk'wmi7t áts'x-en-tsin going.to-1SG.SUB go-CAU DET.PL **nukw**-DET children see-DIR-2SG.OB 'I am going to bring some of the children to see you.' (cannot be all the children)

Although *nukw* is presuppositional, it does not carry a familiarity presupposition. *nukw* can be used in the first sentence of a story; it does not require hearer-familiarity with a previously-mentioned individual fitting the description. See Matthewson (2005) for details of the analysis and supporting data.

Now let us test the above-mentioned prediction of Gauker's analysis using *nukw*. Although *nukw* will not usually give rise to wait-a-minute responses (even if the hearer is unaware of the non-maximality of the referent), such responses <u>should</u> emerge if the non-maximality presupposition is odd enough that the addressee cannot believe that the speaker believes that proposition to be part of the propositional context. Here is a case:

- (20) A: ka-lhéxw-a aylh ta **núkw**-a snéqwem OOC-appear-OOC then DET **nukw**-DET sun 'Another sun appeared.'
 - B: NUKWA?! [laughs] Yikes! [laughs a lot] On another planet maybe! [laughs a lot].

The use of *nukw* in (20) indicates that A's take on the propositional context includes the proposition *There are at least two suns*. B finds this idea humorous.

(20) is important for another reason: it shows that St'át'imcets speakers are not unable or unwilling to express surprise and hilarity at strange presuppositions. This

reinforces the claim made in section 5 that the general absence of wait-a-minute responses in the St'át'imcets data is not due to a cultural effect.

The line being advanced here makes a further prediction, alluded to above. If (20B) is really a wait-a-minute response to a bizarre presupposition, then the <u>assertion</u> that there are two suns should not give rise to quite the same response. While data collection on this point is unfortunately not complete at the stage of writing, there are some hints that the prediction is upheld. One speaker assigns the two sentences in (21) different grammaticality statuses; she states that (21a) is a good sentence, but is not true, while (21b) is 'not a very good sentence'.

- (21) a. wá7 i án'was-a snéqwem be DET.PL two-DET sun 'There are two suns.'
 - b. ?? ka-cál'h-a ti **núkw**-a snéqwem OOC-appear- OOC DET **nukw**-DET sun 'Another sun appeared.'

Consultant's comment: "But there's only one. Sounds like there's more."

7. Implications

I have argued in this paper that typical presupposition triggers like 'also', 'more' and 'stop' fail to induce pragmatic presuppositions in St'át'imcets. In this section I briefly investigate the consequences of this claim for parametric theory and for learnability.

Previous research on St'át'imcets had already established some differences between St'át'imcets and English with respect to presuppositions. Matthewson (1998) showed that determiners in St'át'imcets all lack presuppositions of familiarity or uniqueness. The absence of definite determiners was derived there from a semantic parameter regulating determiner denotations. Davis et al. (2004) then showed that St'át'imcets clefts also do not presuppose either familiarity nor uniqueness. Davis et al. derived the properties of clefts from the independently-motivated determiner semantics; under an analysis as in Percus (1997) or Hedburg (2000), English clefts are disguised definite descriptions containing the determiner *the*. Assigning St'át'imcets clefts a similar syntax automatically predicts that definite presuppositions will be absent from them.

These previous analyses linked the absence of presuppositions to a set of functional elements – Ds – and as such were micro-parametric in nature. The current results, however, begin to make the lack of presuppositions look much more general. The question now is whether we should postulate a language-wide macro-parameter, such that St'át'imcets lacks pragmatic presuppositions, while English possesses them.

Empirically, I can at least tentatively conclude that the facts support a macroparameter. Recall that the only element which displays a wait-a-minute effect is *nukw*. I

claimed above that *nukw* elicits a wait-a-minute effect only when the presupposition is so bizarre that the hearer cannot countenance the speaker's believing it to be in the objective propositional context. Thus, *nukw* is analyzable as Gauker-style presupposition trigger.^{5,6}

There is of course a question about whether a macro-parameter banning pragmatic presuppositions is conceptually desirable, and whether it gives rise to learnability problems. I have no definitive answer to this (and have myself in the past argued against such macro-parameters; see Matthewson 2003). However, such a parameter does not seem impossible to me. It sets up a subset relationship between languages, as good parameters should. The learner will begin by assuming that the language lacks pragmatic presuppositions (i.e., that s/he is learning St'át'imcets). Only after observing evidence for pragmatic presuppositions in English will the learner switch their parameter setting.

This scenario predicts that children will initially have problems with overgeneration of definites in English, at the stage where they have not yet learned that *the* induces a pragmatic familiarity presupposition. In fact, there is a large literature documenting exactly this phenomenon (Maratsos 1974, among many others). There is also evidence from other areas of the grammar that children acquire presuppositional phenomena relatively late. Schulz (2000) finds that English-speaking children do not challenge presuppositions with factive verbs until the age of 7. In a similar vein, Bergsma (2000) observes that Dutch-speaking children tend to ignore the contribution of *ook* 'also' up to age six (see Hollebrandse 2002).

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⁵ Failed presuppositions with *nukw*, even non-accommodatable ones, do not usually give rise to wait-a-minute responses. Space constraints prevent me from including the relevant data here.

⁶ Future research involves the elements *i7wa7* 'even' and *tsukw t'u7* 'only'. It is also often assumed that pronominal features are presuppositional (e.g., Heim and Kratzer 1998). However, see Kratzer (2005) for a different proposal.

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