

The Bulgarian Reportative as a Conventional Implicature

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In this work I propose a new way of looking at the Bulgarian reportative. The reportative in Bulgarian conveys the information that the speaker's knowledge is indirect, and therefore he does not wish to commit to it. So far Bulgarian evidentials in general, and the reportative in particular, have been assumed to involve a presupposition and perhaps a modal operator. In particular, the information that the speaker's knowledge is indirect was assumed to be a presupposition. However, this kind of analysis runs into problems, mainly because the Bulgarian reportative does not behave like a presupposition. Presuppositions can be plugged, but the Bulgarian reportative cannot be plugged. In fact, it turns out that the Bulgarian reportative fits Potts 2005 definition of Conventional Implicatures: it cannot be plugged and is always speaker oriented (even under embedding). In this work I present data collected from four native Bulgarian speakers (as well as my own intuitions), involving the reportative in both main and embedded verbs, and discuss this data with respect to the analysis of the reportative as a CI.

The two examples below (based on my own judgments) show that the reportative must be speaker oriented.

- (1) *Maria mi kaza che Ivan celunal Ana. Tja go vidjala.*
Maria me tell-aorist-3sg that Ivan kiss-REP-3sg Ana. She him see-REP-3sg.
'Maria told me that Ivan apparently kissed Ana. She apparently saw him'
- (2) *Maria mi kaza che Ivan celunal Ana. #Az go vidjax.*
Maria me tell-aorist-3sg that Ivan kiss-REP-3sg Ana. I him see-aorist-1sg.
'Maria told me that Ivan apparently kissed Ana. I saw him'

The examples below were presented to four native speakers under four different scenarios, each involving different knowledge state. Although some variance was present, in general a reportative marking on the matrix verb was only accepted when the speaker did not have direct knowledge of the event. The reportative was occasionally accepted even in the presence of direct knowledge when the verb was embedded, however this can be explained by the speaker choosing to relate to the indirect knowledge source rather than the direct knowledge he has.

- (3) *Marina kaza na Peter che Ivan celuna Ana.*
Marina tell-aorist-3sg to Peter that Ivan kiss-aorist-3sg Ana.
'Marina told Peter that Ivan kissed Ana.'
- (4) *Marina kaza na Peter che Ivan celunal Ana.*
Marina tell-aorist-3sg to Peter that Ivan kiss-REP-3sg Ana.
'Marina told Peter that Ivan apparently kissed Ana.'

- (5) *Marina kazala na Peter che Ivan celuna Ana.*
 Marina tell-REP-3sg to Peter that Ivan kiss-aorist-3sg Ana.
 ‘Marina apparently told Peter that Ivan kissed Ana.’
- (6) *Marina kazala na Peter che Ivan celunal Ana.*
 Marina tell-REP-3sg to Peter that Ivan kiss-REP-3sg Ana.
 ‘Marina apparently told Peter that Ivan apparently kissed Ana.’

The example below was accepted as felicitous by all four speakers, therefore suggesting that the reportative may be used even in the presence of contradictory direct knowledge.

- (7) *Marina kaza che Todor imal chervena kosa, no kosata mu e*
 Marina tell-aorist-3sg that Todor has-REP-3sg red hair, but hair-the his is
cherna
 black
 ‘Marina said that Todor apparently has red hair, but his hair is black’

References

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