I have no idea if factivity is categorical. Did Mandelkern et al. 2020 discover that it is?

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This talk challenges the long-standing assumption that attitude predicates divide into factive and nonfactive ones (Kiparsky and Kiparsky 1970, Karttunen 1971, i.a.). Empirical investigations in de Marneffe, Simons, and Tonhauser 2019 and Degen and Tonhauser 2022, which asked participants to draw inferences about the content of the clausal complement (CC) from examples like (1), confirmed the long-standing intuition that the CCs of factive predicates are highly projective, but they also found i) that there is variability in how projective the CCs of factive predicates are, and ii) that the CCs of factive predicates are not categorically more projective than those of nonfactive predicates. These results were taken to suggest that "there is little empirical support [...] for the assumed categorical distinction between factive and nonfactive predicates" (Degen and Tonhauser 2022:552).

(1)   Ed: *"Does Cole know/think that Julian dances salsa?"*

Mandelkern et al. 2020 challenged this conclusion by arguing that projection variability is an artefact of the inference task used, writing that "we should think twice before embracing a notion of presupposition projection that is gradient based on results from inference tasks alone" (p.497). They suggested that naturalness ratings of utterances with attitude predicates in explicit ignorance contexts, as in (2), are more suitable to distinguish the semantic presuppositions of factive predicates (hypothesized to be unnatural in such contexts) from inferences that may arise with nonfactive predicates "for any of a variety of pragmatic reasons short of entailment or presupposition" (p.497).

(2)   Ed: *"I have no idea if Julian dances salsa. Does Cole know/think that Julian dances salsa?"*

This talk presents the results of an experiment designed to investigate Mandelkern et al.'s 2020 claim that projection is categorical and that their measure can distinguish presuppositions from nonpresuppoitions. The results again fail to support a categorical factivity distinction, in line with Degen and Tonhauser 2022.

Select references: • Mandelkern et al 2020. We've discovered that projection across conjunction is asymmetric (and it is!). *Linguistics & Philosophy* 43. • Degen & Tonhauser 2022. Are there factive predicates? An empirical investigation. *Language* 98.