

What comprises a counter-expectation

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This paper takes a look at coherence in counter-expectation in Thai which can be expressed through the particle *lɛw45*, a marker of change of state. Through some problems concerning the expression and interpretation of this specific counter-expectation, the paper proposes that, firstly, coherence relies on the association of the semantics and presupposition of the particle with the focused element that corresponds to the issue under discussion. Secondly, both the expectation and counter-expectation are scalar and the focused element that interacts with the particle must belong to the set countering the expectation. The paper attempts to explain how coherence is made in this particular case through the theory of Question Under Discussion.

Introduction:

- (1) *Context: Sutha had a plan to travel to Phuket. However, he has cancelled it because he is unwell.*

phrun42nii45 su22thaa33 may42 pay33 phuu33ket22 lɛw45
Tomorrow Sutha NEG go Phuket PART

'Tomorrow Sutha is not going to Phuket (previously he was supposed/planned to go but finally he is not going.)!'

Semantically, the change of state marked by *lɛw45* asserts the new state which takes place at the reference time and presupposes the old state which prevailed before the reference time. This is in line with Krifka (2000)'s analysis on *already*. In accordance with change of state, *lɛw45*'s presupposition also represents the past belief/expectation, i.e. the old state of the issue under discussion which was true before the reference time and contrasts the new state displayed in the assertion. The contrast results with a counter-expectation.

Problems: However, the problem shown in (2) suggests that in fact the selection for the entities that are allowed to co-occur with *lɛw45* is more complicated than what is shown in (1). The interlocutors are talking about Danai's habit of taking paracetamols when he has a migraine headache. Puzzlingly, *3 tablets* in (2Bi), but not *1 tablet* in (2Bii), is allowed to co-occur with *lɛw45* as the reply to (2A). The reply in (2Biii) is totally bad.

- (2) A: thuk45khran45 da33nay33 kin33 yaa33 sɔɔŋ24 met45
every time Danai eat medicine two CLASS
'Every time, Danai takes 2 tablets of paracetamol.'
- B: (i) khran45nii45 khaw24 kin33 pay33 saam24 met45 lɛw45
this time he eat go three CLASS PART
'This time he has taken 3 tablets!'
- (ii) khran45nii45 khaw24 kin33 pay33 nɯŋ22 met45 ʔeeŋ33/*lɛw45
this time he eat go one CLASS only PART
'This time he has taken only one tablet!'
- (iii) !khran45nii45 khaw24 pay33 phuu33ket22 lɛw45
this time he go Phuket PART
'This time he has gone to Phuket!'

controlled by the semantics and presupposition of *leew45* and with the impact of scalarity, the foci categorise the plausible alternatives that are invoked by the question words into the set under expectation and the set countering the expectation. In the interpretation process of (4a), the alternatives are categorised by the focused *10 pieces* into the set ≤ 9 under expectation and the set >9 countering the expectation. The set ≤ 9 contains the numbers of cake that Danai was expected to eat. It is contrasted by the focused *10 pieces* which belongs to the set >9 . For the interpretation process of (4b), the focus on *Danai* hints the expectation that some people, excluding Danai, were expected to eat >9 pieces of cake. The expected set of these people is countered by the assertion at the reference time that it is Danai who has eaten 10 pieces of cake, not the people who belong to the set under expectation. It is noteworthy that the speaker of (3) assumes that both hearers hold the presuppositional belief that reflects the set ≤ 9 . However, there is also a possibility that they do not hold it. If this turns to be the case, both hearers will not consider (3) a counter-expectation.

Conclusion and outlook: Although *leew45* seems to suggest that the proposition attached to it denies the presuppositional belief, its mechanism of denial is more complicated than that of the presupposition denial proposed by Geurts (1998). The coherence and the formation of denial or counter-expectation in the case of *leew45* involves scalarity and requires the interaction between the particle and focus. QUD efficiently identifies the essential components for the whole mechanism. Besides the influence of change of state, this particular counter-expectation seems to be similar to degree comparison in that the presuppositional belief/expectation acts as the standard degree to which the assertion is compared. Whether counter-expectation, change of state and degree comparison share the same mechanism needs further research.

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