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# **Challenging meaning types: A study on direct and indirect refutation**

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## **Abstract**

Refutations, the expressions of disagreement in dialogue, are part of our everyday conversations. Arguments and discussions are present in our daily lives since every possible subject that anyone could speak about embraces an uncountable array of different opinions. Taking this into consideration, the aim of the present paper is to analyse natural occurring data in order to examine the different mechanisms used when engaging in disagreement, and how refutations target different meaning types; namely, assertions and presuppositions. The initial hypothesis and the one that would be proved in this paper by interpreting naturalistic data, is that, in accordance with the theoretic literature, direct refutations such as *No, that's not true* target assertions, whereas indirect ones like *Hey, wait a minute*, target presuppositions. For this purpose, data gathered from 22 episodes of an American TV talk-show was probed and classified according to the linguistic meaning of the utterance they refute: assertion or presupposition; and the refutation type: direct or indirect. Furthermore, it was also considered whether the refutation affected the immediately preceding utterance or not. As a secondary point, the pragmatic theory of verbal courtesy was also borne in mind to see whether it could help understand the distribution of the refutations dealt with along the texts. In the light of the insights gained from the analysis in the aforementioned field, some generalizations and conclusions were drawn by connecting refutation types to meaning types and the influence of the pragmatic theory of verbal courtesy. The results do not show a significantly tight relation between the refutation type and the linguistic meaning, as both assertions and presuppositions were negated by means of direct and indirect refutations, and *Hey, wait a minute* did not exclusively target presuppositions.

**Key words:** direct refutations; indirect refutations; assertions; presuppositions

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## 1. Introduction

Participants in conversations constantly find themselves in situations where their opinions differ from those around them. Conversations are part of our daily lives, and they often lead to disagreements as a result of the opposite views human beings tend to have over every possible subject that surrounds us. For expressing this disagreement we make use of refutations. In general, disagreements are dispreferred over agreements (Pomerantz, 1984), as according to Brown and Levinson (1987) (as cited in Kleuter, 2007), they cause a threat to the listener. These authors' theory of politeness claims that every individual has a self-image they want to maintain, and the speech acts that damage this face are considered Face Threatening Acts (Kleuter, 2007). Refutations could be classified among these acts, forasmuch as by being in disagreement with the foregoing utterance, they question the truthfulness of the expressed opinion: an act that damages the desire to be endorsed and respectable by others; or as Brown and Levinson (1987) name it, the *positive face* (Kleuter, 2007).

Even though studies have been conducted in this domain in order to analyse the different refutation methods and what they depend on, (Shanon, 1976 as cited in Potts, 2008; von Fintel, 2004 as cited in Potts, 2008; Potts, 2008; Castroviejo et al., 2013) there is need for further investigation. Reviewing relevant research, studies have suggested that direct refutations are employed in response to assertions (Kadmon, 2001), whereas for presuppositional utterances, indirect refutations are preferred (von Fintel, 2004). On this basis, the present paper is a small-scale attempt to analyse refutations to test whether the literature is supported by the results from verbal interactions in natural conversations. With this in mind, I will try to answer the following research questions:

- a) Does direct refutation only negate assertion?
- b) Does indirect refutation only negate presupposition?
- c) How do contents get refuted?

In order to do so, I will first introduce the literature review on this domain in section 2. Secondly, in section 3 I will describe the data and explain how I organized and annotated it, and then, in section 4 I will proceed to the analysis of the data and the discussion of the results. I will conclude by providing an answer to the research questions posed in the preceding paragraph.

It is important to point out that this research exclusively focuses on the relationship between meaning types and refutation types, and purported to offer generalized conclusions from that literature; however, it does not take other phenomenon such as turn taking (Sacks et al., 1974; Stivers et al., 2009), or socio-cultural variables into account due to time and space constraints.

## **2. Theoretical Background**

In the ensuing section I will provide a general overview of previous research on refutations. I will introduce the framework for the study of the data that comprises the focus on this research. For this purpose, I will first explain the two meaning types that can be distinguished: assertion and presupposition. Subsequently, I will give a general overview of Face Threatening Acts and the presence of refutations among them; and finally, I will describe the role of refutations in argumentative discussion and how the different refutation types serve as a way to distinguish linguistic meanings. Throughout the literature we will encounter different concepts such as rejection, disagreement or refutation. We should bear in mind that the concept will vary depending on the author; nonetheless, they all refer to the same phenomenon that will be elaborated on this paper: refutations.

### **2.1 Meaning Types: Assertion and Presupposition**

The comparison of different aspects of linguistic meaning is a pivotal issue in both pragmatics and semantics, and has been the focus of many of the linguistic experimental works carried out for the understanding of the global meaning of utterances (Schwarz, 2015). As a reflection of this issue's relevance, there are several tests that have been conducted in order to distinguish between what contributes to the truth conditions of an utterance from what does not. Among them, we find those in the domain of modal verbs: *the changeability test* (Faller, 2002), *the deniability test* (Murray, 2010) or the *assent/dissent diagnosis* (Papafragou, 2005), which although with different terminology, share the same purpose: distinguishing asserted content from non-asserted. This paper will deal with the differences between two linguistic meanings; namely, assertion and presupposition, and to differentiate them it will focus on the refutation type that targets them.

### 2.1.1 Assertions

For the purposes of this paper, I will put aside the numerous studies concerning assertion as a speech act and its illocutionary force, and I will focus on its ability to act as the foregrounded content of declarative sentences.

Although the most common concept to refer to this linguistic meaning is by the term *assertion*, it can go by various different names, such as *extensional content*, *what is said* or *assertion entailment* (Potts, 2005). In any case, I will be referring to it as *assertion* or *at-issue content*.

The *at-issue content* is the part of the utterance that comprises the speaker's main propositional meaning (Schwarz, 2015), and changes the conversationalists assumptions about the discourse by making further contributions (Chierchia & McConnell-Ginet, 1990). Even though it will normally coincide with the main clause; there might be cases in which we might find the asserted proposition in the embedded clause (Simons, 2007).

Moreover, according to Stalnaker (1999), assertions contain the following self-evident truths:

- 1) They are “expressions of a proposition” that “represent the world as being a certain way” (p.78). Nevertheless, the addressee does not necessarily have to accept the content of it.
- 2) They require a context involving a speaker and some hearers to whom the assertion will be directed; and each of them will have their own beliefs and objectives.
- 3) There might be occasions in which the assertions will be context dependent, considering the speaker and the time of the assertion.
- 4) The essential effect of the assertions is to “affect the attitude of the participants in the context” (p.79); that is, to “change their presuppositions in the conversation by adding the content of what is asserted to what is presupposed” (p.86).

### 2.1.2 Presuppositions

On the other hand, presuppositions are commonly thought to exhibit two characteristics that distinguish them from assertions (Karttunen,1973; Stalnaker,1973,

1974 as cited in Schwarz, 2015). Firstly, they do not add any new information to the discourse (typically) (Schwarz, 2015); instead, it is the backgrounded information which not only speakers consider as mutual knowledge, but also as taken as true by all of the participants in the ongoing conversation (Geurts, 2017). That is, it is assumed to be in the “common base” of the discourse and it is derived through an inference (García Murga, 2014). However, in Stalnaker’s view (1973), (1999) (as cited in Harvey, 2014), there are some propositional attitudes “adopted by a speaker in which some proposition is treated as if it were true, regardless of whether it actually is”(p.10). Based on this idea, there might be cases in which presuppositions introduce plain new information as if it was given, pretending that the hearers are already familiar with it (Geurts, 2017). According to Grice (1975), this is a situation of exploitation in which “the speaker exploits the rules of communication by breaking them” (Geurts, 2017, p.184). This phenomenon is called *accommodation* (Lewis, 1979; Beaver & Zeevat 2007 as cited in Geurts, 2017), and even if in most cases the hearer will be prepared to adjust to the new information that was taken for granted as given and cooperate with the speaker, there may be occasions in which if the information presented is noteworthy, the presupposition will be controversial (Geurts, 2017). Note the difference in the ensuing examples presented by Geurts (2017:184-185):

- (1) a. I’m sorry I’m late, my bicycle broke down.
- b. I’m sorry I’m late, my chariot broke down.

While in both cases there is a presupposition that the speaker owns a means of transportation: a) a bicycle and b) a chariot; example (a) would let the speaker away with the presupposition, while example (b) would not. This situation would arise since while owning a bicycle is common, owning a chariot is remarkable, and to presuppose remarkable information is controversial (Geurts, 2017).

Secondly, another characteristic which is the hallmark for the presupposition status is projection. Presuppositions are not affected when embedded under different linguistic contexts, such as negation, questions, and modals. Instead, they survive, or more technically, they project (Schwarz, 2015:4; see also García Murga, 2014 for Spanish).

- (2) a. John stopped smoking
- b. John didn’t stop smoking
- c. Did John stop smoking?

- (3) a. Lee kissed Jenny
- b. Lee didn't kiss Jenny
- c. Did Lee kiss Jenny?

In example (2) we can see how even if examples (b) and (c) do not express the asserted meaning of (a), the presupposition that John used to smoke prior to the moment of speaking projects in all the variations (Schwarz, 2015). However, since this phenomenon is not one of the characteristics of *at-issue content*, assertions are cancelled. As reflected in examples (3b) and (3c), the assertion that Lee kissed Jenny does not project when negating or questioning the sentence.

Another way to recognise presuppositions is by the presence of so-called *presupposition triggers*. Presupposition triggers are the linguistic expressions that signal that what the speaker is uttering is common ground; hence, they are responsible for a presupposition (Chierchia & McConnell-Ginet, 1990; Kadmon, 2001; García Murga, 2014). Even though there is a wide array of presupposition triggers in language, I will only portray a few. I will draw on the description and examples provided in Geurts, 2017; Beaver, 2001; Karttunen, 1971 and Chierchia & McConnell-Ginet, 1990.

1) Factive verbs :

Verbs such as *realize* or *regret*, presuppose the truth of the complement and furthermore, the negation of the main verb does not affect the presupposition.

- a) John realized he had no money. (→ John had no money)
- b) John didn't realize he had no money. (→ John had no money)

2) Adjectives:

“The infinitive complements of certain adjectives such as *glad*, *proud*, or *lucky*, are also presupposed to represent true propositions” (Karttunen, 1971:340).

- a) John was glad to see his parents (→ John saw his parents)

3) Cleft constructions (*It* cleft, *wh* cleft):

- a) It was in November that we left for Kiev. (→ we left for Kiev)
- b) What Bruce ate was kelp. (→ Bruce ate something)



4) Definite NPs:

- a) The pizzeria in the Vatican is closed on Sundays. (→ There is a pizzeria in the Vatican)

## 2.2 Refutation

To refute, as defined in the *Cambridge Online Dictionary* is “to say or prove that a person, statement, opinion, etc. is wrong or false” (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

As opposed to justification, which is certainly of monological nature, a refutation is an illocutionary speech act that presupposes at least two speakers: the participant uttering the refutation and the one to whom that refutation is intended. Thus, it is a reactive act of disagreement towards a previous assertion, and as a result creates a controversy among the participants in the ongoing discourse (Moeschler, 1982).

In general terms, speakers tend to avoid disagreement, as it is the dispreferred option if we are to choose between agreeing and disagreeing (Pomerantz, 1984). While agreeing with someone strengthens the interlocutors desire to be approved of, as it shows support towards its opinion; disagreeing is perceived as a threat and causes discomfort (Pomerantz, 1984, as cited in Sifianou, 2012). One of the most influential theories of politeness is the one developed by Brown and Levinson (1987) (as cited in Kleuter 2007) where the concept *face* was introduced. This concept is defined as the public self-image that every member of every culture gives of themselves or of others. Face can be damaged, enhanced or maintained by interaction; however, everyone endeavours to save both, their own as well as the interlocutor’s (Kleuter, 2007). Brown and Levinson (1987) claim that face has two aspects: positive and negative. Positive face is reflected in the desire to be approved of, desirable or respected by others, whereas negative face is the freedom to act as the individual chooses, being independent by not having their actions imposed by others (Holtgraves, 1997).

Certain illocutionary acts are likely to threaten one of these faces or both (Wagner, 2004). These acts are called Face Threatening Acts, (from now on FTA), and according to Brown and Levinson (1987), they are those that do not respect the hearer’s need for space (negative face), their desire for their self-image to be sustained (positive face), or both (Wagner, 2004).

Amongst these acts we find the case of disagreement, which by questioning the truthfulness of the speaker damages directly their positive face (Kleuter, 2007). Yet, although agreement is preferred over the FTA of disagreement due to the aforementioned reasons, in many occasions it is of greater importance to disagree in order to defend one's point of view rather than to constrain from someone losing their face (Kotthoff, 1993; Locher, 2004 as cited in Kleuter, 2007). To do so, Levinson and Brown (1987) (as cited in Holtgraves, 1997) outline various politeness strategies used to perform these acts in a less threatening manner. Although there are positive, negative and off-record politeness strategies, it might be hard to apply a negative politeness strategy to save the positive face (Holtgraves, 1997); thus, I will only consider the positive politeness strategies. Among the strategies that seek for the positive face of the hearer, looking for an area of agreement or accomplishing the hearer's desires were suggested. In order to do so, users of language might "find ways of agreeing while disagreeing or minimize the extent of the disagreement" (Holtgraves, 1997, p. 225). In addition, they may use implicit disagreements, or hesitating hedges such as *well* in pursuance of minimizing the threat (Holtgraves, 1997).

Even though contradiction and disagreement may carry a negative connotation, they need not necessarily be regarded as something adverse to be avoided, since on the assumption that discussants are willing to resolve the disputes, the disagreement between them could contribute to the development of intellectual process. For a discussion to be solved in a reasonable manner, the exchange of opinions will occur in form of argumentation, and the discussants will attack and defend the standpoints in a rational manner (Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984). Participants' standpoints can be positive or negative depending on whether they express a positive or negative *committedness* towards an expressed opinion, and the arguments in defence of these standpoints will justify or refute the given statement, regarding the acceptability or unacceptability of it. Consequently, refutations will arise whenever the argumentation is in favour of a negative standpoint, what is known as contra-argumentation (Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984).

The different types of refutations (direct and indirect) used in argumentation can be employed to identify different linguistic meanings with regard to the part of information in the sentence they refer to. On the one hand, the main part of an utterance, the

assertion, is the one central to the speaker's concerns, and it is considered to be the foregrounded information; while the part of secondary importance, the presupposition, is the backgrounded information (Kadmon, 2001). As Kadmon (2001) states, the foregrounded part, which as previously mentioned is the *at-issue content* of the utterance, demands straightforward responses, for instance *I don't think so* or *Yes, I agree*. Hence, taking into account that presuppositions are backgrounded, direct responses will target assertions rather than presuppositions (Kadmon, 2001). Thus, a direct refutation (*I don't think so, that's not true*) will directly refer to the speaker's main point. Note the following examples by García Murga (2014:240) (my own translations):

- (4) a. El ejercicio ha sido hoy interesante.  
a. The exercise today was interesting.  
b. Ha habido un ejercicio.  
b. There was an exercise.
- (5) a. No, el ejercicio ha sido aburrido.  
a. No, the exercise was boring.  
b. ?? No, no ha habido ningún ejercicio hoy.  
b. ?? No, there was no exercise today.

In examples (4) and (5) it can be observed how when directly calling into question an utterance, the refutation does not affect the presupposition (in this case, that there was an exercise) but the assertion (that the exercise was interesting).

In order to refute presuppositions, Shanon (1976) (as cited in Potts, 2008), introduced the *Hey, wait a minute* test, (from now on HWAM), in pursuance of comprehensive distinctions among the different types of conveyed content (Potts, 2008). This test was later on popularized by von Stechow (2004) (as cited in Potts, 2008) and has become a widely used tool to distinguish presuppositions from assertions (Potts, 2008).

As represented in example (6) by von Stechow (2004: 271), the HWAM test is illegitimate with assertions.

- (6) 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.

Therefore, von Fintel (2004) and von Fintel & Matthewson's (2006) contributions allow the following generalizations about presuppositions (Potts, 2008):

- 1) The HWAM test is appropriate for refuting the presuppositional content of an utterance (Potts, 2008).
- 2) The HWAM test is not appropriate for refuting the assertion of an utterance. (Potts, 2008).

In addition, the first generalization can implicitly suggest that:

- 3) If HWAM test is appropriate for refuting presuppositional content, then the utterance refuted is a presupposition (Potts, 2008).

Thus, on the strength of the aforementioned generalizations, it could be assumed that the HWAM test functions exclusively and entirely with presuppositions (Potts, 2008). Nonetheless, in Potts' (2008) paper, whose goal is to test these hypotheses against naturally occurring data, he concludes that this test did not work with many of his examples, as it also targeted assertions.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Description of Materials**

On the basis of what the literature says on how to refute assertions and presuppositions, I wanted to take real samples from conversations and assess naturalistic data. To this end, I collected refutation instances by going through the transcripts of 22 episodes of the American talk-show *Meet the Press*; more precisely, the Sunday shows from March 7, 2016 until January 8, 2017, gathering in total 22 hours of the programme. NBC's *Meet the Press* is an American TV show dealing with all aspects of political issues by means of a one-to-one interview and a roundtable discussion. Despite the profile of the guests being highly changeable, hosting people of different sex, age and background, most of them are political figures. I considered using this programme, since in my view, political debates are prone to contain a high number

of refutations by virtue of the controversial opinions that may constantly arise in them; and hence, provide me with a wide range of tokens that could be interesting for the study.

However, there are major limitations that hinder the generalizability of the research. On the one hand, the sample is not significant as it was collected arbitrarily. Additionally, it is very small, which incapacitates me to guarantee that the frequency of appearance of one expression with one meaning type is statistically significant. Thus, the purpose of the present paper is to study some naturally occurring data so as to investigate what types of expressions are used to refute different meaning types, rather than to obtain frequency data or statistic correlations.

### **3.2 Organization of the Data**

As a first step, I collected the examples in context: overall, the paragraph preceding the refutation, and the paragraph containing the refutation; thus, containing 2 discourse turns. Gathering the data in context was important to get a sense of the conversation and classify the utterances that preceded the refutations. Be that as it may, when annotating the data I did not include the complete paragraph, but exclusively the sentence being refuted and the refutation (except when the content refuted was not immediately preceding the refutation, in those cases I included the whole conversation turn that included the sentence being refuted). In addition, I did not classify the preceding utterance to the refutation other than in its linguistic meaning: presupposition or assertion. In any case, I assessed the refutation in terms of whether it was direct or indirect, and immediately preceding the utterance refuted or not. In order to do this, I created a table (see the appendix) where I included the item number, the content preceding the refutation, the refutation, the type of content being refuted (presupposition or assertion), the type of refutation (direct or indirect), whether the refutation was referring to a fact or an opinion and whether the refuted content was immediately preceding the last utterance or not. However, the column containing whether the information was a fact or an opinion did not result of great utility since I had difficulty differentiating opinions from interpretations of a fact; thus, I decided to eliminate it. Additionally, although central to my research were the direct refutation *No, that's not true* and the indirect HWAM, my secondary goal in this research was to

collect different means of expressing direct and indirect refutations, so I included and commented on more items than the previous two.

#### 4. Analysis of the Data

Taking into consideration Brown and Levinson's (1987) definition of *face*, refutations are a threat to the hearer's face since they question the truthfulness of the foregoing utterance, and therefore damage the hearer's positive face. For this reason, they can be categorized as FTA and assuming that uttering them is an uncomfortable situation for speakers, one would presume that in pursuance of lessening this threat, speakers would seek indirect methods to disagree, by means of politeness strategies. Moreover, in line with the literature, the natural way to refute an assertion is by using a direct refutation such as, *No, that's not true, or I don't think so* (Kadmon, 2001). whilst in order to refute a presupposition, indirect ways are preferred (von Fintel, 2004; Potts, 2008). As Holtgraves (1997) and Pomerantz (1984) point out, disagreements usually tend to be softened by hesitating prefaces or weak agreements, so I expected some hedges such as *well*, to be found among refutations as a way to minimize the threat. Finally, based on the theoretic literature, I assumed that the HWAM token was only used to refute presuppositions (von Fintel, 2004); however as Potts's (2008) recent study calls into question this idea and revealed some cases in which the test involved assertions, I could expect to encounter such cases throughout my data.

On that note, and as a way to present the hypotheses more clearly, they could be endorsed by the generalizations in 1-5 as follows:

- 1) If refutations are a FTA, indirect methods should be more prominent than direct ones.
- 2) If direct refutations target the *at issue* content of an utterance, assertions should be negated by means of direct refutations such as *No, that's not true*.
- 3) If indirect refutations target the presupposition of an utterance, presuppositions should be negated by means of indirect refutations such as HWAM.
- 4) If speakers take into account verbal courtesy, hesitating prefaces or weak agreements such as *well* should be found.
- 5) Following the theoretical literature, since HWAM has direct access to presuppositionality, it should exclusively work with presuppositions. Nevertheless, based on an empirical study with similar aims to this paper, I

should not only expect to find the previously mentioned construction targeting presuppositions, but also assertions.

Before analysing the data I would like to clarify what has been considered direct and indirect when collecting the refutations and classifying them. Refutations are any expression used in a way to avoid a speaker's proposition to be accepted by the rest of the hearers. All the different techniques that can be carried out to refute are standardly classed in two types, which I define as follows:

- 1) Direct refutation: a refutation is conducted in a direct way when it is done blatantly, this is, including the particle *no*, or assessments such as *wrong*, *false*, *I don't think so*, etc.
- 2) Indirect refutation: a refutation is conducted in an indirect way when the speaker conveys that she does not yet accept the truth of the proposition that has been immediately uttered, so she interrupts the discourse momentarily in order to decide whether a certain part of the previous content could be accepted. Hence, they do not contain explicit expression of objection or denial.

## **4.1 Direct refutations**

### **4.1.1 Assertions**

As we will see, the expressions found in examples 1-9 are used with the purpose of expressing dissent regarding a proposition uttered by another discussant. These expressions target directly the *at issue* content of the utterance; that is, the speakers main point or the foregrounded information. What is more, speaker A is not taking any information for granted, but she is making a further contribution, from which we can conclude that speaker A's utterances are assertions. Although there might be a number of ways of directly refuting them, the methods presented below are the ones that predominated in our corpus.

- *I don't think:*
  - (7) A: This feels like a slight rollback—  
B: I don't think so. I actually don't think it's a rollback

To illustrate what has been mentioned above, here we know that B's utterance is a refutation of the previous assertion, because the main point of A's utterance is to resolve the issue of whether this feels like a rollback. A claims it is, but B doesn't think so. Hence, both discussants have opposed views on the main point of the conversation.

- *That's not true / wrong:*

(8) A: You picked sides.

B: No, that's not true, Rick.

- Explicit negation marker *no*:

By using the explicit negation marker *no*, speaker B directly targets the main point of the previous utterance.

(9) A: I would rather lose than win the way you guys did.

B: No you wouldn't.

- Corrections:

This method is the most frequent one in our corpus whereby the speaker refutes the assertion by negating the explicit content in the utterance without directly expressing that the other participant is wrong. This technique does not seem to match our definition of direct refutation, which states that a direct refutation is carried out in a blatant manner, including words such as *no*, *wrong*, *false*, *I don't think so* etc. Nevertheless, I will consider it as a subtype of it, since, regardless of having no explicit refutation marker, there is an explicit negation of the content conveyed by the preceding utterance. This is shown in (10).

(10)A: The media, hitting the media is always a crutch for you guys.

B: It's not a, it's not a crutch.

As illustrated in (11), in many cases, the hearer seems to be defending herself or a third person after having been reproached (be a cause of blame), or for having interpreted the hearer's words. In our data, being reproached has been a common reason to find refutations.

(11)A: You were just implying this stuff was made up.



B: I'm not implying it was made up.

In the following example I'd like to point out that the refutation has been effected in a positive way since the content refuted was a negative assertion. Even if  $p$  and  $q$  are in a contradiction relation, being  $p$  the content refuted and  $q$  the refutation; this does not imply the refutation has to be negative. In fact, the polarity of the refutation depends on the preceding assertion (Moeschler, 1982). In example (12), furthermore, the verb *did* has been used for emphasizing the positive polarity. Note also that this conversation was carried out in a roundtable, thus, speaker B is refuting A's utterance although she is not the addressee A is referring to.

(12)A: You're not answering my question.

B: He did answer your question.

- The token *I'm not saying*:

In some situations, as reflected in (13), it seems that the hearer has been put certain words in her mouth she claims not to have mentioned, so the refutation is not claiming the truthfulness of a fact but how the listener has interpreted the speaker's words. In order to refute those words, she starts the utterance by *I'm not saying* or similar constructions. Even though this expression does not correspond to our prototypical definition of direct refutations, I will consider it as such because as in the previous subclass, "negation of the explicit content", the speaker negates explicitly what the prior participant has stated.

(13)A: Bannon is already making his influence felt in innuendo about Clinton's health.

B: I'm not saying that, you know, she's had a stroke or anything like that, but this is not the woman we're used to seeing.

In the case of example (14), speaker A is producing a raising declarative, which implies a bias towards a positive answer (Gunglogson, 2003); therefore, A does not express an assertion, but a belief, an inference or conclusion about what B has previously said in form of a question. B however, does not seem to agree with A's interpretation of her utterance, so she refutes it.

(14) A: He wasn't running for President, so it's okay to make unwanted sexual advances?

B: Chuck, Chuck, I'm not saying it was the right thing to do.

#### 4.1.2 Presuppositions

Contrary to our expectations, the findings revealed that most of the presuppositions were refuted in a direct way, just as the assertions I analysed. This data has been classified following the same scheme as for assertions; nonetheless, no cases of *I don't think so* or *That's not true/ Wrong* were found:

- Corrections:

Von Stechow (2004) proposes that the refutation of a presupposition should be carried out by means of an indirect refutation, such as HWAM. Notwithstanding this, in our examples there were cases in which I did not find such construction.

(15) A: I think as soon as the audit is completed Donald Trump will release—

B: There is no audit on this return.

In example (15), the uttered sentence conveys that there is an audit under consideration; that is, the definite article *the* introducing *the audit*, presupposes the existence and uniqueness of the audit. Speaker A is therefore taking for granted the existence of this audit and speaker B does not seem to be in accordance and refutes the presupposed content.

In some cases, as it occurred with assertions, we found instances in which speaker A is taking for granted some information about speaker B, which the latter does not seem to accept, and thus, refutes it. In the two examples presented below the presupposition is triggered by the *wh* question markers *why* and *what* respectively. In situation (16), speaker A is presupposing that there is a reason for speaker B to parse and the latter does not seem to accept that information; whereas in example (17), speaker A presupposes her discussant is deflecting something which she does not accept as true.

(16) A: And I understand why you're trying to parse this.

B: I'm not trying to parse it.

(17) A: I get what you're deflecting.

B: I'm not deflecting.

- The explicit negation marker *no*:

Example (18) is an interesting case. Even though in general terms and following the literature, *no* targets assertions, it is not clear whether here “the striking thing” is working as a factive predicate or not. If that is the case, speaker B would be refuting the presupposition that Donald Trump’s unfavourable ratings are higher than Secretary Clinton’s. However, if it is not factive, we would be talking about a refutation of the assertion, that is, the truth of the statement.

(18)A: The striking thing here is that Donald Trump's unfavorable ratings are actually higher than Secretary Clinton's.

B: No, actually, I've got a survey in Ohio that says Hillary Clinton's negatives are higher than Donald Trump's.

## 4.2 Indirect refutations

### 4.2.1 Assertions

Although according to the literature assertions demand straightforward responses, that is, direct refutations, the data revealed that indirect refutations are also employed to reject assertions. The methods that we will analyse next are means of politeness strategies.

- The hesitating hedge *well*:

This hedge was found in several refutations. *Well* is considered a hesitating hedge and it is used as a displace agreement; this is, when a turn is dispreferred (disagreement over agreement, or refutations in our corpus), the speaker makes use of these false starts as a way to delay the refutation (Holtgraves, 1997). Although this item was found in different contexts, it is used as a displace agreement in order to mitigate the threat to the hearer’s positive face in all cases.

The following case (19) reflects how to lessen the threat towards speaker A’s positive face, speaker B uses the hedge *well* as a politeness strategy before giving her opinion. Since B’s opinion does not concur with her interactant’s, she refutes A’s assertion by employing this strategy as a manner to partly agree with the hearer.

(19)A: I tend to agree with Mary that he would be just be bored to tears as Vice Presidency—

B: Well, I don't think he'd be bored.

In example (20) it can be observed that *well* is used as a way to briefly agree with the speaker's foregoing turn and subsequently introduce a contrastive utterance by means of the marker *but* in order to express disagreement with what was previously asserted. According to Brown and Levinson (1987), this is a politeness strategy called token agreement. Additionally, in this same example, participant B not only uses the disagree agreement *well* as a way to delay the disagreement, but also the hedge opinion *I wouldn't say* to reduce the strength of the expressed opinion (Holtgraves, 1997). In example (21) two token agreements can be found: *well* and *yeah*. On the other hand, whereas in example (20) speaker B starts her refutation by politely disagreeing with the hearer to later on end up agreeing, in (21) she starts by agreeing in order to end up disagreeing. In any case, the hedge *well* completes the same function in all situations.

(20)A: Can the United States continue to have a compartmentalized relationship with Russia anymore under this circumstance, which is what you pursued for a long time?

B: Well, I wouldn't say compartmentalized, but we do have to have what I'll call a strong, but also a balanced approach to Russia.

(21)A: So this feels a bit overwhelming I think to people.

B: Well, yeah, but I think you have to keep everything in context.

In example (22), *well* is used to introduce an argument against a generalization proposed by speaker A in which she asserts that generally speaking it is not the case not to have a Bush at a convention. Speaker B, in this case is refuting a generic statement, by giving an argument which cancels A's assertion. By saying that A's utterance did not happen four years ago, speaker B is breaking with the generalization that this situation repeats in time.

(22)A: It is unusual not to have a Bush at a convention.

B: Well, it didn't happen four years ago, Chuck, that's not true.

- Partly agreeing and partly disagreeing:

Apart from the hedge *well*, many other techniques have been found in order to refute the hearer's assertion in a polite manner by partly agreeing and partly disagreeing.

As reflected in example (23), participant B gives an argument in favour of A's assertion but quickly introduces a contrastive sentence in which she gives another argument to refute A's utterance.

(23)A: And he's been completely consistent on this point.

B: He had deportation-- But he has not been consistent on this issue of what to do with the 11 to 15 million.

I also found an instance in which the token agreement *yeah* and the hedge opinion *I don't think* are used so as to minimize the strength of the expressed opinion.

(24)A: They're gravitating to somebody that says, "I'm just gonna make it all better again."

B: Yeah. No, I, I, I do. I-- but it's not, I don't think they're so much gravitating to Trump.

Finally, there is a an occasion in which the speaker, despite uttering she is not disagreeing with what was previously mentioned, introduces a contrastive utterance in which she presents an argument in order to express her opposite opinion. She might have uttered "I'm not disagreeing with that" in pursuance of softening the disagreement.

(25)A: I mean, the fallout from Iraq War, look at the Republican Party today.

It is more isolationist today and it's because of the failure of the Iraq war.

B: I'm not disagreeing with that, but I'm saying if you accuse Bush of lying when he was telling what everyone believed, then you are dividing the country, you are demoralizing the country.

- *Wait a minute:*

In the following examples it can be observed that expressions such as HWAM do not only refute presuppositions. In context (26), it is uttered not to let the speaker away with her assertion "we have a psychopath running for President". It is a case in which HWAM is used in order to access a not immediately preceding utterance. It is a way to impede that a non-preceding utterance is accepted as true, because speaker B has not

accepted it yet. If instead of using this indirect refutation the speaker had used a direct one, she would be refuting the immediately preceding content rather than the assertion she seems not to be in agreement with. Therefore, this case gives us an insight that indirect refutations do not only negate presuppositions, but also the content conveyed by not immediately preceding utterances; that is, assertions that are not elaborating on the current main point of the conversation.

(26)A: I mean, basically, we have a psychopath running for President. I mean, he meets the clinical definition, okay?

B: Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Do you really think, diagnosing people on air, I assume you don't have a degree in Psychology. Is that fair? I mean—

The next situation is an example in which speaker B uses a similar construction to HWAM as a way to negate the truth of the immediately preceding assertion uttered by A, which contradicts with von Fintel's (2004) claims that HWAM can only refute presuppositions.

(27)A: You know, what, what we have this week is a, is a series of, of unsubstantiated allegations.

B: Let me stop you there. They're not unsubstantiated.

- Other methods found:

Finally, there is an instance in which the refutation is effected throughout a presupposition. Considering that there are some adjectives such as *glad* that are used as presupposition triggers (Karttunen, 1971), *happy that* from the following example is acting as one. It is used by speaker B to presuppose that the R.N.C was not hacked, and thus, contradict the preceding utterance. The speaker is probably trying to achieve a concrete rhetoric effect and that is why he discards a neutral form to refute.

(28)A: You guys have had a specific denial that the R.N.C.'s network wasn't hacked. That doesn't mean Republicans associated with the R.N.C. weren't hacked. That doesn't rule that out.

B: (...) you should actually--be happy that the R.N.C. wasn't hacked.

#### 4.2.2 Presuppositions

In this section, we will look at the different techniques for refuting presuppositions indirectly. Based on the literature, the natural way to execute this action is by expressions such as HWAM; however, additional methods were encountered.

- The hesitating hedge *well*:

The use of this hedge was the most recurrent way to indirectly refute presuppositions. As we mentioned in the *well* section for assertions, the use of this hedge may have different specific purposes according to the context, but overall it is used as a way to delay the refutation and try to mitigate the threat to the positive face of the hearer. Notwithstanding this, when refuting presuppositions, it might have an additional function: likewise the construction HWAM, *well* can also be employed as a manner to stop the ongoing discourse momentarily in order not to let the speaker away with her presupposition.

(29) A: Well, look, I know the glass-is-half-empty tendency of many in the media.

B: Well, it's not about the media, sir.

- *Wait a minute*:

(30) A: I think to compare someone that we know gave away national secrets to--

B: Wait a minute, you are making assumptions, we don't know that.

The previous example matches our expectations drawn from the literature. Here, the factive verb *know* is introducing the presupposition that someone gave national secrets and speaker B is momentarily stopping the discourse in order not to let speaker A away with this presupposition.

#### 4.3 Discussion

The starting point for the present research was on the one hand, that direct refutations express dissent to the proposition uttered by another interactant by assessments such as *that's not true*, *wrong*, *I don't think so* etc., or the explicit negation marker *no*. This type of direct responses target the *at-issue content* of the prior speaking turn; thus,

considering that presuppositions are backgrounded and do not accept direct responses, at least initially; this direct responses target assertions. On the other hand, the prototypical indirect refutation claimed in the literature, HWAM, is a way to stop the current discourse momentarily, not to let the speaker away with her presupposition. Therefore, it is a useful method to identify presuppositions, as according to the literature, it functions exclusively with them.

On this basis, we expected assertions to be refuted in a direct way, by means of tokens such as *no*, *wrong*, *I don't think so* or *false*; and presuppositions indirectly, with expressions such as HWAM. Nevertheless, there is another proposal which seems to be impacted by this theory; as Potts (2008) pointed out cases in his study in which HWAM targeted assertions.

In addition, we should bear in mind Brown and Levinson's concept of *face*. According to them, we as interactants tend to *save face* by means of politeness strategies, such as agreeing while disagreeing, or the use of certain tokens that minimize the threat, due to the fact that disagreeing is uncomfortable for any speaker as it threatens the positive face of the listener. Consequently, based on this idea, I expected indirect refutations to be more prominent than direct ones.

Taking all of this into account, I will proceed to portray what the natural occurring data suggested and whether it was compatible with the hypotheses laid out at the beginning of section 4.

To begin with, the results gathered referring to direct refutations met our expectations. The data showed that, overall, this refuting type was used to negate assertions, as we had foreseen. Nevertheless, although it was more frequent to find cases in which direct refutations negated assertions, we also found cases in which presuppositions were negated this way. Moreover, various different techniques used to refute assertions were also found to negate presuppositions. Among the many different direct refutations methods that may exist, the following are the ones that were found in our corpus for assertions: 1) *I don't think* 2) *That's not true / Wrong* 3) Explicit negation marker *no*, 4) Corrections, and 5) The token *I'm not saying*. From those, number 3 and 4 were also applied for presuppositions. The technique to refute both linguistic meanings directly that speakers seem to prefer was to negate the content from the preceding turn but without inserting any negation marker, or what I labelled as



corrections. In the case of assertions, this could be because among all the direct refutation manners that were employed in the data, this one might be the less threatening one. Nevertheless, in the case of presuppositions, questions remain open. By just negating the explicit content without any expression that holds the ongoing conversation, the speaker may not have needed to stop it in order to choose whether they accept or not the truth of the foregoing utterance because he did not accept it from the very beginning. Conversely, it could just be that other refutation methods are more common than the prototypical indirect HWAM. However, these results might be controversial, since by directly refuting an utterance, we are straightforwardly replying the truth of the statement; that is, the *at-issue content* and not the presupposition.

On the other hand, regarding indirect refutations and contrary to our expectations, there were more cases in which this refutation type referred to assertions than to presuppositions. Nonetheless, this could merely be a random result, because in our corpus assertions outnumbered presuppositions. Notwithstanding, as the present research is not quantitative, we did not pay much attention to the frequency of each type of technique, and focused on whether the data matched the literature.

Despite according to the literature assertions demand straightforward responses, that is, direct refutations; considering the concept of *face* introduced by Brown and Levinson (1987), it is not striking to have encountered so many indirect ways of refuting assertions. The different techniques used were 1) the hesitating hedge *well*, 2) the mechanism of partly agreeing and partly disagreeing, 3) the HWAM and 4) other methods. The first and second methods, which were the most prominent, are part of Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness strategies. Overall, what the hesitating hedge *well* does in these cases is to delay the refutation by displacing the agreement in pursuance of lessening the threat to the positive face of the listener. The second method presented here is also a way to refute in a more polite manner, by agreeing with the listener up to a point and quickly introducing a contrastive argument. Moreover, in many of the refutations classified in the previously mentioned subtypes, we found many other tokens to lessen the threat to the hearer's face, such as the token agreement *yeah* (20) and (21); or the hedge opinion *I would'n't say* (20). Thus, it could be concluded that even though assertions are meant to be refuted directly, speakers may choose to do it indirectly so as to feel less threatening when contradicting. Regarding the HWAM expression, which originally was believed to function exclusively with presuppositions,

we perceived that it also reacts to assertions. On the one hand, it is a way to access not immediately preceding assertions (26). Using this expression, the speaker is momentarily stopping the ongoing discourse as a way to show the hearer that she has not yet accepted the truth of the not immediately preceding sentence. By directly refuting, one would be referring to the prior utterance and letting the speaker away with whatever she mentioned before and the hearer does not agree with. Therefore, our results showed that HWAM might have an extra use apart from helping us identify presuppositions, and that usage is that of refuting not immediately preceding content. Nevertheless, there were also cases in which HWAM was used to refute immediately preceding assertions (27), as expected from Potts (2008) study, and which seems to contradict the claim that HWAM is not suitable for refuting *at-issue* content. Finally, we also found a case (28) in which the refutation was done by means of a presupposition. The refutation contained a presupposition that implied that what the discussant had mentioned was not true. The speaker might have had a concrete discursive intention by uttering the sentence that way. Although I cannot conclude what that was, I can speculate that, in using a presupposition triggered by an emotive factive predicate, the speaker presents the information as though it *should already be* common knowledge. So it is not really a content that is up for debate.

Regarding the indirect refutations affecting presuppositions, our expectations were quite satisfied. We found some cases of HWAM or similar expressions and hesitating hedges such as *well*. However, what is striking here is that although von Fintel (2004) in his paper states the way to refute presuppositions is by using certain constructions such as HWAM, we found that when bringing the literature into natural conversation, speakers do not tend to choose this technique as frequently as expected. Both techniques (hesitating hedge and HWAM) were used as a way to stop the discourse in order to process what the other person took for granted and take some time to choose whether it is accepted or not. Nevertheless, this last technique had various uses: as we saw in the precedent paragraph, it was also used as a way to negate the not immediately preceding content and immediately preceding assertions.

Finally, I also found an interesting example (12) in which the presupposition was carried out positively. This case arises in contexts in which the preceding utterance is expressed in a negative way, since the fact that a refutation is a contradiction to other discussants statement, does not necessarily mean it has to be carried out negatively.

To recap, I consider that although part of what the literature says was fulfilled, some results differed greatly. On the one hand, we found out that direct refutations may be used both for assertions and presuppositions and that indirect refutations are very frequent with assertions. While I find the former situation controversial and I am still not certain about it, the later could be a result of speakers trying to diminish the threat to the hearer's positive face. On the other hand, we observed that the expression HWAM does not only refute presuppositions but also not immediately preceding content, and assertions; and that there are more techniques to refute indirectly than the prototypical one.

## **5. Conclusion**

The purpose of this paper was to analyse refutations in natural occurring data in order to prove whether they met what the theoretical literature had investigated on this topic. My primary goal was to make generalizations by connecting the refutation types with the meaning types, and see whether the verbal courtesy had an effect in the way we refute or not. While it is too soon to confirm the conclusions, my view after having analysed the gathered data is the following:

Does direct refutation only negate assertion?

Although in general, direct refutations targeted assertion, I encountered several challenging cases through the corpus in which presuppositions were negated by means of direct refutations. Since the data did not match my hypothesis based on what the theoretical literature states; that is, that direct refutations only target assertions, these cases deserve a fundamental explanation that could be left for further research.

Does indirect refutation only negate presupposition?

Our results reflected that indirect refutation is used for both assertions and presuppositions, and that this could be a consequence of the speaker's desire to lessen the threat that disagreeing with a participant supposes. Moreover, we found out that there are other indirect refutation techniques apart from the prototypical one (HWAM) and that it is not always the case that the indirect refutation HWAM negates a presupposition as von Stechow (2004) had suggested. This technique can also be employed to negate an immediately preceding and a not immediately preceding assertion.

How do contents get refuted?

On the one hand, we found that both assertions and presuppositions were directly refuted by means of expressions such as: *that's not true/wrong*, explicit negation marker *no* and *I don't think*. Nevertheless, these techniques were more prominent in assertions, as it could be expected from the literature. On the other hand, our results also suggested that indirect refutations can be used for both linguistic meaning types, although they might have a different purpose in each. When targeting assertions, indirect refutations such as *well* are carried out as a politeness strategy in pursuance of mitigating the threat to the positive face of the hearer; however, when refuting presuppositions they are employed as a manner to interrupt the conversation and analyse whether the prior participant's presupposition will be accepted. Furthermore, HWAM can refute a not preceding assertion, or hold the conversation in order not to let a speaker away with a presupposition.

Given this, and on the basis of the naturally occurring data that I analysed, I will conclude that the use of direct and indirect refutations is not a totally reliable diagnostic to identify meaning types, as there were many challenging cases that did not match the expectations. For this reason, I will leave for further research the employment of HWAM targeting immediately preceding assertions, and the use of direct refutations targeting presuppositions. It would also be interesting to do a cross-linguistic study and compare whether these results reflect in other languages. Indirect refutations affecting assertions could be something cultural as some languages and cultures are more straightforward than others and may have different feelings about saving the other participants face.

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## **7. Appendix**



Item	Refuted content	Refutation	Refutation type	Refuted meaning type	Content immediately precedent
Item 1	A: You picked sides	B: No, that's not true, Rick	Direct	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 2	A: Can the United States continue to have a compartmentalized relationship with Russia anymore under this circumstance, which is what you pursued for a long time?	B: Well, I wouldn't say compartmentalized, but we do have to have what I'll call a strong, but also a balanced approach to Russia.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 3	A: You guys have had a specific denial that the R.N.C.'s network wasn't hacked. That doesn't mean Republicans associated with the R.N.C. weren't hacked. That doesn't rule that out.	B: (...) you should actually--be happy that the R.N.C. wasn't hacked.	Indirect	Assertion	Not immediately preceding
		B: Number one, The R.N.C. was not hacked.	Direct	Assertion	Not immediately preceding
Item 4	A: Reince, that means you do not believe--the assessments of the U.S. intelligence community.	B: How can-- wait a second, now you're so circuitous here, Chuck.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 5	B: How can-- wait a second, now you're so circuitous here, Chuck.	B: No, I'm just saying--	Direct	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 6	A: You are getting briefings on this.	B: Number one, I don't have-- I'm not in those briefings, first of all.	Direct	Assertion	Not immediately preceding
Item 7	A: You're ignoring The Washington Post report for obvious reasons, because you want to deny the R.N.C. aspect of that.	B: No, I'm not ignoring The Washington Post report.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 8	A: You dispute 17 different intelligence agencies that have assessed that Russia agents were behind this? You dispute this?	B: Chuck, this is insane. In the same article, about those 17 agencies, that the report was inconclusive.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 9	A: In the same article, about those 17 agencies, that the report was inconclusive.	B: It was inconclusive about-- -- Vladimir Putin, Reince. It was not inconclusive-- --that Russian agents were involved	Indirect	Assertion	Not immediately preceding
Item 10	A: And I understand why you're trying to parse this.	B: I'm not trying to parse it	Direct	Presupposition	Immediately preceding

Item 11	A:You would have to believe, and obviously I can't go into the classified information,but you'd have to believe that the uniform nature of the hacking and the dumping of information that was damaging to Secretary Clinton and helpful to Donald Trump was both coincidental and accidental and the Russians didn't know what they're doing, to believe that they had no interest in helping one candidate. That's simply not credible.	B: Well, I understand that. But let me play devil's advocate here.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 12	A: I would rather lose than win the way you guys did.	B: No you wouldn't.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 13	A:Well, look, I know the glass-is-half-empty tendency of many in the media.	B:Well, it's not about the media,sir	Indirect	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 14	A:The media, hitting the media is always a crutch for you guys.	B:It's not a, it's not a crutch.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 15	A: You're not answering my question	B: He did answer your question.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 16	A: Why are you campaigning against Mitt Romney as Secretary of State?	B: I'm not campaigning against anyone.	Direct	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 17	A:But when you say it, when you actually don't have a college degree, you hear, "Oh, they think I'm stupid."	B:That's not at all	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 18	A: I think as soon as the audit is completed Donald Trump will release--	B:There's no audit on this return.	Direct	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 19	A: The F.B.I. has been in full revolt since the decisions made last summer.	B: Not full revolt.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 20	A:Well, that's what corrupt essentially means.	B:Not necessarily.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 21	A: But that's the choice we have.	B: Well, no.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 22	A: They're gravitating to somebody that says, "I'm just gonna make it all better again."	B: Yeah. No, I, I, I do. I-- but it's not, I don't think they're so much gravitating to Trump	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 23	A: You know, what, what we have this week is a, is a series of, of unsubstantiated allegations.	A: Let me stop you there. They're not unsubstantiated.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately precedent

Item 24	A: --is preoccupied with unsubstantiated claims--	B: You keep saying unsubstantiated, that is not true, you have a firsthand account. It's unproven, but they're not unsubstantiated.	Direct	Assertion	Not immediately precedent
Item 25	A:--He wasn't running for President, so it's okay to make unwanted sexual advances?	B:Chuck, Chuck, I'm not saying it was the right thing to do.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 26	A:Well, the actions would be even worse if they were actions. Talk and action are two different things.	B:Wait a minute, New York Times, "Temple Taggart was 21-year-old beauty contestant when, she said, Mr. Trump kissed her on the lips, without invitation, at a pageant event.	Indirect	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 27	A:You were just implying this stuff was made up.	B:I'm not implying it was made up.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 28	A:He hasn't released his tax returns, which means he's either not that rich--	B: wrong	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 29	A: On Monday, you tweeted, "This debate was not Trump's best, but there are-- still two more	B: I didn't tweet that. That's not my tweet.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 30	A:I get what you're deflecting	B:I'm not deflecting.	Direct	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 31	A:If-- if the-- It's news to us that this was coming in.	B:Oh I don't think so.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 32	A:You could put half of Trump's supporters into what I call "the basket of deplorables."	B:Hillary, they are not a basket of anything.	Direct	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 33	A: I mean, the fallout from Iraq War, look at the Republican Party today. It is more isolationist today and it's because of the failure of the Iraq war.	B:I'm not disagreeing with that, but I'm saying if you accuse Bush of lying when he was telling what everyone believed, then you are dividing the country, you are demoralizing the country	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 34	A:And he's been completely consistent on this point.	B:: He had deportation-- But he has not been consistent on this issue of what to do with the 11 to 15 million.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately precedent

Item 35	A:The simple truth is that what the American people long to see is leadership at the national level that doesn't myopically focus on the group that you're focused on and I know the media loves to focus on.	B: It's not the media.	Direct	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 36	A:And if you actually look at the work that The Clinton Foundation has done, it's actually good work.	B:Actually, it's not.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately precedent
Item 37	A:The striking thing here is that Donald Trump's unfavorable ratings are actually higher than Secretary Clinton's.	B:No, actually, I've got a survey in Ohio that says Hillary Clinton's negatives are higher than Donald Trump's.	Direct	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 38	A: So what she basically just said is she admitted that, right now, the Republican Party is a white nationalist party. And that's basically what she equated.	B:No, she didn't. She equated hers is--	Direct	Presupposition	Immediately precedent
Item 39	A:Bannon is already making his influence felt in innuendo about Clinton's health.	B:I'm not saying that, you know, she's had a stroke or anything like that, but this is not the woman we're used to seeing.	Direct	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 40	A:I think to compare someone that we know gave away national secrets to--	B:Wait a minute, you are making assumptions, we don't know that.	Indirect	Presupposition	Immediately preceding
Item 41	A:I will tell you as a lawyer James Comey laid out a prima facie case for gross negligence, absolutely.	B:No, I understand the case he laid out, but we don't know factually	Direct	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 42	A:I mean, basically, we have a psychopath running for President. I mean, he meets the clinical definition, okay?	B:Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Do you really think, diagnosing people on air, I assume you don't have a degree in Psychology. Is that fair? I mean--	Indirect	Assertion	Not immediately preceding
Item 43	A:But that's not an excuse for breaking the law.	B:I'm not saying that's an excuse	Direct	Assertion	Immediately preceding

Item 44	A:The quo and quid pro quo is the meeting and you cannot set up meetings on behalf of--	B:But one moment, the quid here is to very wealthy people, "Give us money, so we can give 11.5 million people AIDS drugs." And the quo is, "Huma Abedin may call you back." That is not a quid pro quo, in a sense.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 45	A:How does a 70 year old woman start persuading people she's telling the truth?	B:Well, first of all, she isn't 70	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 46	A:And if he gets distracted like this, why shouldn't this be an issue that concerns voters of him in the Oval Office if he can so easily get distracted by personal criticism?	B:He's not distracted	Direct	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 47	A:This feels like a slight rollback--	B: I don't think so. I actually don't think it's a rollback	Direct	Assertion	
Item 48	A:"It's a rookie mistake, and it proves that Trump needs people like us around to help steer him in the right direction on some basic things."	B:He's 100 percent wrong	Direct	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 49	A:It is unusual not to have a Bush at a convention.	B:Well, it didn't happen four years ago, Chuck, that's not true.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 50	A:So this feels a bit overwhelming I think to people.	B:Well, yeah, but I think you have to keep everything in context	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately preceding
Item 51	A:But the whole political strategy of getting out the white vote is morally problematic and very dangerous	B:Well, hold on. So it is about race	Indirect	Presupposition	Immediately preceding
Item 52	A: I tend to agree with Mary that he would be just be bored to tears as Vice President--	B:Well, I don't think he'd be bored.	Indirect	Assertion	Immediately preceding