

**Stony Brook University  
The Graduate School**

Doctoral Defense Announcement

**Abstract**

**On (Non)Factivity, Clausal Complementation and the CP-Field**

By

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This dissertation examines the syntactic and semantic behavior of sentential complement clauses under *factive* vs. *non-factive* verbs. These classes of verbs, while superficially similar, behave very differently both in the syntactic structures they allow and in the semantic interpretation of their complements. Kiparsky & Kiparsky (1971) provide the classic analysis, where factive verbs like *regret* are said to be associated with more complex syntactic structure than non-factive verbs like *believe*.

The main claim I make is that the classic analysis has it wrong - essentially backwards. I propose instead that it is actually *non-factives* that have a syntactic projection that *factives* lack. I provide cross-linguistic syntactic evidence for a more articulated non-factive structure, showing numerous cases where more complex syntactic structure is associated with non-factives, and not factives. I also show that the extra projection opens an escape hatch that allows for the freer *wh*-extraction pattern found in non-factive constructions.

I argue further that the extra syntactic projection contains a semantic operator that is responsible for non-factive interpretation. In the absence of this projection, a default factive interpretation results. This is a relatively recent semantic view of factivity, as in the past it has been widely assumed that factives were the special case in need of explanation. The view may be new, but it is well supported. In addition, I show that traditional 'factivity' classification is actually the wrong one to use to divide the verb classes. I argue that verbs should be classed as to whether they take 'familiar' or 'novel' complements, along the lines of Hegarty (1992). This semantic classification matches the syntactic data much better than a factive/non-factive distinction.

I exploit the extra structure and operator to provide an account for long-distance Negative Polarity Item licensing, which is available only under what are traditionally called non-factives. Finally, I show that in addition to covering the new data I present, my analysis covers the same empirical ground as Kiparsky and Kiparsky's original proposal.

**Date:** May 28, 2007

**Time:** 4:00pm

**Place:** SBS, Room S-207

**Program:** Linguistics

**Dissertation Advisor:** Daniel Finer