

Temporal Priority and Pragmatic Ambiguity: The Case of *Already*
Laura A. Michaelis
University of California, Berkeley

0. Introduction¹

Among those adverbs which serve to locate states of affairs with respect to time points, one can make a division between those, like *now*, which serve a tenselike function, and those which can instead be identified with certain aspectual categories. In the former case, verb and adverb co-refer to a given reference time; in the latter case, reference time is supplied by the tense of the predication alone—the adverb, like an aspectual operator, accepts any tense specification. An adverb of the latter type is temporal *still*, which Traugott and Waterhouse (1969) regard as an adverbial manifestation of imperfective aspect, the aspectual class of predicates (stative and progressive) with which it co-occurs. Another adverb grouped in the aspectual class is *already*. Analyses of *already* (and its analogs in other languages) have typically focused upon the manner in which this adverb's semantic structure is related to that of an associated verbal construct, the perfect. No one of these studies, to my knowledge, has examined the relationship between *already*'s semantic structure and the types of communicative functions served by *already*. It is the purpose of the present paper to investigate the manner in which features of the linguistic and extralinguistic context interact with the lexical specifications of *already*, inducing a number of use distinctions. An account of these usages relies upon an understanding of the basic semantic structure accessed in each of the contexts at issue. Toward that end, we might first attempt to sort out and revise some previous accounts of the semantics associated with *already*.

Many of these accounts have employed certain conventions of tense logic to specify necessary and sufficient conditions governing the validity of sentences containing this operator. The only clear agreement among all of the analyses consists in their portrayal of *already* as a sentential adverb which encodes or at least reflects the existence of a given state of affairs at reference time.² This state of affairs is coded by the clausal material within the adverb's scope. Let us call the coded proposition the *Already State* (AS). Thus, the AS of (1) is *All of the paratroopers have left the Baltic region*:

- (1) All of the paratroopers have ALREADY left the Baltic region. -*The Daily Texan* 1/31/91

There is some disagreement as to what further conditions the adverb places upon the AS. In one group of analyses, of which Horn (1970) and König (1977) are representative, that further condition—a presupposition in Horn's formulation—is only that the AS obtain for some time span following reference time. This condition seems to arise from a general constraint upon stative predications: states are characterized by temporal extension; they cannot obtain at a single moment alone. The peculiarity of the gnomic sentences given in (2) demonstrates that this condition is not sufficient to describe those constraints imposed by *already* per se :

- (2) a. ?Oil ALREADY floats on water.
 b. ?The earth ALREADY revolves around the sun.

In another group of analyses—of which Doherty (1973), Hirtle (1977), Abraham (1980), Hoepelman and Rohrer (1981), and Mordechay (1986) are representative—*already* is a completive marker, insofar as it serves to code the existence of a situation which has arisen from an anterior event. Hence, the AS of (1) represents the aftermath of the paratroopers' earlier departure; it might be paraphrased as *There are no paratroopers remaining in the Baltic region*. Several of these analysts have remarked upon the close association of *already* with the resultative perfect. The latter construct serves to present a current situation as the result of some previous event (cf. Fenn 1987). It is *already*'s manifest sympathy for such semantic content which apparently led Traugott and Waterhouse (1969) to decree that "*already* should be specified as the realization of a...set of features associated with [the] perfect". A number of those who view *already* as a marker of resultant states—e.g., Doherty and Abraham (op. cit.)—have further suggested that this operator presupposes the nonexistence of the AS during a phase prior to reference time. Doherty's definition is given in (3), with S=AS:

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|-----------------|---------|---------|
| (3) | <i>already</i> | presupposition: | phase 1 | (not-S) |
| | | assertion: | phase 2 | (S) |

(Doherty 1973)

It is apparent, however, that while *already* can function as a marker of resultant states in the manner suggested, the presupposition given in (3) is not encoded in its semantic structure. The examples given in (4) demonstrate that *already* need not scope a proposition representing a resultant state. The operator is equally comfortable with an AS representing a historically stable situation, i.e., one that has obtained for some period of indefinite length prior to reference time:

- (4) a. "The strawberry one [i.e., frappé] has fewer calories. They don't have to put sugar into it because the strawberries are ALREADY sweet."
 b. If sour cream is ALREADY sour when you buy it, why does it have an expiration date on the package? -"Farley", *SF Chronicle* 11/17/90
 c. "Why would you need a permanent? You ALREADY have curly hair."

In such examples, to be discussed below under the rubric of "priority to process", *already* appears simply to indicate the presence of a state in advance of any procedure or event sequence known to subsume that same state as an endpoint. Thus, for example, the sweetness of the strawberries (the AS) is held in (4a) to render a sweetening procedure superfluous, just as the existence of the AS of (4c), possession of curly hair, is understood to obviate the procedure designed to bring about that state. The AS's here represent intrinsic properties which are not construed as resultant states. Such examples also provide counterevidence against those proposals (notably Hoepelman and Rohrer op. cit) in which *already* is

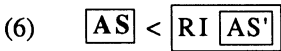
represented as encoding the assertion that the eventuation of the AS is premature with respect to a given schedule of events. Such analysts point to examples of the kind given in (5):

- (5) When we arrived, before noon, Huey was ALREADY drunk. -Ken Kelley, "Huey Newton", *California Magazine* 8/90

In (5), *already* serves to assert that the state of inebriation has come about at a point prior to the time at which it might be expected to eventuate. The examples given in (4) show that the flavor of expectation contravention associated with *already* in (5) is not a reliable concomitant of its semantic contribution. Since in (4) the AS is not a resultant state, it cannot therefore represent a situation arising at an earlier than expected point. The expression of early eventuation is, I will argue, a salient usage of *already*, but not one deserving of codification into the semantic structure of the operator. Rather, I will argue, the usage exemplified in (5) is only one of a set of such usages arising out of *already's* basic function as a marker of temporal priority. We might now then turn to this function and the use distinctions arising from it.

1. Semantic Structure

A central claim of the present analysis is that *already* not only encodes the existence of a given state of affairs at reference time, but also presupposes the anteriority of that state of affairs to an interval of a specific type. Let us call this interval the Reference Interval (RI). The RI is defined as including a state which is effectively identical to the AS. The semantic structure at issue might be schematized by means of the diagram given in (6):



In (6), the assertive component³ (existence of the AS at reference time) is given in boldface. The "less than" indicates that the AS obtains at some time prior to the RI. The RI and the anteriority relationship itself is presupposed, as indicated by plain typeface. Evidence for this presupposition is provided by such sentences as (4b), in which the entailment of anteriority (to a process) exists within a polarity context (conditional protasis). The RI, which, as we will see, is frequently construed as hypothetical, is represented as including a state, AS'.⁴ AS' is intended to represent that state which is analogous to (i.e., of the same situation type as) the AS necessarily anchored by some reference time. We will see below that there are uses of *already* in which the RI and AS' coalesce. The contrast pair given in (7) provides an illustration of the manner in which *already* sentences conform to this schema :

- (7) a. The ALREADY unstable overpass was rendered dangerously weak by the quake.

- b.? The ALREADY stable overpass was rendered dangerously weak by the quake.

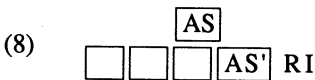
Sentence (7a), in which, I will argue, *already* codes priority to further accretion of a scalar property, fits the conditions of (6) in the following fashion: the AS—the instability of the overpass—exists prior to an RI—the period of the earthquake—during which additional weakening (the AS') obtains. The anomaly of (7b) stems from the fact that it fails to meet the conditions of (6): the AS (overpass stability) is not subsumed by the subsequent RI, an event during which a state of instability is created. The RI thus here subsumes a state of affairs (AS') which differs from the AS. Hence, the requisite identity between the AS and AS' is not present. We might note that another marker of temporal priority, *previously*, is not restricted by the identity condition of (6). Because this adverb would code only anteriority of the past state of stability to the phase of instability, it can be substituted for *already* in (7b), rendering that sentence acceptable.

The definition given in (6) is certainly reconcilable with the program of the aforementioned analyses. It might easily be cast in terms of a tense logic—such as that used by König and Traugott (1982)—which makes reference to superordinate events (RI properly includes AS'), as well as like situation types (AS=AS'). Nonetheless, it would seem that whatever its formal realization, this definition alone does not provide an account of the interpretive mechanism brought to bear upon tokens of *already* in context. *Already* can be regarded as an instance in which “linguistic content significantly underdetermines first level, ‘literal’ interpretation” (Kay 1989). Within the constraints imposed by the semantic schema (6), there are, it seems, several construals that can be placed upon the underspecified RI. Each of these construals has been touched upon: that manifested in the expression of priority with respect to a process in (4), with respect to an expected eventuation point in (5), and with respect to further accretion along a scale in (7).

I will claim that the apparent fluidity of interpretation allowed by the underspecified RI renders *already* pragmatically ambiguous in the sense of Horn 1985. That is, the semantic structure of (6) can be harnessed for a variety of uses. These uses (i.e., anteriority-marking functions) are derived from the interpretive instructions provided by the context. The remainder of this paper will be devoted to a closer look at the various functions served by *already* and the manner in which these functions arise from the contextual specifications imposed upon the RI of schema (6). The uses at issue are: (a) priority to process, (b) priority to expected eventuation point, and (c) priority to further accretion.

2. Functions

2.1. *Priority to Process*. This usage, exemplified in (4), can be schematized by means of the diagram given in (8):



The RI in (8) represents a schematic process (Mordechay 1986)—a sequence of distinct situation states arrayed along a time line. This process frequently represents a procedure designed to bring about a given end state (as the permanent procedure of (4c) culminates in curly hair). The end state of this process (the AS') is analogous to the AS, which may itself be the resultant state of a process. The inceptions of the RI and of the AS are not temporally ordered with respect to one another; all that is required, as indicated by (8), is that the final state of the RI obtain at some time later than that situation depicted by the AS. If the RI is presumed to be hypothetical, like that defined by the permanent contemplated by the addressee of (4c), then the anteriority of the AS (the present curly hair) to the AS' (the effected curly hair) necessarily obtains.

The sentences in (9) provide further examples of the priority-to-process usage schematized in (8). Each sentence is accompanied by a listing of the elements filling the roles provided by the schema (6):

- (9) a. Police responded to a bomb threat at a Denny's restaurant early yesterday to discover that an employee had ALREADY moved the suspicious device to the parking lot. -*SF Chronicle* 6/1/90
 a.' AS=bomb removal; RI=police intervention; AS'=bomb removal
 b. Tired of all the bustle? Take a break and head for Long Island Sound, where you won't even need fishing poles in some areas because the fish are ALREADY dead. -*Newsweek* 7/16/90
 b.' AS=fish death; RI=fishing; AS'=fish death
 c. Don't stop him if he's telling a joke you've ALREADY heard, and laugh anyway. -How to be a Great Date, *Cosmopolitan* 11/90
 c.' AS=joke known to addressee; RI=telling of joke to addressee; AS'=joke known to addressee

I wish to include under this heading a usage of *already* that appears to be a counterexample to the condition, imposed by (6), that the AS and AS' represent effectively identical situations. In this usage, exemplified in (10), the AS is an undesirable situation, and the RI is a preventative measure—a process designed to obviate, rather than effect, that situation. In such cases, the final state of the RI, the AS', represents the lack of that situation coded by the AS. Hence in this usage there does not appear to be the requisite identity between the AS and AS' situations.

- (10) a. It was too late to stop that war in hearing rooms 25 years ago because our boys were ALREADY dying, and that of course meant more boys must die. -Rob Morse, *SF Chronicle* 12/2/90
 a.' AS=warfare; RI=effort to prevent war; AS'=lack of warfare
 b. Since you've ALREADY bad-mouthed me on the air, I'll take the blame for it. But I think most of your listeners with any intelligence know that it wasn't me. -Mark Ibanez, KGO-AM 11/12/90
 b.' AS=publicly slandered character; RI=prevention of said slander; AS'=unbesmirched character

The manner in which the usage exemplified in (10) does in fact conform to (6) can be seen in examples (11a-b). Here the first continuation represents a

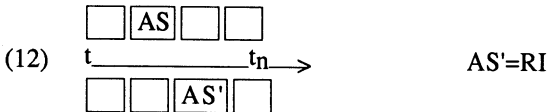
straightforward instance of the priority-to-process usage of (9) and the second an instance of the usage shown in (10), wherein the RI represents a preventative measure:

- (11) First Deposit won't receive a federal bail out because
 a. it's ALREADY solvent (cf. (9))
 b. it's ALREADY gone bankrupt (cf. (10))

This example demonstrates that the RI—receipt of the loan—can be viewed both as a procedure designed to effect solvency (11a) and as a means of preventing bankruptcy (11b). In the latter case, the process filling the RI role can be viewed as an event sequence whose outcome ranges over two potential situations: the desired resolution (solvency) that the process is intended to effect or preserve, and the undesired resolution (bankruptcy) that the process is intended to obviate. Insofar as both types of resolutions instantiate the procedure's possible outcome, they are analogous. Hence, in such examples as (11b), there is in fact the required identity between the AS' (=solvency or bankruptcy) and the AS (=bankruptcy) in which the RI has culminated.

It can further be noted that the usages exemplified in (11a-b) share an argumentative point: both are used to assert that the existence of the *already*-scoped state of affairs obviates the need for some course of action, whether that course of action has thereby been rendered unnecessary (as in (11a)) or futile (as in (11b)).

2.2. Priority to Expected Eventuation Point. In this usage, exemplified in (5), *already* codes the premature appearance of an eventuality which has been anticipated by the interlocutors. As shown in (12), this usage can be schematized in a manner similar to that suggested by Hoepelman and Rohrer (1981), who use two parallel time lines to represent, respectively, the actual time at which a given situation obtains (the AS) and the time at which that situation was expected to obtain (the AS'). Here, the two rows of boxes are intended to represent two schedules or situation sequences (actual and expected) arrayed along a timeline. The AS is shown to obtain at some less advanced point on this timeline than does the analogous state of affairs (the AS') within the hypothetical situation-sequence:



The expected eventuation point (the AS') appears to come in two basic varieties: (a) that whose placement along the timeline is determined simply by stipulation (a given event is regarded by speaker or hearer as scheduled for a particular interval) and (b) that whose placement is determined by cognitive modeling of event sequences—a script or an idealized path of development. Sentence (13) provides an example of the former type; here, *already* codes the anteriority of Uncle Harry's presence (the AS) to that point (5 o'clock=AS') at which his presence had been scheduled by the speaker:

- (13) Uncle Harry is here ALREADY? We didn't expect him until five.

In that usage involving a conventionalized point of eventuation, the timeline within the speaker's expectations contains a conventionally given event-sequence. This sequence subsumes a component state (the AS') analogous to the AS. In examples (14a-b), this event sequence represents a canonical course of development, within which component states or situations are associated with particular time points. *Already* codes the presence of a situation at some less advanced point along that timeline than would be predicted by the model:

- (14) a. Dave, a wiry 7-year-old Concord boy, has ALREADY battled a few of life's adversities. -*SF Chronicle* 12/23/90
b. When it took six days for a postcard to go from Chicago to LA, guess who ALREADY made a fax machine? -Toshiba commercial 4/28/90

Thus, for example, (14a) both presupposes and contravenes a model in which one's experience with adversity exists at some point later in life than age seven. Conventionalized sequences may not only associate situation states with particular time points, but may also simply order situation states with respect to one another. The examples in (15) demonstrate that *already* can also code the inversion of component states within a script—i.e., the presence of a given state of affairs (the AS) at a point before that slot (the AS') provided for it by the script:

- (15) a. The Iraqis were ALREADY heading for the demonstration point, before they'd heard what I'd said. -G. Bush, press conference following his address on Iraqi TV 9/17/90
b. You know what happens in a fancy restaurant? When you sit down, there's ALREADY a plate in front of you. But they take that plate away as soon as you sit down. -Charlie Brown, "Peanuts" 5/6/90

Thus, adduction of the usage given in (15) requires one to presume scripts in which a protest measure follows the delivery of the offensive political statement (15a) and the presence of the plate before the diner obtains only after he has ordered (15b). The actual time-scale reverses the elements of these scripts, and *already* thus marks the anteriority of the AS with respect to the canonical point of eventuation assigned to that situation by the script (the AS').

2.3. *Priority to Further Accretion.* As shown in (7a), *already* can be used to indicate that some fairly advanced degree of a given scalar property is present at reference time, in advance of any further accretion of that property along the same scale. This usage can be schematized as in (16), wherein the AS is the value for the scalar property present at reference time and the RI subsumes any greater degree of the property at issue (AS'), whether hypothetical or actually obtained. The degrees of the scale are paralleled by moments along a timeline:

- (16) $\frac{\text{AS}}{t} \text{ [RI-AS' } \frac{\text{AS'}}{t_n} \text{]} \rightarrow$

The identity between the AS and AS' required by the semantic schema of (6) is present by virtue of the fact that the two situation states are instances or degrees of the same (scalar) property. Further examples of this usage are given in (17):

- (17) a. ...the Cal bookstore is posting reasons for axing Stanford in the Nov. 17 Big Game, [my] favorite being There are too many Muffys and Biffs in the world ALREADY. -Herb Caen, *SF Chronicle* 11/10/90
 b. Considering that Cooper has ALREADY been in telepathic contact with extraterrestrials, a supernatural Bob wouldn't be too far-fetched. -John Carman on "Twin Peaks", *SF Chronicle* 11/13/90
 c. Experts estimate that the full gear will add 10 degrees to the ALREADY searing daytime desert temperatures. -*Newsweek* 8/20/90

Thus in (17b), for example, the present plot situation is held to have obtained a rather high degree of storyline weirdness (the AS) prior to the introduction of a supernatural antagonist, a development which would result in further advancement along the scale in question (the AS').

Like the priority-to-process usage, this form of anteriority coding can be identified with a particular argumentative force (cf. section 4). Sentences of the type given in (17) are typically used to lead the addressee down a reasoning path of the following sort: since the AS in itself represents a fair degree of advancement along some scale (AS=searing heat in (17c)), any further advancement along that scale (RI=heightened temperature associated with the wearing of the combat gear) will produce a very high degree of the property at issue (unbearable heat).⁵

3. Function Construal

3.1. *Coalescence*. Now that we have looked at the three functions of *already*, one disclaimer seems to be in order: these uses have been treated as discrete only for purposes of exposition; they frequently coalesce. That is, it is often the case that interpreters need not resolve a given instance of use ambiguity in favor of one or another function. Such use coalescence is a hallmark of use ambiguity. Thus, for example, Li, Thompson and Thompson (1982) demonstrate that function conflation characterizes the pragmatically ambiguous Mandarin perfect marker. Similarly, it appears that in certain contexts, more than one of the communicative functions served by *already* may be accessed by the interpreter. The sentences in (18) are intended to exemplify this situation:

- (18) a. [Patty:] If we win today, Marcie, I'm going to let you keep the game ball! [Marcie:] It's ALREADY my ball, sir. My dad gave it to me for my birthday. -"Peanuts" 11/9/90

- b. Why did you go for the scotch if Sunny was ALREADY soused?
-A. Dershowitz, "Reversal of Fortune"

Thus in (18a) *already* serves to signal both priority to process and priority to expected eventuation point: Marcy asserts not only that the ball is hers prior to the process of winning it, but also indicates her presumption that her possession of the ball at this point in the proceedings will appear premature to her addressee. In (18b), *already* appears to indicate both priority with respect to a process and priority to further accretion: Sunny's drunken state obtained prior to any effort to effect that state, and prior to that advancement along the scale of inebriation represented by the consumption of the scotch. Thus, the Reference Interval may be subject to several simultaneously available construals in a given context.

3.2 *Contextual selection.* More typically, perhaps, the context will select as preferred a given form of priority coding. This can be seen in (19), where the three continuations (a-c) represent distinct sets of contextual instructions, by means of which the interpreter can adduce each of the three respective usages:

- (19) Harry's ALREADY rich;
- a. he doesn't need your stock tip (priority to process)
 - b. and he only started investing last fall (priority to expected eventuation point)
 - c. if this new deal goes through, he'll be a millionaire (priority to further accretion)

4. Argumentative Force

It is useful to distinguish between (a) uses of the semantic template (6) and (b) uses of *assertions* invoking a given function. The former are akin to the three functions of *already* discussed in section 2; they devolve upon distinct interpretations of the RI. The latter can be discussed under the rubric of *argumentative force*. As mentioned earlier (sections 2.1 and 2.3), certain functions of *already* can be used in the service of a particular argumentative goal. A given variety of *already*-style temporal precedence has an argumentative force insofar as assertions invoking it exploit the capacity of the addressee to derive from the *already*-bearing proposition a certain type of conclusion. Thus, for example, the prior-to-process assertion (4c) requires the addressee to infer from the fact that the AS (curly hair) exists at present—prior to any effort to effect the AS—the conclusion that a procedure intended to bring about the AS (the permanent) is not necessary. It is the speaker's argumentative intent that the addressee should draw this conclusion. That it can be used to further this argumentative intent is characteristic of the form of priority coding exemplified in (4).

It should be noted that not every use of *already* has a distinct argumentative value (i.e., distinct from its contextually specified function). Thus, where *already* codes priority with respect to an expected eventuation point (2.2), it simply functions as a comment upon the prematurity of the AS; such usages do not require of the addressee any inference thereof.

5. Conclusion

I hope to have demonstrated that a complete account of *already*'s function should refer not only to the variety of temporal priority schematized in (6) but also to the manner in which a lexically underspecified Reference Interval included within this schema receives an interpretation in context. This investigation of the various contextually governed subfunctions of *already* then demonstrates the manner in which the semantics of a grammatical morpheme having no particular discourse-pragmatic function—in this case a marker of temporal priority—is refined or augmented to fit certain communicative needs. Typically, this communicative need can be identified with an argumentative goal—that of inducing the addressee to derive a particular conclusion from an assertion invoking a given variety of *already*-style temporal priority. Hence, contextually provided specifications (those “fleshing out” the RI) provide a means of mediating between a semantic template and the various argumentative ends for which that template might be used.

Endnotes

1 For their help in developing the present analysis I would like to thank Gene Buckley, Charles Fillmore, Jean-Pierre Koenig, and Knud Lambrecht.

2 Two disclaimers are in order here—the first involving the notion of sentential vs. propositional scope, the second involving the distinction between temporal and aspectual operators:

(i) It appears the scope of *already* may best be defined not in syntactic but semantic terms. There are a number of instances in which *already* appears to have predicational rather than sentential scope. *Already* often seems to scope only a modifier—as in (17c), *already searing*. In such instances, however, *already* does have propositional scope—over the predicate-argument structure dubbed the AS (already [AS the temperatures are searing]). While the AS is often realized as a sentence, it need not be.

(ii) As mentioned in the introduction, *already*, like *still* (and unlike such indexical temporal adverbs as *yesterday* and *now*), can combine with a predication of any tense. *Already* and *still* do represent temporal adverbs insofar as both adverb types (a) have propositional scope and (b) can be regarded as a two-place function ('obtains at') relating that proposition to a time interval. The distinctive ability of *already*-style adverbs to combine with various tenses can be attributed to the fact that their chief function is not to place an eventuality with respect to speech time; it is to place that eventuality with respect to a nondeictic interval (i.e., one not necessarily equated with speech time). With regard to *still*, this interval is a presupposed period of prior instantiation of the state of affairs in question (König and Traugott 1982); with regard to *already*, this interval is a subsequent phase (RI). *Still* is then analogous to imperfective aspect insofar as it codes continuity or stasis over time; *already* is akin to the (present) perfect, which relates an event to a discourse-active phase of aftermath (Dinsmore 1991). These suggestions are in keeping with the original claim of Traugott and Waterhouse (1969) that adverbs in this class are manifestations of certain verbal aspectual categories. Their claim,

however, is seemingly based only upon the aspectual class of predicates with which these adverbs typically co-occur; the present claim is based upon isomorphic semantic structure held to unite the adverbial and aspectual constructs and to account for the observed co-occurrence of the two types of constructs. Such co-occurrence is good evidence that the adverbs in question are sympathetic to the semantics of the associated verb aspect. Nonetheless, *already* cannot simply 'copy' the semantic features of the perfect; it need not co-occur with the perfect. The semantic structures of the aspectual adverb and its attendant verbal aspect are thus not wholly isomorphic.

3 To claim that *already* in such sentences as (1) *asserts* (rather than *reflects*) existence of the AS at reference time is a little inaccurate, as the corresponding sentence without *already* asserts the very same thing. We might then regard *already*'s assertive component as redundant with that of the tense of the predication; the presupposed anteriority relation is the unique contribution of *already*. It should also be noted that the semantic assertion represented in the template (6) is not equivalent to the assertion *within discourse* that the AS obtains. As noted in fn. 5, where an *already*-sentence appears within a subordinate clause, the existence of the AS is pragmatically presupposed (presumed to be known to the addressee). Such pragmatic presupposition is to be distinguished from semantic presupposition: the former is specified within the lexical entry (as is the existence of the RI in (6)); the latter is akin to shared knowledge within discourse. Only where an *already*-sentence functions to inform the speaker of the existence of the AS—as in (5), e.g.—do the two forms of assertion coalesce.

4 Limitations of space prevent discussion of a distinct sense of *already* which, although also coding temporal priority, does not code priority with respect to an RI of the sort schematized in (6). Examples of this sense are given in (a-b):

- (a) Those Muppets will live on in shows ALREADY taped by Henson. -"Entertainment Tonight" 5/21/90
- (b) The Lao pilots brought the empty canisters back to sell the aluminum, having ALREADY snipped off the umbilical cords to sell the wire. -Stan Sesser, "The Forgotten Country" *The New Yorker* 8/20/90

In such examples, the RI simply represents a reference time subsequent to the inception of the AS; it does not contain any state analogous to the AS (AS'). *Already* here is paraphrasable by *previously*.

5 The argumentative force of a particular usage of *already* in a given context does not appear to arise from the fact that the *already*-bearing sentence functions to inform the addressee of the existence of the AS (although such was assumed in the oral version of this paper). In (17c), for example, the fact that the AS obtains is pragmatically presupposed: the AS is embedded in a participial relative clause; the addressee is presumed to know that the daytime desert temperature is high.

Nonetheless, *already* here has an argumentative force of the kind discussed in section 2.3.

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