



Within a typological discourse as in (5), the progression of asking questions is expected to be gradual from the general to the specific. B's question appears to be too specific at this point of the discourse and is thus unlikely to be asked. Yet despite this, 'our *even*' in (5) is infelicitous. Importantly, if we alter the context of sentence (5) as in (6), below, 'our *even*' becomes felicitous:

(6) (A discusses classifying a newly discovered species with B, the lab's animal feeder, who is aware that he will soon have to feed the wug). A: *The wug seems to be cold-blooded.* B: *what does it feed on even?* This felicity variation cannot be accounted for by a difference in the (un)likelihood of asking the prejacent question compared to asking alternative questions. '*what does it feed on?*' is not least likely, but rather very likely to be asked by the animal feeder (speaker) and is not least likely to be asked by the addressee (if such a revision to the analysis were to be considered). In addition, because I&T suggest that the 'least likely to be asked question' correlates with the 'most likely to be known answer', we note here that the latter also does not apply to the prejacent question in (6). What the wug (member of a newly discovered species) feeds on, is not most likely to be known to either speaker or addressee.

#### **Resolving Challenge (b):**

Instead of I&T's suggested likelihood-based semantics, we propose, alternatively, to apply to 'our *even*' Greenberg's (2015, 2018) gradability-based semantics of (garden variety) *even*. According to this analysis, *even* operates on a scale whose dimension is contextually derived. In the case of 'our *even*', we suggest that this dimension is 'usefulness towards resolution of the QUD'. Greenberg's (2015, 2018) lexical entry for *even*'s scalar presupposition, is in (7), below:

(7) *even* (C) (p) (w) is defined iff  $\forall q \in C \lambda q \neq p \rightarrow \forall w_1, w_2 [w_1 R w \wedge w_2 R w \wedge w_2 \in p \wedge w_1 \in [q \wedge \neg p]] \rightarrow \max(\lambda d_2. G(d_2)(x)(w_2)) > \max(\lambda d_1. G(d_1)(x)(w_1)) \wedge \max(\lambda d_1. G(d_1)(x)(w_1)) \geq \text{stand } G$

Within this semantics, for *even* to be felicitous, the degree of *x* (a non-focused element within the prejacent) is required to be higher on a contextually derived scale, *G*, in the accessible *p*-worlds compared to its degree in the accessible *q-and-not-p* worlds. Moreover, both these degrees are required to be  $\geq$  the standard associated with *G*. Assuming that: (i) *x* (which is non-focused) is the question SAO, standing for 'asking the question', (ii) in the *p* worlds one asks the prejacent question, (iii) in the *q-and-not-p* worlds one asks an alternative question (and not the prejacent question) and (vi) the dimension of the scale is usefulness, where asking questions (requiring the addressee to reply (cf. Krifka 2015, Sauerland & Yatsushiro 2016)) is judged by the usefulness of receiving these replies. Following the LF in (3), this analysis applied to 'our *even*' thus defines that: in the worlds where one asks the prejacent question, a more useful answer is attained compared to where one asks an alternative question, and moreover in both world sets, the attained answers are [*pos*] useful towards resolving the QUD, i.e. are associated with a degree which is  $\geq$  the standard for usefulness. In the full paper we suggest a formal framework for usefulness, following literature on utility and decision theory (e.g. van Rooij 2003, Benz 2004, 2005).

**Addressing the Triviality Concern:** This analysis may appear to predict that our *even*'s contribution is trivial, since (i) one in any case always asks the question of the highest usefulness and (ii) all questions in *C* are  $\geq$  the standard for usefulness (by virtue of their definition as contextually relevant). However, in the full paper we explain the idea that our *even*'s contribution would be non-trivial and thus licensed exactly in contexts where relativized to the addressee, asking the prejacent question is of low/below-standard usefulness, e.g. since he/she deems the answer to already be in the CG (as in (1) and (4)), or relates to a different QUD (as appears to occur in (6)). Then, by using 'our *even*', the speaker indicates that contra to the addressee's evaluation, asking the prejacent question and receiving its answer is in fact rated above the standard for usefulness and moreover it is the most useful for resolving the QUD.

#### **4. Accounting for the Data**

This analysis (to be fully elaborated on in the paper), correctly accounts for the felicity of (1), (4) and (6) in that asking and receiving a response to the prejacent question is [*pos*] useful and is of the highest usefulness (to the speaker) contra the addressee's expectations. Additionally, this latter element appears to account for the observed effect where the prejacent question of 'our *even*' intuitively seems to be 'most helpful despite expectations to the contrary'. Lastly, our account explains the infelicity of (5), where the prejacent question is not the most useful for the specific stage in the discourse.