International Conference

Specificity
From Empirical and Theoretical Points of View

Stuttgart, August 31 to September 2, 2010

Invited Speakers:

Peter Bosch (Univ. Osnabrück)
Adrian Brasoveanu (Univ. of California)
Paul Dsekker (Univ. van Amsterdam)
Donka Farkas (Univ. of California)
Manuel Leonetti (Univ. de Alcalá)
Hans Kamp (Univ. Stuttgart)
Maribel Romero (Univ. Konstanz)
Carla Umbach (Universität Osnabrück)
Ongoing research on different aspects of specificity has contributed to a better understanding of the referential potential of indefinite noun phrases at the semantics-pragmatics interface. Furthermore, many studies have established a considerable body of cross-linguistic expressions and constructions that can be related to different types of specificity. The close interaction of in-depth description of particular linguistic phenomena and contrasts with theoretical models of specificity has been very fruitful. However, there are still many open questions, such as

- how are the different types of specificity related to each other?
- what are the interactions of specificity with other semantic-pragmatic categories such as referentiality, definiteness and genericity?
- what is the exact range of linguistic phenomena related to specificity and what are reliable tests?
- can we associate different ways of encoding specificity, i.e. by lexical items, by morphology, by syntax, by phonology etc. with distinct properties of specificity?
## Program

### Tuesday, 31.08.2010

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The distinction between definite and indefinite determiners sometimes seems blurred. Poesio (1994) pointed out sentences like those under (1), where one might just as well substitute "a" for "the", with no obvious semantic or pragmatic difference.

(1)  a. John got these data from the student of a linguist.
    b. I usually had breakfast at the corner of a major intersection.

Carlson et al. (2006) observed that there is a reading of sentence (2a) that it seems to share with sentence (2b). Under this reading (2a) is true also in a situation where John and Mary went to different supermarkets.

(2)  a. Mary went to the supermarket, and so did John.
    b. Mary went to a supermarket, and so did John.

These observations seem in conflict with just about all current theories of definite reference. Both Poesio and Carlson et al. are using the term 'weak definiteness' to describe the behaviour of the English definite determiner in these cases, but Poesio's account in term of anchoring does not generalize to the observations by Carlson et al., nor would the suggestion in Carlson et. al that points in the direction of an incorporation account seem to be of any help in Poesio's cases.

I will not be able to solve the puzzle in this paper; my contribution is rather in discussing related observations about the semantics and discourse function of German preposition-determiner contractions that have not been discussed in this context and that may help in clarifying the issue because they add a different form of definiteness marking. For instance, the reading of (2a) under which John und Mary went to different supermarkets cannot be expressed in German by the uncontracted form in (3a), but only by the contracted form in (3b), and the contracted form in (3b) cannot be interpreted anaphorically, while the uncontracted form in (3a) can.

(3)  a. Mary ging zu dem Supermarkt und John auch.
    b. Mary ging zum Supermarkt und John auch.

References:
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LICENSING INDEFINITE SUBJECTS IN CONSTITUENT QUESTIONS

1. The data and the issues: indefinite subjects of specificational wh-questions

Specificational copular sentences (first studied by Higgins 1973) have been recently analyzed as having the subject DP as their topic (Geist 2007, Mikkelsen 2005). In case the subject of a specificational sentence is indefinite (e.g. A/One person who might help you is Mary), this analysis does not raise problems: indeed, a specific indefinite can be the topic of a sentence (c.f. Cresti 1995, Portner and Yabushita 2001, a.o.); moreover, the indefinite subject of a specificational sentence is necessarily a specific indefinite. Its specificity follows from Higgins’s characterization of specificational sentences, according to which they have a subject that denotes a list of elements, with the complement of the copula exhaustively enumerating the members of the list; this exhaustiveness shows that the speaker knows the constitution of the list denoted by the subject and is therefore a specific indefinite. We will say that the subject is speaker specific or ‘referentially anchored’ to the speaker, as the notion of specificity that we will use is that of von Heusinger (2002).

Specificational sentences can also take the form of constituent questions, as shown by Comorovski 2005, 2007 and Barros 2009. In the Romance languages, specificational questions have the form DP[+wh]-copula-DP, where the subject is the postcopular DP. The subject can be indefinite only if it contains a subjective modifier (e.g. bun (“good”)), as illustrated by the contrast below in Romanian:

(1)  
a. Care ar fi (după tine) un loc bun de mers în vacanţă?  
„What would be (according to you) a good place for spending the holidays?”

b. * Care ar fi/e un hotel de cinci stele în Paris?
„what would be/is a hotel of five stars in Paris?”

Our paper examines the subjective modifier condition on indefinite subjects of specificational wh-questions. In so doing, we are brought to consider the information structure of non-generic wh-questions. This will enable us to advance and defend the hypothesis that the nature of the frame setter of the question plays a crucial role with respect to licensing an indefinite subject.

2. Indefinite subjects and topichood in constituent questions

Just like declaratives, constituent questions need an aboutness topic: they are asked about something (cf. Krifka 2001, Dikkers 2004, a.o.). As Dikkers 2004 puts it, the topic of a question is „the thing someone intends to increase his/her knowledge about by using the question”. Unlike declarative sentences, constituent questions do not allow a specific indefinite subject as a topic. We explain this declarative-interrogative asymmetry with respect to topical indefinite subjects by the fact that specific indefinite subjects have a restricted range of referential anchors when they occur in constituent questions. This fact is a consequence of the following: (i) on the one hand, in both questions and declaratives, matrix indefinite subjects cannot be referentially anchored to sentence-mate DPs; they can only be anchored to the speaker; (ii) on the other hand, in questions, unlike in declaratives, specific indefinite topics cannot be speaker specific, since this would defeat the very purpose of the interrogative speech act: if the question is used to request information about an entity known by the speaker, but unknown to the hearer, the hearer could not answer the question. Given
that matrix specific indefinite subjects cannot be anchored to sentence-mate DPs and that, in questions, indefinite topics cannot be speaker specific, we conclude that matrix specific indefinite subject are excluded as topics of constituent questions.

If the subject is indefinite and the question is not generic, the question can be about: a) a non-subject constituent; b) an event or, as we will argue, c) the subject, provided the frame setter (term used in the sense of Jacobs 2001) is the point of view of some individual. Below are examples of the three types of question topics as they occur in Romanian constituent questions:

a) questions that are about an argument projected as a constituent other than the subject:

(2)  Noul lui roman, oare cind il va publica (vre)o editură?
„His new novel, when will a/some publishing house publish it?"

The topic of (2) is the fronted DP.

b) questions that are about an event:

(3)  Cind va mai trece cineva pe aici?
„When will someone pass by here again?"

The answer to question (3) is a thetic statement. Thetic statements have been argued by Jäger 2001 to be about an event argument. In the same vein, we suggest that the topic of question (3) is an implicit argument, namely someone’s passing by this place, an event which is presupposed by the constituent question and is therefore a discourse-old entity.

c) questions in which the frame setter is the point of view of a „judge”, as in (1b) above, which is a specificational question; this type of topic will be discussed in section 3.

3. Topichood and frame setting

We have seen that a specific indefinite subject cannot be the topic of a wh-question; this fact makes specificational wh-questions with an indefinite subject a challenge for the view that the topic of a specificationl sentence is the subject. To meet this challenge, we will turn to the subjective modifier condition (cf. section 1).

According to Lasersohn 2005, sentences that contain a subjective predicate require for their evaluation a parameter that he dubs „the judge”. Stojanovic 2007 demonstrates that Lasersohn’s approach is a notational variant of an approach in which the „judge” is analyzed as an (implicit) argument of the subjective predicate. We will treat the judge in the latter way. Since in question (1b) the adjective bun („good”) is a subjective predicate, we propose that the topic of (1b) is “a hotel in Paris that is good from the point of view of the hearer”, who is the (implicit) judge. The information structure of (1b) is represented in (4) below, in which, following Krifka (2001:35), we have allowed the topic of the question to scope out of the question act:

(4) Topic a good(you) hotel in Paris X QUEST what would be x

Significantly, in languages that have a marker for topics, such as Korean, the „judge” in a specificational question, if not left implicit, is marked by the topic marker -(n)un, as seen below:
(5) ne - nun coheun tap - i mwuel kes katni?
    you-TOP good answer-NOM
    „According to you, what would a good answer be?”

Féry and Krifka 2008 remark that languages with morphological topic-marking of aboutness topics (Japanese, Korean) have an additional use for the topic marker; they use it to mark frame setters. We propose that in the Romanian question (1b) and in the Korean question (5), the point of view of the „judge“ is the frame setter of the question. Independent evidence for the claim that the point of view of a „judge“ plays a crucial role in licensing indefinite subjects comes from the fact that indefinite subjects are acceptable also in other wh-questions which contain an expression of subjectivity, in particular questions containing an epistemic modal expression:

(6)  
   a. Ce obiecții ar fi posibil să aibă cineva (împotriva acestei inițiative)?
       „What objections might someone have (against this initiative)?”
   b. *Ce obiecții a avut cineva (împotriva acestei inițiative)?
       what objections has had someone (against this initiative)

Stephenson (2007) shows that the evaluation of sentences containing an epistemic modal depends on a „judge“. Thus we can analyze (6) as having the judge”s point of view as a frame setter. Note that in both (1b) and (6), the use of the conditional mood, while not obligatory, is (highly) preferred over the indicative; if time permits, we will offer an explanation for this preference.

4. Conclusion
We have shown that a non-generic constituent question can have an indefinite subject provided: a) the question has an available non-subject topic, or b) the question has as a frame-setter the point of view of a „judge“.

Selected references:

Paul Dekker
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Reference, Specificity and Functionality

Philosophers and linguists have interesting and widely diverging ideas about what it means to refer, and to use a term specifically. The simple and attractive idea that names and other singular terms (pronouns, names, descriptions) refer to individuals, has been discredited by
philosophers like Frege, Russell, and Strawson, for various reasons. Linguists have been
tempted to keep on treating singular terms as referring but in order to solve some of the
philosophical puzzles, various theoretical tools have been invented, ranging from referents
by description (E-type referents), causal-intentional referents, discourse referents, and
choice-function referents, among others.

In my talk I want to do away with the standard philosophical speculations, and ad hoc
linguistic stipulations. My proposals are based on a functional view on reference, which also
takes information structure into account. Both points can be independently argued for on
linguistic as well as philosophical grounds, and both points neatly generalize to proposals
handling puzzles about scope islands and generalized donkey anaphora.

The resulting context-dependent, or functional, view on the 'reference' of singular terms,
creates room for a sophisticated, also functional, treatment of specificity. Very roughly,
since referents are given by functions, the same referents can be given by different functions,
or concepts. If, by specificity we mean, an individual which the speaker has in mind, this
may raise the question whether it is the individual as it is given by the concept which the
speaker has in mind or as it is given otherwise, by a concept he does not have in mind. We
will present data showing that indeed shifts in perspectives on the domain of discussion,
specific uses of a singular term may turn into non-specific ones, and vice versa. Hence,
specificity shows out to be not a property of the use or validation of a singular term, but a
by-product of the conceptual states of the interlocutors. The intuitions are formalized and the
data are explained by applying Maria Aloni's notion and use of conceptual covers.

### MICHELANGELO FALCO
**SCUOLA NORMALE SUPERIORE/PISA**

**TOWARDS A D-TYPE THEORY OF SPECIFICITY**

I propose a unified and explicit syntax and semantics for quantificational DPs (Qs), which
accounts for specificity - scopal, epistemic and partitive (Farkas 2002) - through a
contextualist view of LF representations. The goal is achieved by combining the following
ingredients: (i) Elbourne’s (2005) proposal that indexes are phonologically null NPs, but
present in the syntactic representation of DPs. (ii) Stanley’s (2000) claim that the restriction
of Qs is enriched by another domain restriction index supplied by the context. (iii) Enç’s
(1991) idea that there are two ‘referential indexes’: one, the index $i$, for the referent, and one,
the index $j$, for the restriction.

#### Specificity distinctions

A) While definiteness is associated with a presupposition of uniqueness and of existence (1-a),
partitivity (Enç 1991 a.o.) is associated only with a presupposition of existence (1-b).

1a. *The professor* come to the party. #The other professor did not. Existence and uniqueness

   b. *One of the professors* came to the party. The other professor did not. Existence, not unique.

B) An epistemically specific indefinite (Fodor & Sag 1982; Schwarzschild 2002 a.o.) makes
reference to an entity that is known by the speaker as in (2-a) vs. (2-b).

2a. *A student* cheated on the exam. It was the guy who sits in the very back. Epistemically spec.

   b. *A student* cheated on the exam. I wonder which student it was. Epistemically non-spec.

C) Finally, the scopal definition equates specificity with wide scope of the indefinite with
respect to the scope of an operator (3) (Reinhart 1997 a.o.).

3a. *John* would like to *buy a boat*, but he cannot afford it. Scopally specific

   b. *John* would like to *buy a boat*, but he cannot afford one. Scopally non-specific

Extending Elbourne’s (2005) proposal for definite descriptions (4), I propose a format for
Two indexes
Definite and indefinite determiners select different types of indexes. Definites select a referential index \( i \) (4). Indefinites, due to their non-referential nature, do not select such an index, thus their format can be preliminarily represented as in (5), where the referential index is missing.

(4) \([\text{the} \, i \, [\text{NP}]]\) Format for definites
(5) \([\text{Q} \, [\text{NP}]]\) Preliminary format for indefinites

Nevertheless, indefinites do select an index, but crucially not an \( i \)-index. Consider the examples in (6).

(6) Discourse context A: Ho visto dei cani.
A: I have seen ART.IND dogs.

a. B: Anch’io ne ho visti.
   B: Also I CLIT:PART.GEN have seen.

b. B: Anch’io ne ho visti alcuni (die cani che hai visto).
   B: Also I CLIT:PART.GEN have seen some (of the dogs that you have seen).

The anaphoric reading is absent in (6-a), in other words the set of dogs seen by the speaker A is different from the set of dogs seen by the speaker B. On the contrary, it can be the same set of dogs in the case of (6-b), that is to say the anaphoric reading is possible. In both sentences \( ne \), the genitive clitic, cliticizes ART.IND dogs. Since the difference between the minimal pair (6-a)-(6-b) is the presence of \( \text{alcuni} \) (some) in (6-b), the anaphoric reading is dependent on its presence. Since the anaphoric reading depends on the presence of an index, it is the indefinite that selects a set-denoting index. Therefore, indefinites select a different type of index, whose interpretation can be given by a set formula introduced by the previous discourse. Consequently, the format in (5) must be extended by introducing the second index \( j \) denoting a set (7), as in Encç (1991).

(7) \([\text{Q} \, [[\text{NP}][j]]]\) Format for indefinites

In the case of anaphoric reading of (6-b), the index is interpreted using the linguistic material from the previous discourse dogs that you have seen. Technically, this can be formalized through the abstraction operation of Kamp & Reyle 1993: applied to (6), it constructs the set described by the formula (8), which is the desired interpretation of \( j \) for the anaphoric reading.

(8) \(\lambda x. [\text{dog } x \, \text{and speaker A has seen } x]\). Abstraction applied to (6).

The syntax/semantics for indefinites
Syntactically, in (7) \( j \), the second index, corresponds to a - possibly phonologically null - phrase, NP2 in (9), as the definite NPs in Elbourne’s (2005) proposal.

(9) \([\text{Q} \, [[\text{NP1}][\text{NP2}]]]\) Syntactic format for indefinites

As for the structure of the complex NP, I propose that NP2 is adjoined to NP1. Evidence in favor of this claim comes from the anaphoric possibilities of examples involving hypernyms and hyponyms, such as (10).

(10) I read all the works by Verga. Two novels (*of the works by Verga) are very intriguing.

The example (10) means that two novels belong to the set of the works by Verga, thus the DP has a specific interpretation. Nevertheless, if NP2 (of the works by Verga) were a
complement of NP1 (novels), the complex NP would correspond to the novels of the works by Verga, with ellipsis of the partitive at Spell-Out. But this NP is ill-formed. Since adjuncts can be omitted in the syntax, but complements cannot, I conclude that NP1 does not select NP2, instead NP2 is adjoined to NP1. As for the semantics, the index-NP2 is characterized as an elements of logical type $<$e, t $>$: it has exactly the same type of the index-i in Elbourne’s (2005) theory. NP2 is interpreted as $\lambda x. g(j) = x$. This allows to interpret the complex NP in the formula (9) by predicate modification, that is the intersection of the denotation of NP1 and NP2, thus arriving at a traditional restriction.

Converging evidence
The argument from binding provides evidence in support of the format advocated here. The most natural interpretation of the sentence (11-a) is the one informally represented in (11-b).

\begin{align*}
(11) & \quad \text{a. Every student answered every question.} \\
& \quad \text{b. Every student } x \text{ answered every question } y \text{ on } x^{\prime}\text{’s exam.} \quad \text{(Stanley2000:ex.22b-23b)}
\end{align*}

Since binding is a semantic phenomenon, to generate the interpretation (11-b) we must assume that

there are bound variables in the LF of Qs, whose values, relative to a context, generate a domain of quantification. More specifically Stanley (2000) captures these readings by syntactically associating with each nominal, domain restriction indexes, of the form $f(k)$. Relative to a context, $f$ is assigned a function from object to properties, and $k$ is assigned an object. Thus the structure of the sentence in (11-a) becomes at LF (12), where $f(k)$ and $f(l)$ correspond both to the index $j$ of Enç (1991), that is to NP2 in the present analysis.

\begin{equation}
(12) \quad [\text{Every student, } f(k)]y \text{ answered every question } <\text{question, } f(l)>.
\end{equation}

Summarizing, my proposal and Stanley’s (2000) converge to the same analytical conclusion, looking at two different empirical domains. Therefore, the analysis is strengthened from the larger empirical support it receives. My analysis suggests that the second index of Enç does the same work of Stanley’s (2000) domain restriction index. The data in (6) and the argument from binding justify its presence, while its status is quite stipulative and its semantics unclear in Enç 1991.

The three specificities derived
From the format for partitive specificity (A), epistemic specificity (B) is derived once we consider the possibility that implicit parameters can be relativized to the bearer of an attitude in the case of indefinites: Schwarzschild’s (2002) singleton analysis. In turn, this possibility explains the exceptional scopal behavior of indefinites (C): singleton are existential Qs whose domain is restricted to a singleton, thus they are scopally inert. The singleton approach is more economic than the choice function approach (Reinhart 1997), since it uses the plain and independently needed domain restriction of Qs, without the stipulation of an additional determiner (the choice function). Crucially, the syntax/semantics advanced here provides an explicit format for the singleton analysis, missing in Schwarzschild 2002.

Conclusions
All in all, I proposed an explicit and uniform syntax and semantics for Qs which extends to all the aspects of specificity. The proposal is a conceptual advancement over Enç’s (1991) quite stipulative account of partitive specificity, and provides a format for Schwarzschild’s (2002) idea on epistemic specificity.

References
The first part of this paper proposes a division of the territory of special indefinite Ds into a subclass of Ds that render reference more ‘specific’, and which we call *specifiers*, from those that render reference less ‘specific’, which we call *anti-specifiers*. Anti-specifiers impose a variation requirement, while specifiers impose a referential stability requirement. The richness of the cast of special indefinite Ds, we propose, is due to the richness of the parameters of referential stability/variability. The second part of the paper is a case study of a particular type of anti-specific indefinite within the framework we developed in previous work.

We focus on accounting for the contrast between the exceptional freedom of scope of ordinary indefinites as opposed to the scopal limitations of the special indefinite we study.

In this paper, we focus on indefinite determiners, which indicate different types of identifiability of the referent in different languages. The crucial observation we build on is that the identifiability properties of these determiners are related to the scopal properties of indefinites. We propose a unified semantic analysis which captures both the epistemic nature of indefinites, has correct predictions regarding the possible scopal configurations, and in addition also captures the cross-linguistic variation in this domain.

**Background.** As noted by Haspelmath (1997) many indefinite determiners and pronouns in different languages are sensitive to knowledge of the speaker or of other discourse participants. In English, *a certain* requires that the referent be identified, however, this requirement is not relativized to a specific individual. The speaker or another discourse participant may possess the identifying knowledge. There are also examples where the possessor of the identifying knowledge is not named in the discourse and the referent is assumed to be just in principle identifiable (cf. Jayez & Tovena 2006, Farkas 2002).

(1) Mary spoke with *a certain* professor. I know him well. [identifiable to the speaker]
(2) Mary spoke with *a certain* professor. I don’t know him. [identifiable to Mary]
(3) To open the door you have to type in *a certain* code. [in principle identifiable]

A different situation can be found in Russian, where indefiniteness can be marked by different indefinite pronouns. Two pronouns, *koe-kakoj* and *kakoj-to*, divide the labour: *koe-kakoj* indicates that the referent of the NP is identifiable by the speaker (1’). By using *kakoj-to*, the speaker conveys that she cannot identify the referent (cf. also Haspelmath 1997:45, Kagan 2007). In this case, other discourse individuals may possess the identifying knowledge, cf. (3’) (Geist 2008). If no source of epistemic knowledge can be identified the indefinite with
**Problem.** In addition to the differences in the identifiability such indefinite determiners differ in scope. Indefinite determiners indicating identifiability of the referent by the speaker (koe-kakoj, ein gewisser) obligatorily require widest possible scope while indefinite determiners with an underspecified possessor of identifying knowledge are more variable with respect to scope taking. They can have wide or intermediate scope but in some cases even narrow scope (cf. Kratzer 1998, Farkas 2002, Jayez & Tovena 2006 for a certain, Geist 2008 for Russian koe-kakoj, ein bestimmter is analogous to kakoj-to). The fact, that indefinites with koe-kakoj or ein gewisser can only exhibit wide scope can not be traced back to the identifiability feature, since identifiability of the referent by the speaker does not obligatorily yield the wide scope interpretation and is available for indefinites in transparent quantificational contexts even under narrow scope:

(4) Every boy loves a woman. Jack loves his mother, Michael loves Jane, Daniel loves Ann. Hence, a shift in the approach is needed. We argue that it is not the identifiability feature that is relevant in the interpretation but rather a more direct functional dependency, which can be often specified as „what the epistemic agent has in mind“.

**Analysis.** To account for the cross-linguistic differences within epistemic determiners and their scope behavior we build on the formal analysis of indefinites in Onea & Geist (in prep.). This analysis is guided by the idea that the diversity of indefinite determiners in different languages may be related to a more general pragmatic phenomenon of referential anchoring, cf. von Heusinger (2008). Referential anchoring is understood as a link that can be established between the referent of an indefinite NP and some epistemic agent (the speaker or other discourse individual). We model referential anchoring as a mechanism for narrowing down the domain of quantification for the indefinite to a singleton. To overcome known problems with domain narrowing proposal for indefinites in Schwarzschild (2002) we assume a special type of domain narrowing which we formally implement in terms of an enrichment operation that adds a Skolem functional dependency into the restrictor of an existential quantifier: the referential anchoring operator adds a function f to some underspecified discourse individual y.

The variables f and y are contextually bound.

(5) \[\text{OP} = \lambda\Phi\lambda\Pi\lambda Q. \Phi(Q) (\lambda x. P(x) \& f(y) = x)\] (Onea & Geist in prep.)

This operator establishes a functional dependency between the referent of the indefinite x and some implicit argument y, the referential anchor. This operator can apply to plain indefinites like a problem in (6) to yield exceptional wide scope reading (6a) or intermediate scope reading in (6b).

(6) Every linguist thought of every solution a problem may have.

a. \(\exists > \forall > \forall\)  

b. \(\forall > \exists > \forall\)

Assuming that the indefinite a problem is an existential quantifier taking narrow scope, the wide and the intermediate scope readings can be achieved by enrichment of the indefinite by the operator in (5). The wide scope interpretation in (6a) is the result of the binding of the anchor y to the speaker and the specification of the functional relation \(f(y) = x\) as “the speaker has x in mind”. The intermediate scope reading (6b) arises if the anchor is specified by every linguist. In this case, the functional relation can be specified as “the most difficult problem x for y”.

However, while with plain indefinites the anchoring operator may apply in the course of

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kakoj-to is interpreted as being just in principle identifiable.

(1') Masha razgovarivala s koe-kakim professorom. [identifiable to the speaker]

(2') Masha razgovarivala s kakim-to professorom. [identifiable to Mary]

(3') Chtoby otkryt’ dver’, nuzhno nabrat’ kakoj-to kod. [in principle identifiable]

A similar situation can be observed in German. According to Ebert et al. (in prep.), two complex indefinite determiners ein gewisser and ein bestimmter differ with respect to the possessor of the identifying knowledge analogous to Russian: ein gewisser resembles koe-kakoj, ein bestimmter is analogous to kakoj-to.
interpretation as a type of pragmatic enrichment, this operator can be grammaticalized in some languages and become part of lexical meaning of complex indefinite determiners. We assume that epistemic indefinite determiners contain the anchoring operator as part of their meaning. However the determiners differ in the specification of the referential anchor \( y \) and in principle may differ in the anchoring function \( f \). We assume that in the lexical entry of epistemic determiners \textit{koe-kakoj} in Russian and \textit{ein gewisser} in German the anchor \( y \) is lexically specified as the speaker. The functional relation \( f \) is underspecified and can be by default specified as “have in mind”. For epistemic determiners \textit{a certain} in English, \textit{ein bestimmter} in German and \textit{kakoj-to} in Russian we assume that the anchor is not lexically specified. It can be specified or just existentially bound in the context, however. In principle, the anchor of \textit{kakoj-to} and \textit{ein bestimmter} could also be specified as the speaker. However, such a specification is excluded by pragmatic blocking. The hearer knows that if the speaker could identify the referent she would use \textit{koe-kakoj} or \textit{ein gewisser}. The use of \textit{kakoj-to} or \textit{ein bestimmter} implies that the condition of speaker identifiability is not met. For the determiner \textit{a certain} no such blocking arises and its anchor can be specified as being identical to the speaker. This analysis allows us to comprehensively model the variation in indefinite determiners and the constraints on scope. The analysis predicts that every indefinite NP takes scope below its anchor. The anchoring to speech act participants like the speaker, who is outside of the range of any sentential operator, yields a wide scope interpretation of the indefinite. This is what was observed for indefinites with \textit{koe-kakoj} and \textit{ein gewisser} anchored to the speaker. The variability of scope exhibited by the indefinites accompanied by \textit{a certain}, \textit{ein bestimmter}, \textit{kakoj-to} can be now explained by the variability in the anchor specificication and in the specification of the functional variable.

Ebert, C. et al. in prep. \textit{The interpretation of the German specificity markers.}
Farkas, D. 2002, \textit{Varieties of Indefinites.}
Geist, L. 2008, \textit{Specificity as referential anchoring. Evidence from Russian.}
Haspelmath, M. 2007, \textit{Indefinite pronouns.}
Jayez J. & Tovena L. 2006, \textit{Epistemic determiners.}
Kratzer, A. 1998. \textit{Scope or pseudo-scope?}
specificity, scopal specificity and partitive specificity have similar effects on the interpretation of indefinites, but they are not dependent on each other. The common metalinguistic effect is that they reduce the restrictor set of the indefinite, i.e. the set of potential referents is restricted to few or to only one element. This concept of “referential stability” (Farkas & von Heusinger 2002) is not a semantic notion, but rather a generalization across various semantic contrasts and representation.

In this paper I argue, however, that there is a core semantic notion of specificity underlying the intuitive concept, namely “referential anchoring”. The referent of a specific indefinite is functionally dependent on the referent of another expression (von Heusinger 2002). This is a generalization of the original claim of Fodor & Sag (1982) and the formulation of Kratzer (1998) in terms of skolemized choice functions. I elaborate this view of specificity and show that it allows a unified account for a clearly defined part of phenomena related to specificity. Obviously, this account cannot explain all phenomena associated with the seven kinds of specificity. In order to define the set of relevant phenomena (i) I give a clear semantic representation of what I call specificity in terms of referential anchoring, (ii) I show that some contrasts associated with specificity are also triggered by different mechanism (like exceptional scope behavior) and (iii) I provide data from different kinds of encodings of specificity in various languages.

References:
Fodor, Janet & Sag, Ivan 1982. Referential and Quantificational Indefinites. Linguistics and Philosophy

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ON THE INTERACTION OF SPECIFICITY AND MODIFICATION

This talk presents evidence that certain referential/quantificational ambiguities are in fact positional ambiguities modulated by the presence of a syntactic modifier. One example of such a dependency comes from Modern Standard Arabic, where a preverbal indefinite subject must bear a syntactic modifier, e.g. an adjective in (1a), while a post-verbal subject need not (1b) (Mohammad 2000). Mohammad and others argue that preverbal subjects occur in [spec,TP], and post-verbal subjects in [spec,VP].

(1) a. walad-un *(tawiil-un) jaa'a  b. jaa'a walad-un (tawiil-un)  
boy-NOM *(tall-NOM) came-3MS came-3MS boy-NOM (tall-NOM)  
‘A tall boy came.’  ‘A (tall) boy came.’
Hallman (2004) points out that apparently referential indefinite subjects of individual-level predicates in English are ungrammatical unless modified (2a), a restriction that does not hold of subjects of stage-level predicates (2b). According to Diesing (1992), stage-level predicates allow LF reconstruction of the subject to [spec,VP], where they escape restrictions on [spec,TP]. Arabic and English therefore show the same restriction on [spec,TP]. An indefinite there must bear a modifier.

(2)  
   a. A fireman *(in the 5th precinct) is intelligent.  
   b. A fireman (in the 5th precinct) is available.

Fodor and Sag (1982) claim that indefinite objects in English such as *a squirrel in (3a) are ambiguous between a referential and a quantificational reading. The modified indefinite in (3b) shows the same ambiguity in principle but the additional descriptive material there gives the impression of familiarity and therefore promotes the referential reading.

(3)  
   a. Sandy didn't see a squirrel.  
   b. Sandy didn't see a squirrel that was chasing its tail around the oak tree.

It appears, however, that in fact no referential reading is available for (3a), as the contextualization in (4) clarifies.

(4)  
   Sandy saw several squirrels...
      a. *but she didn't see a squirrel.  
      b. but she didn't see a squirrel that was chasing its tail around the oak tree.

The judgments in (4) are parallel to those in (1a) and (2a). I propose that the modifier in (4b) licenses placement of the quantificational indefinite object in a high syntactic position, e.g. [spec,AgrOP], which, analogous to [spec,TP], the unmodified object may not occupy. In [spec,AgrOP], the quantificational object outscopes negation (5). This proposal unifies Fodor and Sag’s observations about the role of modification in promoting object specificity with the independent observations about Arabic and English subjects in (1) and (2).

(5)  
   Sandy [AgrOP <a squirrel that...> [not [VP see <a squirrel>]]]

In support of the view that the role of modification in promoting specificity is grammatical, not pragmatic, note that it is not the case that all types of additional material within the indefinite promote specificity. There is a significant contrast in the extent to which a complement clause (6b) and a relative clause (6c) promotes the specific reading of an indefinite object (judgments regard the interpretation that asserts that a report exists). This observation exactly mirrors the grammaticality judgments for subjects of individual-level predicates (e.g. *well written) in English (7) and preverbal subjects in Arabic (8).

(6)  
   a. *The police chief didn't read a report.  
   b. ?*The police chief didn't read a report that someone bribed an officer.  
   c. The police chief didn't read a report that someone published on the internet.

(7)  
   a. *A report is well written.  
   b. ?*A report that it's going to rain this morning is well written.  
   c. A report that Mary submitted this morning is well written.

(8)  
A report exposed a weakness in the security apparatus.

A report that someone entered the Green Zone with a bomb exposed a weakness in the security apparatus.

A report that someone published on the internet exposed a weakness in the security apparatus.

Though unmodified definites may occur in [spec,TP] and [spec,AgrOP] in English and Arabic, these have a covert domain restriction (Stanley and Zoltan 2000). The evidence presented above supports the claim that [spec,TP] and [spec,AgrOP] are restricted to DPs that bear a syntactic modifier, explaining the apparent referentiality of modified objects.


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EPISTEMICALLY SPECIFIC USE AND EPISTEMICALLY SPECIFIC INTERPRETATION

This talk is based on a revision of a paper (“Epistemic Specificity from a Communication-theoretic Perspective”) earlier versions of which have been circulated since the early parts of this decade; so the main ideas of the talk are no longer new. They are:

1. Epistemic specificity is one of a range of problems relating to the semantics and pragmatics of noun phrases whose analyses can benefit from a clear and principled distinction between the (i) utterance encoding on the part of the speaker and (ii) utterance decoding on the part of interpreter.
2. Such analyses require a framework that permits us to make precisely articulated assumptions about (i) the semantic representations that interpreters build when they interpret incoming utterances; (ii) the semantic representations that serve speakers (at least under certain conditions) as basis for the production of utterances intended to convey all or some of the content of those representations.

3. The framework we use is an extension of DRT that has been designed for the representation of propositional attitudes and, more generally, of complex mental states consisting of representations of propositional attitudes as well as representations of particular entities.

4. Epistemic specificity is analysed in terms of the use and creation of such entity representations.

The talk will present some of the central features of the underlying framework and then proceed, by way of example, to the two-pronged analysis of epistemic specificity that is the centre piece of this paper. After that, and time permitting, we will discuss the question at what level of semantics or pragmatics the effects of specific interpretation should be taken to become available and how this may differ depending on the form of the specifically interpreted NP and its syntactic environment. Questions like this one, we will argue, force one to rethink the relations between semantics and pragmatics and the architecture of linguistic theories.

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SPECIFICITY AND TOPICALITY: SOME THOUGHTS ON THEIR COMPLEX INTERACTION

It is a well known fact that information structure, and in particular the existence of topical positions, can have certain effects on the interpretation of indefinite determiners. The central effect is the correlation of topicality with the specific reading of indefinite expressions (cf. Reinhart 1981, Erteschik-Shir 1997, Portner and Yabushita 2001, and more recently Endriss 2009). However, the precise nature of such correlation is not easy to capture in a simple way. On the one hand, only some indefinite quantifiers can appear as topics, and they are essentially the same that show exceptional wide scope readings (i.e. typically specific readings). This supports the hypothesis that both facts are related, specific readings being obtained as inferential specifications from some basic property shared by topical indefinites (see Endriss 2009 for a complete discussion). This perspective has the advantage of linking specificity with the independently needed concept of ‘sentence topic’, thus offering a plausible explanation for the correlation between specificity and certain grammatical constructions. The only point that could still be under discussion is whether specific indefinites have to be necessarily topics, which is not clear at all.

On the other hand, the correlation has to face a number of puzzling facts. Languages that show a consistent ban against certain indefinites as topics (for instance, negative indefinites in Italian: cf. ??Nessun parente suo, non l’ho mai incontrato ‘I have never met any relative of him/her’) at the same time allow for other non-specific indefinites as topics (cf. Ma qualche parente ce l’aveva, no? ‘But (s)he had some relative, hadn’t (s)he?’). Moreover, many languages accept bare nominals as topics, and bare nominals are usually considered as non-specific expressions (for instance, in Italian: Film in versione originale, qui non ne danno, alla televisione ‘Here films in original version are not aired on TV’). In addition, the
constraints on topic (i.e. dislocated) positions do not seem to be the same as the constraints on other positions that typically host topical expressions, as subject positions: Spanish and Italian tend to reject bare nouns as preverbal subjects, and this is usually related precisely to the topic status of preverbal subjects (Laca 1999), but then one has to wonder why bare nouns are mostly acceptable when dislocated.

Among the questions that arise from a superficial look at such facts, I would highlight the following ones: Do all kinds of topic have the same interpretive effects on indefinites? Are all kinds of specific interpretations correlated with topicality in the same way? How should the correlation be understood? How does this fit a general view of specificity? I intend to deal with some of these problems on the basis of data mainly taken from Romance languages (in particular, Spanish, Italian and Catalan), aiming at reinforcing and clarifying the empirical base for a discussion of the general issue of how specificity interacts with topicality.

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SPECIFICITY AS REFERENTIAL ANCHORING IN RUSSIAN: SHIFTING SPEAKERS AND HAMBLIN SETS.

Russian indefinite pronoun series built from bare *wh*-roots pose a challenge for semantic theories (Haspelmath 1997, Yanovich 2005, Geist 2008, a.o.), since current frameworks do not have enough distinctions to explain the differences in their distribution. Russian specific indefinite markers built from the prefix *koe-* and the roots such as *kto* 'who' or *kakoj* 'what
\[ \lambda P f_{\text{speaker}}(P), \]
where *f* is "a contextually salient partial function from individuals into choice functions", in this case mapping the speaker into a choice function. Geist then uses this to account for her empirical observation that "*koe* strongly indicates the identifiability of the referent by the speaker."

(1) a. *Moi popytki koe-komu vsjo ob’jasnit’ pomogli malo*. (A. Cimko ‘My army stories’)
   My attempts koe-who.Dat everything to.explain helped little
   ‘My attempts to explain everything to some people helped little.’

   (Geist 2008 translating from Fodor and Sag 1982)
   koe-what\(^1\) student cheated on exam him they.call Ivan Petrov
   ‘A student [known to the speaker\(^2\)] cheated on the exam. His name is Ivan Petrov.’

Here, I will argue that Geist's empirical claim is too strong, while her proposed semantics is too weak to account for her claim, and not detailed enough to account for the actual distribution of *koe-* marked indefinites. The empirical portion of my claim is based on a corpus study conducted on the Russian National Corpus, while the theoretical one proposes a modification of Geist's semantics for *koe*.

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1 Russian has two different words for the noun and adjective versions of what: *chto* "what.Noun" and *kakoj* "what.Adj"
2 Geist's brackets.
First, note that given Geist's definition, $f_{\text{speaker}}$ is a choice function which bears some contextually salient relationship to the speaker. This is too weak to ensure that the chosen referent is identifiable to the speaker, since, as Yanovich (2005) points out, the context may supply the function that picks the object that the speaker hates the most, or any other function yielding incorrect truth-conditions. Instead, we need the particular epistemic relationship to be built into the choice of the choice function: $f$ is a partial function mapping individuals to choice functions that select objects identifiable to those individuals. With this strengthened definition, let us examine several apparent counter-examples from the RNC. The speaker can felicitously (and grammatically) follow the koe-indefinite in (2, RNC) with professions of his or her ignorance about the identity of the stars; in fact, subsequent context makes it clear that the author is not sure about the identity of the stars or the veracity of Fukidid, in direct contradiction to Geist.

(2) Podlinnyj tekst Fukidida... mozhet byt' ponyat to\'l\'ko tak, chto... pojavit\'s\' koe-kakie zvezdy.

Authentic text of Fukidid may be understood only so that appeared koe-what stars
"Fukidid's authentic text can only be understood to say that there appeared certain stars."

We can save a version of Geist's claim by assuming that the speaker parameter can shift to the attitude holder (Fukidid, in (2)); exactly what Geist argues against by citing (3a). Note, however, that changing the verb to a verb of saying improves matters (3b).

(3)a. Igor' hochet zhenit'sja na koe-kakoj studentke. #Ja ne znaju, na kakoj.

Igor wants to marry on koe-what student.fem. I not know on what
"Igor wants to marry a certain student. #I don't know which one"


Igor said that will marry on koe-what student.fem. I not know on what
"Igor said that he will marry a certain student. I don't know which one"

This perspective shift is possible in contexts other than quotative ones, similar to free indirect discourse (4, RNC). The speaker of (4a) can be questioned about the identity of the koe-marked offices, and felicitously claim ignorance (4b, my example).

(4) a. On odinoko slonjalsja po pustym koridoram, rassmatrival tysjachu raz vidennye plakaty;

He lonely.adv wandered along empty corridors examined thousand times seen posters
iz interesa zashel v zhenskij tualet, potolkalsja v dveri koe-kakih kabinetov
from interest entered in women's bathroom dist.pushed in doors koe-what offices
"He wandered solitarily along empty corridors, examined poster s seen a thousand times before, for curiosity's sake entered a women's bathroom, tried the doors of certain offices"

(4) b. V kakie imenno kabinety on pytalsja zajti? - Ponjatija ne imeju, ego i sprashivajite!

In what exactly offices he tried to enter Notion not have him and ask
"Which offices exactly did he try to enter? - I have no idea, ask him!"

Finally, RNC has a number of examples, in which no discernable individual can identify the object selected by the choice function. In every case, however, the koe-NP receives a kind reading (5, RNC), where the speaker is understood to know the kind of referent involved.
I propose a Hamblin semantics for koe-indefinites (cf. Kratzer and Shimoyama 2002), based on joint work with Chung-chieh Shan, which takes into consideration an inherent ambiguity of the adjectival what in Russian between an individual- and a kind-level reading. That is, when combining with individual-level kakoj-N', the function given by koe chooses from a set of individuals (1-4). As an adjective, kakoj may also involve a set of properties or, given the intimate relationship between properties and kinds (cf. Chierchia 1998), a set of subkinds of N' with which it combines - in this case, koe selects a kind (5). At the same time, I suggest that the speaker parameter in the choice-function denoted by koe is susceptible to a kind of intra-sentential context shifting, where shifted koe represents instances of partial quotation, like the exocentric uses of expressives (Potts 2003, Anand 2007) (6, Hindi free indirect discourse, from Anand 2007). In (6), multiple speakers (judges) are responsible for the formal markers: the speaker is the holder of honorific emotion towards the addressee (formal you), while Apu holds such emotion towards the son (formal genitive marker). This suggests that a single contextual judge parameter (as proposed in Potts 2007) is insufficient, and that contexts signalled as instances of partial quotation, such as free indirect discourse, license reference to additional (quoted) judges.

(6) Aaj aap-ke beta ghar par hain, Apu-ne kal sochaa.

Your son [who Apu honors] was at home today, Apu thought yesterday; I honor you.

Analysis along these lines, formally given in (7), exactly parallels the Hamblin semantics for other Russian indefinite markers given in Yanovich 2005, and permits us to account for the full range of koe- indefinites as in (8). Together with Shan, I propose a modified version of the Hamblin Function Application rule, which can handle adjectives such as kakoj or which (7e). The wh-root kakoj denotes a singleton set of a relation between properties and individuals that have these properties (7a, b). When combining with an N' such as {student'}, the rule in (7e) yields just the set of students with (7a), and the set of subkinds of students with (7b). In case [[γ]]^w,γ ⊆ D_στ, the denotation specified in (7e) degenerates to that of the original HFA in Kratzer and Shimoyama (2002), so the meaning of simple phrases such as koe-kto is still generated (8d).

A problem arises when we attempt to compose a koe-marked kakoj with its complement N', such as student. If Hamblin alternatives are introduced lexically by kakoj, which is then combined with koe, the resulting object cannot combine with {student'}; moreover, the CF f_speaker fails to pick out an individual, because kakoj denotes not a set of individuals but a singleton set of a relation.

[[koe-kakoj ]] = [[[koe ]]([[kakoj ]])] = (λQ.f_speaker(Q)(\{\{<P,x>: P(x)\}\}) = f_speaker(\{\{<P,x>: P(x)\}\})

We can sidestep this problem by assuming a denotation of kakoj that first combines with the N' by (7e) to create a set of alternatives for koe to choose from, as desired (8a, 8b). Despite the clitic koe forming an apparent unit with the wh-word kakoj, arguably the underlying constituency of the koe-kakoj-N' is [koe [kakoj N']].
(7) a. \( [[kakoj\_ind]]: \{\langle P,x\rangle: P(x) \} \)
    b. \( [[kakoj\_kind]]: \{\langle P,x\rangle: \text{kind-of-}\ P(x) \} \)
    c. \( [[koe]] = \lambda Q. f_{\text{speaker}}(Q) \) where \( f \) is partial function from individuals to Hamblin generalized choice functions that select objects identifiable to the individuals, and where \( \text{speaker} \) is the individual who is being (partially) quoted.
    d. \( f_{T,T} \) is a Hamblin Generalized Choice Function if \( (f(p_{T,T})) \in p_{T,T} \) (from Yanovich 2005)
    e. Hamblin Functional Application (new rule with C. Shan, modified from Kratzer and Shimoyama 2002):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(8) a. } [[kakoj\_ind \text{ student}]] &= \text{via (7e)} = \{\langle P,x\rangle: P(x) \} \{\text{student'}\} = \{x: P(x)\} \\
\text{b. } [[\text{koe-kakoj}\_\text{ind student}]] &= \lambda Q. f_{\text{speaker}}(Q)(\{x: \text{student}(x)\}) = f_{\text{speaker}}(\{x: \text{student}(x)\}) \\
\text{c. } [[\text{koe-kakoj}\_\text{kind consensus}]] &= f_{\text{speaker}}(\{x: \text{kind-of-consensus}(x)\}) \\
\text{d. } [[\text{koe-kto} "\text{koe-who}""]] &= \text{via (7e)} = \lambda Q. f_{\text{speaker}}(Q)(\{x: \text{human}(x)\}) = f_{\text{speaker}}(\{x: \text{human}(x)\})
\end{align*}
\]

The implications of this analysis reach beyond the realm of Russian indefinites, expanding the reach of Hamblin semantics and forefronting the need to develop alternative-friendly semantic composition mechanisms. In addition, the shifting of the speaker parameter in the choice-functional operator \( koe \) places specificity markers into the same class of shifty phenomena as indexicals in free indirect discourse, shifting judges in predicates of taste (Stephenson 2006), exocentric uses of expressives (Potts 2003, Anand 2007), as well as possibly the eavesdropping (Egan, 2005) and time lag (Fintel and Gilles, 2006) puzzles raised for epistemic modals.

References:


On Singular Indefinites in Turkish

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In Turkish, direct objects may or may not have overt accusative marking (-Acc vs. -∅). Enç (1991) proposed a bidirectional implication between -Acc and the semantic category of specificity, which she defined as partitivity. von Heusinger and Kornfilt (2005) (vH&K) object to Enç’s implication in specificity-to-Acc direction by reporting -∅ marked partitives. We add to this examples of -Acc marked non-partitives, challenging the implication in the other direction as well. The -Acc-specificity association has recently been revised by von Heusinger (2002) and vH&K: -Acc implies specificity, but in von Heusinger’s (2002) sense rather than Enç’s (1991). vH&K also observe that -Acc is a reliable indicator of specificity only with a number of provisos.

We provide evidence that -Acc-specificity correlation does not hold, even with all of vH&K’s provisos granted. The reason is that modal operators can take scope over -Acc marked objects. Consider:

1. Every committee member conference-Dat famous a linguist call-Inf want-Pres
   ‘Every committee member wants to invite a famous linguist to the conference.’

   (1) is three-way ambiguous: (i) de re linguist taking the widest scope; (ii) de re linguist within the scope of the universal; and (iii) de dicto linguist. Reading (iii), unexpected for a specifically interpreted NP, is the one that controverts vH&K’s claim. The minimal pair of (1) with -∅ marking on the direct object only has the reading (iii). Turkish facts apparently call for a more basic characterization of -Acc than a direct association with specificity. We claim that Turkish indefinites are ambiguous between (a) an e type [G]eneralized [S]kolem [T]erm (Steedman 2009) reading, and (b) a quantificational (or semantically incorporated predicative) reading. In fact, any reading that confines its bearer to scope-islands will do for (b). The -Acc is an ee type function of purely formal significance. It marks the case of e type direct object arguments. Therefore, -Acc ensures that the NP it is attached to is a GST, and a GST always bears -Acc due to case requirements. But what is a GST?

   We employ a two-sorted (entities and situations) type theory (\(L\)) , where functions that would be into types e and t in an extensional setting are functions into se and st, respectively (s for situation objects). We augment \(L\) with GSTs, which are structured representations of the form \(sk_i\)\(^{EI}_p\), where \(i\) is an index unique to the NP that contributes the GST interpretation, \(p\) a restrictor predicate of type et, and \(E\), the “environment”, is a tuple comprising of all the variables of the operators that the GST falls in the scope of at logical form. We provide a Combinatory Categorial Grammar (Steedman 2000) fragment that compositionally maps surface forms to expressions of \(L\). (1) gets the following interpretation, where the -Acc marked indefinite object is interpreted as a GST.

   \[
   \forall x. member'_s \stackrel{s_o}{\rightarrow} \forall s. W(x, s, s'_0) \rightarrow invite'_2(sk_{2\rightarrow \text{linguist}'_2}(x, s))_x
   \]

In (2), we use a left associative “Curried” notation for functions, and indicate situation arguments as subscripts, and constants by primes. The accessibility relation \(W(i, s, s')\) holds iff \(s\) is a situation where all the unfulfilled desires that the individual \(i\) holds in \(s'\) are realized (cf. Moore’s (1995) K for knowledge).

   The constant \(s'_0\) stands for the indexically specified referent of the speech situation.

   The model theory of \(L\), which mimics classical DRTs in many respects, treats GSTs as discourse referent markers. To explicate briefly: A GST of the form \(sk_i\)\(^{EI}_p\) is “ready for extension” in a formula \(\phi\) with respect to a variable assignment \(g\) iff \(E\) contains no variable bound in \(\phi\), is not covered by \(g\), and does not occur in the restriction of another GST. \(R_g(\phi)\) denotes the set of such terms. An extension of an assignment function \(g\) to a Skolem term \(sk_i\)\(_{\lambda x,\pi}\) is the function \(g'\) obtained by adding \(sk_i\)\(_{\lambda x,\pi}\) \(\rightarrow\) \(a\) for some \(a\) (picked from the appropriate type of domain) to \(g\) if \(g[\nu \rightarrow a]\) satisfies \(\pi\), or else does not exist. The definition of extension of a variable assignment \(g\) to \(g'\) is inductively generalized to a possibly empty set of GSTs \(X\), denoted as \(g[X]\). An assignment function \(g\) satisfies a simplex formula \(\phi\) if there exists a \(g'\) s.t. \(g[R_g(\phi)]g'\) and \(g'\) satisfies \(\phi\); \(g\) satisfies \(\neg \phi\) if there exists a \(g'\) s.t. \(g[R_g(\phi)]g'\) and \(g'\) does not satisfy \(\phi\); \(g\) satisfies \(\phi \land \psi\) iff there exists a \(g'\) s.t. \(g[R_g(\phi) \land R_g(\psi)]g'\) and \(g'\) satisfies both \(\phi\) and \(\psi\); \(g\) satisfies \(\phi \rightarrow \psi\) if every \(g'\) s.t. \(g[R_g(\phi) \land R_g(\psi)]g'\) and \(g'\) satisfies \(\phi\), also satisfies \(\psi\); \(g\) satisfies \(\forall \nu. \phi\) iff there exists a \(g'\) s.t. \(g[R_g(\phi)]g'\) and \(g'[\nu \rightarrow a]\) satisfies \(\phi\) for every \(a\) in the relevant domain.
The model theoretic evaluation of the semantic interpretation in (2) captures only the narrowest scope \textit{de dicto} linguist reading. Two additional aspects of the system allow us to capture the “globally specific” (“referential”) and “intermediate scope” (“functional”) readings: (i) The situation variable of a restrictor predicate is allowed to be contextually anchored or get bound by a situation variable in the environment of the GST; (ii) Following Schwarzschild (2002), we allow for “strengthening up to a singleton” of restrictor predicates, as suggested but not implemented in Steedman 2009. We formalize this by conjoining restrictor predicates with “contextually resolvable restrictor predicates” (Bende-Farkas and Kamp 2001), where the latter may contain pro forms, contextually anchored or bound by variables in the environment of the GST. For instance, in an occasion where (1) gets an “intermediate reading”, the GST may take the form $s_{k_2}^{(z,x)}_{\lambda x.\text{linguist}', s_0'} s_{\text{vote}', s_7'} (\text{pro}', x)$, where $s_0'$ and $s_7'$ are contextually available situation referents respectively for the speech situation and a preceding situation in which a committee-members-voting-for-invited-speakers event occurred; and \text{pro}'x denotes a bound-variable pronoun. This is assumed to render the restrictor of the GST a singleton for each antecedent of \text{pro}'x (i.e. committee member). This is nothing but effectuating a functional dependence between discourse referents, through a route not as direct as that of Kratzer (1998). Domain restriction and the anaphoricity of situation indices are independently motivated (see e.g. Cooper 1996). Specificity becomes a special case of this already required mechanism, which may afford a unified characterization of the notion. An NP is said to be interpreted specifically if the restrictor of the associated GST is a singleton, and is interpreted at a situation constant, as opposed to an operator bound situation variable.

The present system is obviously related to Kratzer 1998; Bende-Farkas and Kamp 2001; Schwarzschild 2002 among others, in the way it models the semantics and the contextual interpretation of indefinites. Its debt to DRTs is already acknowledged. The interest in the current system lies in the fact that it realizes this semantics without leaving any degrees of freedom to the syntax-semantics mapping as far as specificity is concerned. All the indeterminism in the system is due to contextually resolved implicit contents of restrictor predicates and the anaphora resolution mechanism. We completely abandon devices that require constraints or predications over derivations, such as “anytime” operations like existential closure Reinhart (1997); Winter (1997), or any sort of “movement”. The mapping between surface forms and semantic interpretations is compositional and purely type driven, in the sense of monotonic projection of lexically coded grammatical information, as standard in CCGs.

References
German *gewiss* and *bestimmt*, when occurring in indefinite NPs, are commonly considered as specificity markers – *ein gewisses N / ein bestimmtes N* roughly correspond to English *a certain N*, conveying the idea that the speaker, or some other agent, is able to identify the referent. But although indefinite NPs with *gewiss* and *bestimmt* are very similar in meaning, they are not equivalent (nor does either of the two correspond to English *a certain N* in a one to one fashion). There are, first, differences in scope taking – *gewiss* NPs must take widest scope whereas *bestimmt* NPs may also take intermediate scope. Secondly, in the case of *gewiss* the identifying agent must be the speaker whereas in the case of *bestimmt* it may also be some other agent. Thirdly, *gewiss* may be combined with proper names, as in *ein gewisser Müller*, which is impossible for *bestimmt* (cf. Ebert et al., submitted).

This talk focuses on another distinctive characteristic which has gone unnoticed up to now: *Gewiss*, but not *bestimmt*, seems to turn into a degree modifier when combined with gradable nouns. In (1a) the risk is a particular one, e.g., being attacked by polar bears, while in (1b) the use of *gewiss* indicates that there is a certain level of risk, which is, however, below the level of a definite risk.

(1)  a.  *Die Teilnahme an der Polarexpedition birgt ein bestimmtes Risiko.*
   b.  *Die Teilnahme an der Polarexpedition birgt ein gewisses Risiko.*

   'Joining the polar expedition has a *bestimmt / gewiss* risk.'

The grading effect of *gewiss* raises the question of why a specificity marker is turned into a degree modifier when combined with gradable nouns. First of all, is it genuine gradability or is it a particular form of hedging what is brought about by *gewiss*? Since *gewiss* serves as a hedging operator when used as a sentence adverb, it might also have a hedging interpretation in (1b). The question has to be addressed of what the meaning of *gewiss* and *bestimmt* is such that they induce specificity.

Reference:
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Literaturhaus Stuttgart
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The conference is hosted by the SFB 732 Incremental Specification in Context, by the Research Center for Linguistics and Cognition (FSK) and the Institut für Linguistik / Germanistik. The conference is supported by the Thyssen-Stiftung and the VolkswagenStiftung.