#### (Scalarity,) ignorance and positive polarity

in

#### indefinites, disjunction, and numerals

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#### Outline

#### Preamble

Q1: Are the facts parallel?

Q2: What is the parallel account?

Q3: Why should we care?

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It is a truth universally acknowledged that
a single man in possession of a good fortune
must be in want of
a wife.
```

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It is a truth universally acknowledged that
a single man in possession of a good fortune parallel facts
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Q1: Are the facts parallel?Q2: What is the parallel account?

In this talk I tackle these questions for the ignorance and positive polarity of numerals, disjunction, and indefinites: *3* (BNs) *more/less than 3* (CMNs) *at least/most 3* (SMNs) *Alice, Bob, or Cindy some student* 

It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune parallel facts must be in want of a wife a parallel account.

Q1: Are the facts parallel?Q2: What is the parallel account?

In this talk I tackle these questions for the ignorance and positive polarity of numerals, disjunction, and indefinites:

3 (BNs) more/less than 3 (CMNs) at least/most 3 (SMNs) Alice, Bob, or Cindy some student

Q3: Why should we care?

#### Outline

Preamble

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# Numerals, disjunction, indefinites

Horn (1972)

- (1) Jo called 3 students / A or B / some student.
  - a. Jo called  $4/5/\ldots$  students / A and B / every student.
  - b. ¬ Jo called 4/5/...students / A and B / every student.
     ⇒ exactly 3 / A xor B / some-but-not-every

#### (2) Lexical scales + Gricean reasoning

- a.  $\langle \dots, \text{ two, three, four,} \dots \rangle$ ; three  $\rightsquigarrow$  not four
- b.  $\langle \text{or, and} \rangle$ ; or  $\rightsquigarrow$  not and
- c.  $\langle some, every \rangle$ ; some  $\rightsquigarrow$  not every





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## Exit modified numerals

Krifka (1999)

- (3) Jo called more than 2 / less than 4 / at least 3 / at most 3 students.
  - a. more than 3 / less than 3 / at least 4 / at most 2  $\,$
  - b. ¬ # more than 3 / # less than 3 / # at least 4 / # at most 2
     ⇒ # exactly 3 / # exactly 3 / # exactly 3 / # exactly 3



## Exit superlative-modified numerals

Geurts and Nouwen (2007), Cohen and Krifka (2014), Mihoc and Davidson (2021)

- (4) Jo called **3** students. So, she called  $\checkmark$  more than 2 / # at least 3.
- (5) a. Jo didn't call **/** more than 2 / # at least 3 students.
  - b. Nobody called **✓**more than 2 / # at least 3 people.
  - c. Jo managed without calling **√**more than 2 / # at least 3 people.
  - d. **Few** of the participants called  $\checkmark$  more than 2 / # at least 3 people.
  - e. Jo rarely called **✓** more than 2 / # at least 3 people.
  - f. If Jo called  $\checkmark$  more than 2 /  $\checkmark$  at least 3 people, she won.
  - g. Everyone who called **/more than 2** / **/at least 3** people won.
  - h. Tim doesn't know that Jo called **✓more than 2** / **✓at least 3** people.
  - i. Only kids aged **/**more than 2 / **/**at least 3 can attend.



## Re-enter disjunction

Büring (2008); Mihoc (2020, 2021), building on Strawson (1952), Grice (1989), Rips (1994), Chierchia (2013), Spector (2014), Nicolae (2017) a.o.

- (6) Jo called Alice. So, she called # A, B, or C / # A, B, ou C.
- (7) a. Jo did**n't** call **✓**A, B, **or** C / # A, B, **ou** C.
  - b. Nobody called  $\checkmark$ A, B, or C / # A, B, ou C.
  - c. Jo managed without calling ✓A, B, or C / # A, B, ou C.
  - d. Few of the participants called ✓A, B, or C / ✓A, B, ou C.
  - e. Jo rarely called  $\checkmark$ A, B, or C /  $\checkmark$ A, B, ou C.
  - f. If Jo called  $\checkmark$ A, B, or C /  $\checkmark$ A, B, ou C, she won.
  - g. Everyone who called  $\checkmark$ A, B, or C /  $\checkmark$ A, B, ou C won.



#### **Re-enter indefinites**

Nouwen (2015); Mihoc (2021), building on Strawson (1974), Becker (1999), Chierchia (2013), Alonso-Ovalle and Menéndez-Benito (2015), Kratzer and Shimoyama (2017) a.o.

- (8) a. Jo called Alice. So, she called # un student oarecare / # irgendein student / ✓ some student.
  b. Jo called # un student oarecare / ✓ irgendein student / ✓ some student, but not Alice.
  - (9) Some cabinet minister has been shot.
     → Speaker ignorance or indifference
- (10) a. Jo didn't call # un student oarecare / # irgendein student / # some student.
  - b. Nobody called # un student oarecare / **√irgendein** student / # some student.
  - c. Jo managed without calling *#* un student oarecare / √irgendein student / *#* some student.
  - d. Few of the participants called # un student oarecare / ✓irgendein student / ✓some student.
  - e. Jo rarely called *#* un student oarecare / ✓irgendein student / ✓ some student.
  - f. If Jo called  $\checkmark$  un student oarecare /  $\checkmark$  irgendein student /  $\checkmark$  some student, she won.
  - g. Everyone who called 🗸 un student oarecare / 🗸 irgendein student / 🗸 some student won.



#### Re-enter comparative-modified numerals

Mihoc (2020, 2021), building also on findings from indefinites, Mayr and Meyer (2014), Westera and Brasoveanu (2014), Cremers et al. (2017)

#### (11) a.

- b. Jo called  $\checkmark$  more than 2 / # at least 3 students, but not 5.
  - (12) Jo called **more than 2** students.
    - ----> Speaker ignorance or indifference



## Re-enter bare numerals, modified numerals

Mihoc (2021), building especially on Mayr (2013), Spector (2013, 2014)

- (13) a. Jo called 3 / more than 2 / less than 4 / at least 3 / at most 3 students.  $\Rightarrow \neg \checkmark 4$  / # more than 3 / # less than 3 / # at least 4 / # at most 2  $\Rightarrow \checkmark$  exactly 3 / # exactly 3 / # exactly 3 / # exactly 3 / # exactly 3
  - b. Jo didn't call 3 / more than 2 / less than 4 / # at least 3 / # at most 3 students.
    → ¬ not # 2 / # more than 1 / # less than 5 / # at least 2 / # at most 4
    ⇒ # exactly 2 / # exactly 4 / # exactly 2 / # exactly 4
  - c. Everyone called 3 / more than 2 / less than 4 / at least 3 / at most 3 students.  $\rightarrow \neg$  everyone  $\checkmark 4$  /  $\checkmark$  more than 3 /  $\checkmark$ less than 3 /  $\checkmark$ at least 4 /  $\checkmark$ at most 2
  - d. If Jo called 3 / more than 2 / less than 4 / at least 3 / at most 3 students, she won.  $\Rightarrow \neg \text{ if } \checkmark 2 / \checkmark \text{ more than } 1 / \checkmark \text{less than } 5 / \checkmark \text{ at least } 2 / \checkmark \text{ at most } 4$
  - e. Jo called 3 / more than 2 / less than 4 / at least 3 / at most 3 students.  $\rightarrow \neg \checkmark 4$  /  $\checkmark$  more than 4 /  $\checkmark$  less than 2 /  $\checkmark$  at least 5 /  $\checkmark$  at most 1
  - f. Jo didn't call 3 / more than 2 / less than 4 / # at least 3 / # at most 3 students.  $\rightarrow \neg$  not  $\checkmark$  1 /  $\checkmark$  more than 0 /  $\checkmark$  less than 6 /  $\checkmark$  at least 1 /  $\checkmark$  at most 5



		Ignorance /	Other modal v	ariation effects?	F	ositive polarity	y?	Scalar im- plicatures?
Category	Item	Variation effect	Positive specificity	Negative specificity	Plain DE	DE + pos. presup.	DE + pos. implic.	-
Indefinites	un qualsiasi/qualunque NP (Italian)	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
	un NP qualsiasi/qualunque (Italian)	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes
	un NP oarecare (Romanian)	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes
	un qualche NP (Italian)	yes	no	yes	no	yes	?	yes
	algún (Spanish)	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
	irgendein (German)	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	?	yes
	some (English)	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Disjunction	ou	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	yes
	or	yes	no	no	yes	yes	yes	yes
Numerals	BNs (e.g., three)	no*	NA	NA	yes	yes	yes	yes*
	CMNs (e.g., more/less than three)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes*
	SMNs (e.g., at least/most three)	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes*

#### Q1: Are the facts parallel?

Yes, though in a much richer sense than usually acknowledged.

In all of numerals, disjunction and indefinites we find:

- ► a modal variation effect in seemingly episodic contexts:
  - $\pm$  compatibility with specificity (negative, positive, negative & positive)
  - $\pm$  compatibility with DE environments (plain, +positive implicature, +positive presupposition)
- ► Horn-style scalar implicatures

#### Outline

Preamble

Q1: Are the facts parallel?

Q2: What is the parallel account?

Q3: Why should we care?



Horn (1972), Chierchia et al. (2012), a.o.:

- Numerals, disjunction, and indefinites naturally activate scalar alternatives.
- ► Factoring these in yields scalar implicatures.



Krifka (1999), Fox and Hackl (2006), Mayr (2013), Coppock and Brochhagen (2013), Kennedy (2015), Schwarz (2016), etc.:

MNs do not give rise to Horn scalar implicatures.



Krifka (1999), Geurts and Nouwen (2007), Nouwen (2010), Cohen and Krifka (2014):

► SMNs are special.



Büring (2008), Coppock and Brochhagen (2013), Kennedy (2015), Schwarz (2016), Spector (2015), Nicolae (2017), Mihoc (2020, 2021):

- ► SMNs are disjunction-like.
- ► They activate disjunctive alternatives.
- ► Factoring these in yields total ignorance and positive polarity.



Nouwen (2015), Alonso-Ovalle and Menéndez-Benito (2010), Chierchia (2013), Mihoc (2020, 2021):

- ► SMNs and disjunction are indefinite-like.
- ► They activate subdomain alternatives.
- Factoring these in yields ignorance ± compatibility with negative and/or positive specificity and ± positive polarity.



Mihoc (2020, 2021):

- ► MNs and disjunction are indefinite-like.
- ► They activate subdomain alternatives.
- Factoring these in yields ignorance ± compatibility with negative and/or positive specificity and ± positive polarity.



Mihoc (2020, 2021):

- Numerals, disjunction, and indefinites are item-with-domain- and item-with-scale-like.
- They naturally activate scalar and, except for BNs, also subdomain alternatives.
- ► Factoring these in (in very specific ways) yields ignorance ± compatibility with negative and/or positive specificity and ± polarity sensitivity, and Horn-style scalar implicatures.
- In numerals, in certain contexts, due to the nature of the domain, ignorance and scalar implicatures clash, hence the occasional scalar implicature gaps.

#### Concrete illustration: Truth conditions and alternatives

- (14) Jo called Alice or Bob. (15) Jo called some student<sub>{Alice, Bob}</sub>.
  - $\begin{array}{cccc} a & b & (DA) \\ \downarrow & & \\ a \lor b & \leftarrow & a \land b & (SA) \end{array}$
- 15) Jo called less than 2 people. Jo called at most 1 person.

$$\begin{array}{cccc}
0 & 1 & (DA) \\
\downarrow \\
0 & \rightarrow & \mathbf{0} \lor \mathbf{1} \to & \mathbf{0} \lor \mathbf{1} \lor \mathbf{2} \to \dots \text{ (SA)}
\end{array}$$

(16)Jo called Alice, Bob, or Cindy.(17)Jo called less than 3 people.Jo called some student{Alice, Bob, Cindy}.Jo called at most 2 people.

0

 $a \ b \ c \qquad (DA)$   $a \lor b \ a \lor c \ b \lor c$   $\downarrow$   $a \lor b \lor c \leftarrow a \land b, \ldots \leftarrow a \land b \land c(SA)$ 

$$0 \ 1 \ 2 \qquad (DA)$$

$$0 \lor 1 \ 0 \lor 2 \ 1 \lor 2$$

$$\downarrow$$

$$\rightarrow 0 \lor 1 \rightarrow 0 \lor 1 \lor 2 \rightarrow \cdots \lor 3 \rightarrow \dots (SA)$$

#### Concrete illustration: Implicature calculation mechanism

Contradiction-based O(nly). Pre-exhaustification (with IE) relative to DA of same size (or smaller). (\* = crucial only for computations with  $\diamond$ )

(18) 
$$O_{ExhDA}(a \lor b) = (19) \qquad O_{ExhDA}(0 \lor 1) = (0 \lor 1) \land \neg O_{A} \land O_{A$$

#### Concrete illustration: Ignorance





(23) 
$$O_{ExhDA} \diamondsuit (0 \lor 1) = \diamondsuit (0 \lor 1) \land \neg \underbrace{0 \diamondsuit 0}_{\diamondsuit 0 \land \neg \diamondsuit 1} \land \neg \underbrace{0 \diamondsuit 1}_{\diamondsuit 1 \land \neg \diamondsuit 0} \land \neg \underbrace{0 \diamondsuit 1}_{\diamondsuit 1 \land \neg \diamondsuit 0}$$

(24) 
$$O_{ExhDA} \square (a \lor b) = \square (a \lor b) \land \neg \underbrace{O\square a}_{\square a \land \square b} \land \neg \underbrace{O\square b}_{\square b \land \square a} \land \neg \underbrace{O\square b}_{\square b \to \square a}$$

(25)  $O_{ExhDA} \square (0 \lor 1)$  $= \square (0 \lor 1) \land \neg \underbrace{O \square 0}_{\square 0 \land \square 1} \land \neg \underbrace{O \square 1}_{\square 1 \land \square 0}$ 

## Concrete illustration: Compatibility with specificity

26) 
$$O_{ExhSgDA}(\Box_{S}(a \lor b \lor c))$$

$$= \Box_{S}(a \lor b \lor c) \land$$

$$(\Box_{S}a \to \Box_{S}b \lor \Box_{S}c) \land$$

$$(\Box_{S}b \to \Box_{S}a \lor \Box_{S}c) \land$$

$$(\Box_{S}c \to \Box_{S}a \lor \Box_{S}b)$$

$$\checkmark total ignorance, \checkmark neg. specificity$$

(28)  $O_{ExhNonSgDA}(\Box_{S}(a \lor b \lor c)) = \Box_{S}(a \lor b \lor c) \land \\ (\Box_{S}(a \lor b) \to \Box_{S}(a \lor c) \lor \Box_{S}(b \lor c)) \land \\ (\Box_{S}(a \lor c) \to \Box_{S}(a \lor b) \lor \Box_{S}(b \lor c)) \land \\ (\Box_{S}(b \lor c) \to \Box_{S}(a \lor b) \lor \Box_{S}(a \lor c)) \land \\ (\Box_{S}(b \lor c) \to \Box_{S}(a \lor b) \lor \Box_{S}(a \lor c)) \lor \checkmark total ignorance, \checkmark pos. specificity$ 

(27)  $O_{ExhSgDA}(\Box_{S}(0 \lor 1 \lor 2)) = \Box_{S}(0 \lor 1 \lor 2) \land (\Box_{S} 0 \to \Box_{S} 1 \lor \Box_{S} 2) \land (\Box_{S} 1 \to \Box_{S} 0 \lor \Box_{S} 2) \land (\Box_{S} 2 \to \Box_{S} 0 \lor \Box_{S} 1) \land (\Box_{S} 2 \to \Box_{S} 0 \lor \Box_{S} 1) \checkmark total ignorance, \checkmark neg. specificity$ 

(29)  $O_{ExhNonSgDA}(\Box_{S}(0 \lor 1 \lor 2)) = \Box_{S}(0 \lor 1 \lor 2) \land$  $(\Box_{S}(0 \lor 1) \to \Box_{S}(0 \lor 2) \lor \Box_{S}(1 \lor 2)) \land$  $(\Box_{S}(0 \lor 2) \to \Box_{S}(0 \lor 1) \lor \Box_{S}(1 \lor 2)) \land$  $(\Box_{S}(1 \lor 2) \to \Box_{S}(0 \lor 1) \lor \Box_{S}(0 \lor 2)) \checkmark$ total ignorance,  $\checkmark$  pos. specificity

#### Concrete illustration: Polarity sensitivity



#### Concrete illustration: Compatibility with some DE environments

#### Concrete illustration: Scalar implicatures

(34) 
$$O_{SA} \Box_{S}(a \lor b \lor c) = \Box_{S}(a \lor b \lor c) \land \neg \Box_{S}(a \land b) \land \cdots \land \neg \Box_{S}(a \land b \land c)$$

$$(36) \qquad \Box_{\rm S} O_{\rm SA}(a \lor b \lor c) = \Box_{\rm S}((a \lor b \lor c) \land \neg(a \land b) \land \cdots \land \neg(a \land b \land c))$$

$$(35) \qquad \begin{array}{l} O_{SA} \square_{S}(0 \lor 1 \lor 2) \\ \square_{S}(0 \lor 1 \lor 2) \land \neg \square_{S}(0 \lor 1) \end{array}$$

(37) 
$$\Box_{S}O_{SA}(0 \lor 1 \lor 2)$$
$$\Box_{S}((0 \lor 1 \lor 2) \land \neg (0 \lor 1))$$
$$= \Box_{S}2$$
clash with ignorance from  $O_{ExhDA}$ !

## Q2: What is the parallel account?

It is an alternative-based account, though much more unified than in previous literature:

In all of indefinites, disjunction, and numerals we have obligatory:

• (except for BNs:)  $O_{ExhDA}$ :

 $\pm$  ability to tolerate O<sub>ExhDA</sub> relative to just natural subsets—SgDA, NonSgDA  $\pm$  ability to tolerate O<sub>ExhDA</sub> that does not lead to a properly stronger meaning

► (including BNs) O<sub>SA</sub>

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Others: Natural languages are supralogical = idiosyncratic, illogical.

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Grice: Natural languages are supralogical = principled, very logical.

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- ► challenge: supralogical effects rich, vary both between and within categories of language

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- ► consequence: tempting to give up on supralogical = principled, very logical

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- ► challenge: supralogical effects rich, vary both between and within categories of language
- ► consequence: tempting to give up on supralogical = principled, very logical
- ► main point today: we don't have to

Thank you!

## Appendix

# [1]

(assertion)

(assertion)

(38) Jo called some student.  $\exists x \in [[student]][C(j,x)]$ 

(39) Jo called a, b, ..., or ...  

$$\bigvee_{x \in \{a,b, \dots\}} C(j,x) \Leftrightarrow C(j,b) \lor \dots \qquad (assertion)$$

(40) Three people quit.  
$$\exists x[|x| = 3 \land P(x) \land Q(x)]$$

- (41) More/less than 3 people quit.  $\max(\lambda d . \exists x[|x| = d \land P(x) \land Q(x)]) \in \boxed{[much/little](3)}$ (assertion)
- (42) At most/least 3 people quit.  $\max(\lambda d . \exists x[|x| = d \land P(x) \land Q(x)]) \in \boxed{[much/little]](3)}$ (assertion)



Appendix

#### scenarios of interest

total variation	partial v	variation	no variation			
'no winner'	neg. specificity 'one loser'	pos. specificity 'one winner'-1	pos. specificity 'one winner'-2	'all winners'		
e.g.,	e.g.,	e.g.,	e.g.,	e.g.,		
<i>w</i> <sub>1</sub> : x <del>y</del> <del>z</del>	<i>w</i> <sub>1</sub> : <b>x</b> y <del>z</del>	$w_1$ : x y $z$	<i>w</i> <sub>1</sub> : х <del>у</del> <del>z</del>	<i>w</i> <sub>1</sub> : x y z		
<i>w</i> <sub>2</sub> : <b>x</b> y <b>z</b>	<i>w</i> <sub>2</sub> : <b>x y</b> z	<i>w</i> <sub>2</sub> : x <del>y</del> z	<i>w</i> <sub>2</sub> : х <del>у</del>	<i>w</i> <sub>2</sub> : x y z		
<i>w</i> <sub>3</sub> : <del>x</del> <del>y</del> z	<i>w</i> <sub>3</sub> : <b>x</b> y z	<i>w</i> <sub>3</sub> : x y z	<i>w</i> <sub>3</sub> : х <del>у z</del>	<i>w</i> <sub>3</sub> : x y z		

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