AG 4 (Kurz-AG)
Indefiniteness Crosslinguistically

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The distribution of Southern German indefinites,
and their diachronic evolution
25.02.2010, 10.30-11.00 Uhr, Raum 1.308

In this paper, I will show that Southern German Indefinite articles provide a (synchronic) puzzle for Chierchia (1998)-style NP-denotations. I will show further-more that the diachronic development of the German indefinite does not square at all with the assumptions put forward in Heine (1997), according to which gram-maticalisation corresponds to gradual semantic bleaching, and that the diachronic evolution of indefinites in German follows a standard grammaticalisation path.

The Synchronic Puzzle Chierchia's system predicts that there cannot be any determiner that applies to both singular count and (singular) mass nouns, but excluding plural count nouns.

In some contemporary Southern-German dialects (this one from Vorarlberg, Austria), it is perfectly acceptable to use an indefinite article with mass nouns, as well as with singular count nouns. However, the indefinite is not possible with plural count nouns (cf. (1)). This is precisely the pattern predicted to be impossible by Chierchia.

(1) a. mir hond an hund.   b.   mir hond a meal.   c. *mir hond a hünd.
       we have a dog.   we have a flour.   we have a dogs.

Importantly, as will be shown, the acceptability of the indefinite article with a mass noun cannot be analysed as a case of coercion from mass to count.

The Diachronic Puzzle One might suppose that the Southern German Indefinite (SGI) has grammaticalised away from an original state similar to the one of contemporary standard German. However, this assumption is not warranted. Quite to the contrary, the SGI is a much closer descendant to Middle High German (MHG) and Early New High German indefinite articles than the standard German indefinite.

In MHG, the use of the indefinite article was less restricted than even in the contemporary Southern dialects. It combined quite freely with mass, but appeared also with at least some plural forms:

(5) Daz   was in   einen   zîten,   dô   vrou Helche erstarp
    That   was in   aPl   timesPl , when lady H.   died.
    'It succeeded at the time when lady Helche had died.'

(5) may be a *plurale tantum*, but in contemporary Southern German, even such a combination with a merely morphological plural is agrammatical. Furthermore, one finds the MHG indefinite article in vocatives, with discourse old elements, and in generic comparison (cf. Paul et al., 1982), all of which is impossible in any contemporary variety of German I know.

Later, in Luther's German, the indefinite article has disappeared from many MHG environments (vocatives, pluralia tantum, discourse-old indefinites), and looks more like the SGI. However, it still can be shown that there were less restrictions on the indefinite than there are today.

Conclusion The indefinite articles in different dia-systems of German pose serious problems to both formal theories of NP-denotation, as well as to commonly assumed pathways of grammatical change.

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Free choice item as fossils
25.02.2010, 11.30-12.00 Uhr, Raum 1.308

Since the seminal work of Paul Grice the relationship between pragmatic inference and grammar has been the subject of a debate in linguistics, which hasn't reached firm conclusions yet. Our project intends to contribute to this debate focusing on one phenomenon that appears to be an important source of insights on this issue: the diversity of indefinite constructions within and across languages.

In this talk we will focus on free choice indefinites. Free choice items are felicitous in permissions (1a), where they give rise to a free choice inference, but are ungrammatical in episodic sentences (1b):

(1)   a. Joe may kiss anybody. b. # Joe kissed anybody.

Several authors have shown that from (2a), arguably the original logical rendering of (1a), we obtain via purely Gricean means the free choice inference in (2b):

(2)   a. Original existential sentence: $\textbf{MAY}(\exists x \; kiss(j,x))$
        b. Conversational implicature: $\forall x(\textbf{MAY}(\textbf{ONLY}_x \; kiss(j,x)))$

The main hypothesis we would like to investigate in this talk is that specialized free choice morphology has emerged as result of a process of fossilization of this originally pragmatic inference. In languages with distinctive free choice forms, inference (2b), pragmatic in origin, has been integrated into the semantic content of sentences like (1a).

In order to better understand what exactly has been fossilized in these cases and how it did happen we have carried out a number of cross-linguistic studies both on the synchronic and diachronic dimension. In the talk, we will present (i) the results of a synchronic corpus study, comparing German emphatic indefinite *irgendein* (which has both epistemic and free choice uses), with Italian, Spanish and Czech distinctive free choice items (*uno) qualunque*, *cualquier(a)*, and *kterýkoli*; and (ii) the first results of two diachronic studies assessing the emergence and historical development of German *irgendein* and Spanish *cualquier(a)*.

In the corpus studies, we have assumed 13 core functions (context/meaning) for indefinite forms organized in an implicational map which extends Haspelmath's (1997) original map as follows: Haspelmath's original indirect negation function has been split into an antimorphic (It is not necessary that *any* student come) and an anti-additive (The gravity of such act goes beyond *any* justification) function; and three new functions have been introduced contiguous to the free choice area, namely the indiscriminacy function (I don't want to go to bed with *just any* woman anymore (Horn 2000, Vlachou 2007)), the universal free choice function (If it is a democratic election, we will accept *any* outcome (Jayez & Tovena 2006)), and the generic function (*Any* lion has four legs).

Horn, L. (2000): *Any* and *(-) ever*: Free choice and free relatives.
Jayez, J. & L. Tovena (2006): *Epistemic Determiners*.
Vlachou, E. (2007): *Free Choice in and out of Context: Semantics and Distribution of French, Greek and English Free Choice Items*.

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Mapping the *any*'s of English, German, and Dutch
25.02.2010, 12.00- 12.30 Uhr, Raum 1.308

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0. The purpose of this talk is to increase the understanding of the cross-linguistic synchrony and diachrony of indefinites in general and of West-Germanic *any* words in particular. It will do this by (re)introducing a Neo-Aristotelian alternative to HASPELMATH's (1997) indefiniteness map and by focusing on English, German and Dutch *any* words.

1. The map.
As argued in AUTHORS (in print), the indefiniteness map offered in HASPELMATH (1997) has a precursor in the Aristotelian "Square of Oppositions" and more particularly in the Neo-Aristotelian triangular geometries that succeed it (e.g. HORN 1990, VAN DER AUWERA 1996). The relevant Neo-Aristotelian map is a triangle of which the basic values are 'non-specific choice', 'specific choice', and 'no choice', exemplified in (1), (2) and (3), respectively. These values capture meanings-in-context, i.e., the meanings of indefiniteness markers such as *anybody* as modified by context (e.g. question or negation). The Neo-Aristotelian map will be shown to deal with the relation between meaning and context better than the HASPELMATH map.

(1)   Did you see *somebody/anybody*?   [Non-specific choice]

(2)   *Some/*any* friends came.   [Specific choice]

(3)   a.   I saw *nobody.*   [No choice]
      b.   I didn't see *anybody/*somebody.*   [No choice].

It will further be argued that for the purposes of *any* words the triangle has to be extended (see Figure 1).

2. The *any*'s.

Present-day English *any* has four of the uses shown on the Neo-Aristotelian map. We claim that the ancestor of *any*, an adjective meaning 'single', entered the map from the left ('non-specific choice', 'no choice'), then reached 'specific or no choice' and 'universal quantification'. The 'specific choice' use was never obtained; it remained the province of *some*. On Figure 2. *any*'s present-day uses are shaded and arrows indicate diachronic pathways.
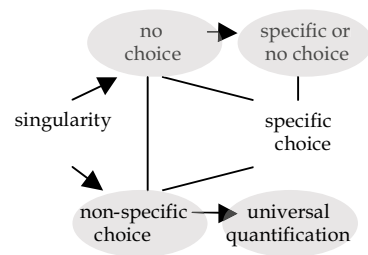

Figure 1: English *any*

The counterparts of *any* in German and Dutch have not enjoyed much attention (apart from some remarks in HOEKSEMA 1995, HASPELMATH 1997, JÄGER 2008), even though their uses are variegated too. We will show how German *einig* and Dutch *enig* entered the indefiniteness map in the same way as English *any*, but remained adjectives. Instead of heading towards 'universal quantification' like English *any*, German *einig* headed for 'specific choice', it left 'no choice' completely and is marginal for 'non-specific choice'. Dutch *enig* retained some 'non-specific choice' and 'no choice' uses, and ventured itself a bit into 'universal quantification', thus far more like English than like German, but it also advanced into the 'specific choice' domain, like German and unlike English.

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The expression of indefiniteness in Hausa
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The talk gives an empirical overview and semantic analysis of the expression of indefiniteness in Hausa (West Chadic). Like many other languages (Matthewson 1999, Chung & Ladusaw (C&L 2004)), Hausa has two series of indefinite NP-expressions, which are analysed in terms of Chung & Ladusaw's RESTRICT and a choice-function mechanism, respectively. The Hausa data add to the growing body of cross-linguistic evidence in favour of an underlying ambiguity in English and German indefinites (Reinhart 1997).

HAUSA-OBSERVATIONS: Same as in Lilloet Salish and Maori (Matthewson 1999, C&L 2004), indefiniteness in Hausa is expressed by two series of indefinite NPs, i.e., by bare NPs or by complex NPs that are introduced by an indefinite marker *wani*, *wata*, *wa(d'an)su* (m., f., pl.) (= *wani-NPs*) (Newman 2000). Both NP-types satisfy standard tests for indefiniteness markers: (i) They occur in existential sentences; (ii) They introduce new discourse referents; (iii) Neither entails nor presupposes uniqueness.

(1) Audu yaa   ginà ***gidaa* /   *wani gidaa***
     Audu 3SG.PERF   build house   WANI house
     'Audu built *a house* / *a certain house*'

The two kinds of indefinite expressions differ semantically in two ways: First, bare NPs must take semantic scope under (modal) operators and negation , whereas *wani*-NPs can take scope above or below other operator elements in the clause (Zimmermann 2008). Second, while both can introduce discourse referents in

principle, there is a strong preference for the use of *wani*-NPs as discourse antecedents for pronominal anaphora (Jaggar 1988).

ANALYSIS: Following C&L (2004), we analyze *wani*-NPs as introducing a choice function variable *f*, which can be bound at any semantic level. Bare NP indefinites, by contrast, are property-denoting (<et>) and combine with the verb meaning via RESTRICT. The unsaturated argument position is existentially closed off at the event level above vP (C&L 2004). In the absence of additional operators, the two analyses yield the same interpretation for the minimal pair in (1). Without additional operators, such as negation, the meanings of bare NPs take obligatory narrow scope, as they are locally composed with the verb meaning. By contrast, *wani*-NPs can scope either above or below negation since the CF-variable can be bound at any structural level (4bc). Finally, the preference for *wani*-NPs as discourse antecedents derives from the fact that, after CF-application, these expressions denote into type <e> and are thus more accessible antecedents for pronominal anaphora in the subsequent discourse.

The analysis of Hausa indefinites suggests that existential closure over CF applies at any semantic level, at least in Hausa. In addition, the syntax-semantic mapping with indefinites is extremely transparent in Hausa, instantiating the SPECIFY/RESTRICT-distinction of C&L in its purest form: Bare NPs wear their property-denoting nature on their sleeves, while CF-instantiating *wani*-NPs are also morpho-syntactically more complex.

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Indefiniteness and the information structure of constituent questions
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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 raises problems, since the subject need not be a presuppostitional indefinite: in case it is not, it cannot serve as a sentence topic (cf. Mikkelsen 2005).

Specificational sentences can also take the form of constituent questions, as shown by Comorovski 2007 for French and Romanian and Barros 2009 for Brazilian Portuguese. In the Romance languages, specificational questions have the form *Wh-DP-copula-DP*, where the syntactic subject is the postcopular DP. The subject can be

indefinite only if it contains a subjective modifier, as illustrated by the contrast below (Romanian):

(1) a. Care ar fi / e (după tine) *un loc **bun** de mers în vacanță?*
   'What would be / is (according to you) *a **good** place* for spending the holidays?'
 b. * Care e un hotel de cinci stele în Paris?
    what is a hotel of five stars in Paris

Our paper purports to explain the subjective modifier condition on indefinite subjects of specificational wh-questions. To do so, we will consider the information structure of wh-questions.

Just like declaratives, constituent questions need an aboutness topic: they are asked *about* something (cf. Krifka 2001, Dikkers 2004, a.o.). If the subject is indefinite, the question can be about: a) a non-subject constituent; b) an event or, as we will argue, c) the point of view of a 'judge'.

Lasersohn 2005 treats the 'judge' as one of the parameters with respect to which a sentence is evaluated. 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 a subjective predicate. We will treat the judge in the latter way. Since in question (1a) the adjective *bun* ('good') contained in the subject is a subjective predicate, we propose that the topic of (1a) is the point of view of the hearer, who is the 'judge'. As the hearer is by definition present in the context of utterance, (s)he is a discourse-old entity; his/her point of view can therefore constitute the aboutness topic of the question. This analysis of the information structure of (1a) is represented in (2) below, in which, following Krifka (2001:35), we have allowed the topic of the question to scope out of the question act:

(2) *Topic* [judge$_{you}$] λx [*Quest* [what would be a good (x) place for the holidays]

The expression *judge$_{you}$*, which is the topic of the question, represets the point of view of the judge.

Significantly, in languages that have a marker for aboutness 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:

(3) ne - **nun** coheun tap - i   mwuel kes katni?
   you-**TOP** good answer-NOM
   'According to you, what be would a good answer?'

Féry and Krifka 2008 remark that languages with morphological topic-marking (Japanese, Korean) have an additional use for the topic-marker; they use it to mark frame setters. Krifka 2007 states that a frame-setter cannnot function as an aboutness topic. We differ here from Krifka 2007. The fact that the same morphological marker is used for aboutness topics and for frame setters cannot be accidental. We suggest that frame setters introduce new discourse topics, as seen from the following example in Krifka 2007: *As for his health situation, he had a bypass operation recently*. The English *as for* construction is a sentence-form associated with the introduction of new discourse topics; moreover, a new discourse topic, when considered at the sentence level, can be an aboutness topic. We propose that in Romanian (1a) and in the Korean (3) the point of view of the 'judge' is a frame setter that functions as an aboutness topic. We conclude that the subject of a

specificational wh-question can be indefinite just in case the question is *about* the point of view of a 'judge'.

Independent evidence for the claim that the point of view of a 'judge' can function as a topic 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:

(4) Ce obiecții **ar fi / e posibil** să aibă   *cineva*   împotriva acestei inițiative? (Romanian)
    'What objections **might / may** *someone* have against this initiative?'

Stephenson (2007) shows that the evaluation of sentences containing an epistemic modal depends on a 'judge'. Therefore we can analyze (4) as having the judge's point of view as a topic.

In sum, an indefinite subject can occur in a non-generic specificational wh-question only if the subject contains a subjective modifier; this modifier provides a 'judge' argument. We have proposed that the topic of specificational wh-questions with indefinite subjects is the point of view of a 'judge'.

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Epistemic specificity and knowledge
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According to Fodor and Sag (1982) the indefinite in (1) can exhibit two different readings: a specific, referential reading, which means that the speaker has a certain individual in mind, and a quantificational reading. Continuation tests like Test A and Test B are often used to tease the two readings apart.

(1) John must marry an English woman.

Test A:(1a.) Namely, Sue.   specific, referential
     (1b.) We try to figure out who it was.   quantificational, non-referential
Test B:(2a.) She is very tall.   specific, referential
     (2b.) One with blue eyes/#She is very tall.   quantificational, non-referential

However if we look at the German *irgend*-indefinite we see that these two tests give inconclusive results. Consider reading (i) of the following example:

(3) Marie musste irgendeinen Doktor heiraten.   (Kratzer & Shimoyama, 2002)
    'Mary had-to marry irgend-one doctor'
(i) There was a doctor Mary had to marry, the speaker doesn't know or care who it
        was.   (ignorance or indifference implicature)
(ii) Mary had to marry a doctor, any doctor was a permitted marriage option for her.
                              (free choice reading)

A way to force reading (i) is by adding *bestimmt,* cf. example (4)[1]. On this reading both continuation in (4.b) and (4.c) are possible. Test A would label the indefinite as quantificational but Test B would suggest that the use is specific, referential.

(4) Marie musste irgendeinen bestimmten Doktor heiraten.
    'Mary had-to marry some particular doctor'

Test A: (4a.) #Namely, Dr. Wunder.　　　　　　Test B: (4c.) He is very rich.
　　　　(4b.) We try to figure out who it was.

We will assume that only Test B is a genuine test for specificity, whereas Test A is a diagnostic for the known/unknown function as described in Haspelmath (1997). The case of *irgend*-indefinites clearly shows that we have to distinguish between having someone in mind usually associated with specificity and knowing who somebody is. Using the tools described in Aloni (2001) we propose that *irgendein* in sentences like (4) contributes an (obligatory) implicature of the form the 'speaker/agent doesn't know who the referent is'. The contribution of *bestimmt* can be characterized as the 'speaker/agent has someone in mind'. Formally we will represent these contributions in a uniform way using identity questions under a modal operator $\Box$:

(5) a.　[[irgend]]: $\neg \Box_{S/A} ?y_n\ x = y$　　　(implicature: speaker/agent doesn't know who)

　　 b.　[[bestimmt]]: $\Box_{S/A} ?y_m\ x = y$　　　(the speaker/agent has someone in mind)[2]

The formula $\Box_{S/A} ?y_m\ x = y$ reads as S/A knows the answer to the identity question who y is under a method of identification m, cf. Aloni (2001). Since m and n can denote different identification methods (5.a) and (5.b) are not contradictory in this framework. The intuitive difference between knowing who somebody is and having someone in mind will be captured by putting more stringent conditions on the identifying method used to interpret the former.

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Nauze, F. 2008. *Modality in Typological Perspective.* Amsterdam: ILLC

[1]In this variant the indifference interpretation is marginal, therefore we will ignore it henceforth.
[2]This might suggest that the exceptional wide scope behaviour of *bestimmt*- indefinites might be related to the tendency for epistemic operators to take wide scope (e.g. Nauze, F., 2008).

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Plural epistemic indefinites
26.02.2010, 12.30-13.00 Uhr, Raum 1.308

Across languages, we find epistemic indefinites, which express speaker's ignorance. German *irgendein* and Spanish *algún* belong to this category: The examples in (1) convey that the speaker does not know which doctor María married (hence the oddity of the *namely* continuation.) The class of epistemic indefinites is not uniform: *irgendein* triggers a total ignorance (Free Choice 'FC') effect: (1a) conveys that, as far as the speaker knows, María might have married *any* doctor (see K(ratzer) and S(himoyama) 2002). Spanish *algún* expresses only partial ignorance: (1b) is compatible with situations where not all the doctors are epistemic possibilities. (A(lonso-Ovalle) and M(enéndez-Benito), to appear.) This sets the stage for a research program that aims to identify the parameters along which epistemic indefinites vary. The present paper contributes to this goal by (i) identifying a novel contrast between types of epistemic indefinites, and (ii) providing an analysis for this

contrast that links it to other attested parameters.

Novel Data: Plural Epistemic Indefinites. While some epistemic indefinites express ignorance in both their singular and their plural forms, others only do so in the singular. The examples in (2) illustrate this contrast for *irgendwelche* and *algunos*, the plural forms of *irgendein* and *algún*, respectively*: irgendwelche* in (2a) triggers an ignorance inference, *algunos* in (2b) does not do so.

Domain Constraints: Building on K & S, AO & MB argue that the different epistemic effects induced by *algún* and *irgendein* result from the different constraints that these indefinites impose on their domain of quantification: K & S claim that the FC effect induced by *irgendein* comes about because *irgendein* is a domain widener. On this analysis, if the set of doctors in the evaluation world is D = {a,b,c}, (1a) asserts that in all worlds compatible with what the speaker knows, María married at least one doctor in D (3a). The use of a domain widener triggers a competition with the alternative propositions in (3b) and (3c): the hearer concludes that the speaker picked the maximal domain because all the propositions in (3b) and (3c) are false. Putting this together with the assertion yields the FC effect. AO & MB argue that *algún* simply signals that its domain *is not a singleton*. On this view, (1b) competes *only* with the alternative assertions in which the domain has been narrowed down to a singleton (3c). The hearer concludes that all alternatives in (3c) are false, which results in a partial ignorance effect.

The Plural Forms: We show that the domain constraints that give rise to the contrast between the singular forms (1) also account for the contrast between the plural forms (2). In the case of *algunos*, the alternative propositions that result from restricting the domain to a singleton set do not constitute viable competitors. As a result, no epistemic effect arises. In contrast, *irgendwelche* sentences do compete other potential assertions in which the domain is restricted, resulting in a FC effect over groups.

(1) a. Maria hat irgendeinen Arzt geheiratet, # und zwar Dr. Smith.
    b. Maria se casó con algún medico, # en concreto con el doctor Smith.
      'Maria married some doctor or other, namely Dr. Smith.'

(2) a. Maria wohnt mit irgendwelchen Studenten zusammen, # und zwar mit Pedro und Juan.
     b. María vive con algunos estudiantes, en concreto con Pedro y Juan.
       'Maria lives with some students, namely Pedro and Juan.'

(3) a. ☐ ∃x [x ∈ {a, b, c} & M(m, x)] ('M' stands for 'married', and 'm' for María.)
    b. ☐ [M(m,a) or M(m,b)], ☐ [M(m,b) or M(m,c)], ☐ [M(m,a) or M(m,c)]
    c. ☐ [M(m,a)], ☐ [M(m,b)], ☐ [M(m,c)]

Alonso-Ovalle, L. and Menéndez-Benito, P. (to appear) Modal Indefinites, *NALS.*
Kratzer, A., & Shimoyama, J. (2002) Indeterminate Pronouns: The View from Japanese. In Yukio Otsu (Ed.), *The Proceedings of the Third Tokyo Conference on Psycholinguistics* (pp. 1-25). Tokyo: Hituzi Syobo.

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Indefinite pronouns in Adyghe: formal aspects
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This paper presents a fine-grained analysis of the Adyghe[1] indefinite pronouns system. My goal will be to take the system as a whole and explore which mechanisms will be of relevance to account for the full spectrum of data in one particular language. To define what the "whole" is, I shall use the stepping stone for any research in indefinite pronouns – Haspelmath (1997). In my presentation I test different theoretical mechanisms against Adyghe data and show that to account for the facts presented we might have to use several different theories.

Haspelmath (1997) offers cross-linguistic generalizations of indefinite pronouns' functions, but does not offer any explanatory theory; moreover, the functional contexts from Haspelmath's map have received no explanation with respect to their formal properties so far.

There are two series of indefinite pronouns in Adyghe, marked by morphemes -gWere and -jE. The former is an indefiniteness marker and the latter is an additive particle, which has grammaticalized into a scalar particle (on scalar particles cf., among others, Fauconnier 1975). gWere-pronouns can take scope either under or over the operators in the contexts, e.g. condition:

(1) zE-gWere   qa-KWe-me,   pIale-r   gWES&We-S't
     one-INDEF   DIR-come-COND,   girl-ABS glad-FUT
     'If somebody comes, the girl will be glad'
     interpretations:
     1. if>∃, If there is someone who will come, the girl will be glad.
     2. ∃>if, There is someone x, such that the girl will be glad if come(x).

Following Matthewson (1999), I assume for the gWere-series pronouns ambiguity of indefinites interpretations, namely, between a wide-scope interpretation via Choice Functions (CF) and narrow-scope interpretation via Generalized Quantifiers (GQ).

The -jE-series consists of three different types of pronouns:
- the numeral zE 'one' – zjE
- the universal quantifier *zeB'e* / *pstew-* 'all' – *zeB'erjE* and *pstewrjE* resp.
- the interrogative stems *xet* 'who', *sEd* 'what' and *tEde* 'where': *xetjE, sEdje* and *tEdjE* resp.

The first type, zjE, exploits the machinery of scalar particles. This type is allowed only under syntactic negation in the same clause. Literally, this pronoun means 'even one', and when combined with negation, the whole means 'even one not P':

(2) z-jE   qe-KWa-R-ep
     one-ADD DIR-come-PST-NEG
     'No one came'

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[1] Adyghe is a polysynthetic language of the Northwest Caucasian family. All the data in examples are my field data.

Pronouns of the second type are universal quantifiers. These pronouns appear as a standard of comparison in comparative constructions, which semantically demand for a universal quantifier.

Finally, the third type is made up from interrogatives. In line with the idea of Kratzer & Shimoyama (2002), I suggest that this series be Hamblin pronouns. Since they are derived from interrogatives, it is very essential for them to induce sets of alternatives, which are used, for instance, in free choice interpretations.

List of glosses:
ABS – Absolutive; ADD – Additive particle; ADV – Adverbial; COND – Conditional; DIR – Directive; DYN – Dynamic; ERG – Ergative; FUT - Future; INDEF – Indefinite; NEG – Negation; OBL – Oblique; PL – Plural; POSS – Possessive; PST – Perfect.

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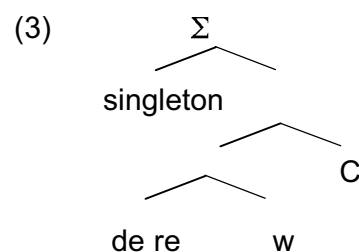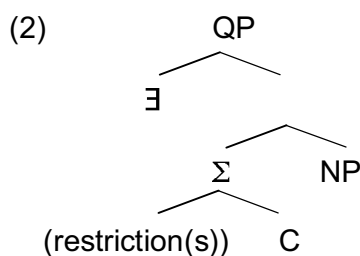

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Decomposing indefinite pseudo-scope
25.02.2010, 12.30-13.00 Uhr, Raum 1.308

I propose a theory of possible and impossible indefinites wrt their (pseudo-)scopal properties (cf. Farkas 2002 in a different framework, Kratzer 2005) but, unlike much previous work (Fodor and Sag 1982, Kratzer 2005, Reinhart 1997, etc.), I argue that indefinites are <u>un</u>ambiguous and series markers (Haspelmath 1997) are <u>not</u> semantically vacuous. The proposal is that indefinite determiners are existential generalized quantifiers whose domain (C) is grammatically restricted. These restrictions are templatic (1). In the default case, C is a function from worlds to sets of contextually salient individuals; in cases in which it is bound by a quantifier like *every* (Heim 1991, von Fintel 1994, Martí 2003), it is of the more complex type $<e,<s,et>>$ instead. (2) is the universal structure of indefinites ($\exists \in D_{<et, \ <ett>>}$) (cf. Matthewson 2001 for quantifiers in general):

(1) singleton — *de re* — ¬singleton — *de dicto* — dep(endent) x

(2)
```
           QP
          /  \
         ∃
             /  \
            Σ    NP
           / \
   (restriction(s))  C
```

(3)
```
           Σ
          /  \
     singleton
             /  \
            / \   C
        de re   w
```

(4) $[[singleton]] = \lambda P_{<et>}.\lambda x_{<e>}.\big| \{x: P(x) =1\} \big| = 1$ $[[de\ re]] = \lambda w_{<s>}.w$

         $[[\neg singleton]] = \lambda P_{<et>}.\lambda x_{<e>}.\big| \{x: P(x) =1\} \big| > 1$ $[[de\ dicto]] = \lambda w_{<s>}.w$

                                                                      $[[dep\ x]] = \lambda x_{<e>}.x$

(1) is constrained by *contiguity* (cf. Abels and Muriungi 2008): a single morpheme may spell out only restrictions that are contiguous in (1). (3) exemplifies a possible choice. C can take silent world-denoting (Percus 2000) or, when complex, individual-denoting pronouns. [*de re*], [*de dicto*] and [dep x] impose restrictions on these pronouns. [*de re*]'s pronoun must be coindexed with the root s-λ (i.e., the indefinite is always *de re*), and [*de dicto*]'s pronoun must not be coindexed with the root s-λ (i.e., it is always *de dicto*) (cf. Keshet 2008, Percus 2000). [dep x] forces the individual variable to be bound. [singleton] forces wide pseudo-scope wrt operators that manipulate individuals (e.g., *every*) and allows for exceptional wide and intermediate pseudo-scope (Schwarzschild 2001, a.o.), [¬singleton] prevents it. A particular indefinite need not choose any particular restriction, in which case its distribution will be free (e.g., English *a(n)*, German *ein*, Spanish *un*, etc.).

Cross-linguistically, it is very common for complex indefinites to be composed of a *wh*-word and a series marker (Haspelmath 1997). Here, *wh* spells out C, and series markers spell out one or more restrictions on C (*wh*, the series marker or both can be covert). To exemplify, consider that, descriptively, Russian *–to*-indefinites (e.g., *kakoj-to* 'some (lit. wh-to)')(cf. Dahl 1970, Kagan 2007, Geist 2008) take obligatory scope above intensional operators but variable scope wrt extensional ones. *-To* spells out [*de re*]. Thus, while its scope wrt intensional operators is constrained to be wide, its scope wrt extensional ones is not: its domain may or may not be a singleton set. [*de re*] markers which force either wide scope or narrow scope wrt extensional operators should exist. I argue that St'át'imcets *ti-* (Matthewson 1999), Russian *koe-* (Geist 2008) and Romanian *pe-* (Geist and Onea 2007) are [singleton, *de re*]. *Ku-* in St'át'imcets, on the other hand, spells out [*de dicto*]: it forces scope below intensional operators such as modals (Matthewson 1999). And, because the world variable restricted by *ku* needs to be bound by an intensional operator, *ku*-indefinites cannot appear in simple declarative clauses (Matthewson 1999). [*de dicto*] can combine with [¬singleton] or with [dep x]. Bare plurals in many languages are [*de dicto*, ¬singleton]: they are always read *de dicto* (Keshet 2008), but take obligatory narrow scope wrt extensional operators. Russian *nibud'*-indefinites are dependent indefinites (Farkas 1997) (Pereltsvaig 2000, 2008, Yanovich 2005) and, in addition, always take narrow scope: *nibud'* spells out [*de dicto*, dep x]. Hungarian reduplicated indefinites (Farkas 1997) are dependent indefinites that always take narrow scope wrt to extensional operators but variable scope wrt intensional ones: they spell out [dep x]. No [*de dicto*] marker should exist that forces wide scope wrt extensional operators, and no [*de re*] marker should also be [dep x]. In this system, dependent indefinites are not strange creatures: quantifiers in general can have their C bound by operators like *every* (see references above); dependent indefinites simply require that.

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**The "presentative" function of indefinite markers
in Romanian, English and German**

Cross-linguistically, the prototypical indefinite determiner phrase (DP) contains an indefinite article which precedes, follows or cliticizes on the singular noun it designates. It was shown in the literature (Givon 1981, Heine 1997, etc), that in many languages the indefinite article developed from the numeral "one". During its diachronic evolution from a numeral, the article fulfilled different functions. At first, it was used in a "presentative" way to introduce brand- new referents that were to be mentioned again in the subsequent text. Later in the process of grammaticalisation, the indefinite article marked specific referents, then non- specific ones, in order to reach the last stage of its evolution, becoming a "generalized" article. In other words, in synchronic language, the simple indefinite article does not distinguish new referents which will be mentioned again from unimportant referents.

I will show in this paper, that besides "prototypical" indefinite articles (of the form indefinite article combined with the noun determined by it), different languages have developed or adopted a grammatical device to mark indefinite DPs which function as "presentative" markers. The indefinite marker functions as an ostensive signal that indicates that the referent will be mentioned again in the next sentences after being firstly introduced in the discourse. By displaying a high persistence, the referent of the indefinite DP in question will be promoted to a more salient position within the text paragraph.

As it will be shown, languages differ with respect to the grammatical means they employ to realize the "presentative" function. We will see that Romanian uses the Differential Object Marker *pe* for this role, colloquial English adopts the referential (and not the deictic) *this* determiner while German uses the demonstrative expression *so.*

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On *some* singular indefinites in Romance

This paper addresses the properties of the Romanian existential indefinite determiner *vreun*, often mentioned in the literature on dependent items (Haspelmath 1997, Giannakidou 1997, Alonso-Ovalle & Menendez-Benito (2009), but not entirely understood. The discussion builds on observations in Farkas (2002) and Falaus (2008), brings out previously overlooked contrasts and puts forth new generalizations capturing the distribution of *vreun*. More generally, it adds to the growing class of epistemic indefinites i.e. items sensitive to what an epistemic agent holds to be true, and thus puts together *vreun* with other existential determiners in Romance (e.g. French *quelque* and Spanish *algun*).

The indefinite determiner *vreun* occurs in two kinds of contexts: (a) typical negative polarity contexts, such as negative contexts, antecedents of conditionals, questions, with a meaning and distribution roughly equivalent to English *any* (as argued for in Falaus (2008)) and (b) non-polarity, positive contexts, discussed to some extent in Farkas (2002), with a meaning equivalent to *some.* I present new data and argue that the distribution of *vreun* in non-polarity contexts (i.e. under modals, hypotheticals and disjunctions) is governed by epistemic modality. Similarly, I show *vreun* occurs in presumptive contexts, an irrealis mood (morphologically based either on future or conditional forms), conveying the meaning that there is indirect evidence (either hearsay/reported or inferential) that a certain state of affairs might hold/might have held. Furthermore, I discuss the licensing of *vreun* in the scope of attitude verbs like *believe, assume, hope,* and in certain cases of imperatives (*alternative-presenting* in Aloni's 2007 terminology), which supports the claim that the relevant property is the type of entailment authorized by the embedding operator. Crucially, the embedding operator, be it an overt modal or an attitude verb, must entail the possibility that *not p* might hold in some of the speaker's doxastic alternatives (*p* the proposition where *vreun* occurs). This is the common feature of all licensing contexts, which I subsume under the label of epistemic contexts - the crucial licensing factor is the existence of a set of alternatives entertained by the speaker which include *non p-*worlds.

I show that *vreun* is subject to a strict semantic licensing constraint, unlike *quelque* and *algun*, which seem to be subject to looser, pragmatic constraints. In order to account for it, I endorse the theory of polarity in Chierchia (2008), relying on the hypothesis that all polarity items come with *active alternatives*–they require the insertion of an exhaustification operator and give rise to implicatures, used for enriching the basic meaning of assertions. Building on Chierchia's analysis of existential free-choice items (FCIs) like *un N qualsiasi*, I argue that (i) like all indefinites, *vreun* triggers scalar alternatives and (ii) like all polarity-sensitive items, it activates domain alternatives, which I argue to be *singletons*. The restriction to epistemic contexts is derived by making use of the evidentiality component part of the semantics of epistemic modals (e.g. von Fintel & Gillies 2009).

The new facts discussed in this paper bring about interesting parallels with other dependent indefinites, whose distribution is also sensitive to epistemic modality. Thus, accounting for the properties of *vreun* enables us to delineate the parameters of variation among semantically dependent indefinites.

Aloni 2007. Free Choice, Modals and Imperatives. *NALS* 15(65—94);

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    Chierchia 2008. A Theory of Semantic Variation for Polarity Sensitive Items, talk given at LSRL 38;

Falaus 2008. Extreme non-specificity as negative polarity, talk given at LSRL 38;

Farkas 2002. Extreme non-specificity in Romanian. in *Romance Languages and Linguistic Theory 2000*;

von Fintel & Gillies 2009. 'Must…Stay…Strong!' Ms, submitted to *Natural Language Semantics;*

Giannakidou 1997. *The Landscape of Polarity Items*, PhD dissertation, University of Groningen; Jayez & Tovena 2008. Evidentiality and determination, Proceedings of the 12th Sinn und Bedeutung, 271—286.

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Indefinites and expression of reciprocity in Spanish

Intro - The standard analysis of reciprocals (Heim et al 1991, Beck 2001) builds on the fact that English *each other* contains a distributive quantifier. This analysis is not applicable to languages like Spanish, where reciprocity is expressed through an *el uno...el otro* 'the one...the other' construction (1), without distributive quantifiers. I develop an analysis for Spanish-type reciprocals that takes both *uno* and *otro* to be indefinite expressions.

(1)   Andrés y   Blas hablaron el **uno** con el   **otro**.
        Andrés and Blas talked   the one with the other
        (="Andrés and Blas talket to each other")

Basic properties - Both *uno* and *otro* pass standard tests for indefiniteness (data not shown here): (i) they exhibit non-specific readings under intensional predicates; (ii) they license donkey anaphora; and (iii) as indefinites, they lack quantificational force of their own (Heim 1982), inheriting instead the force of neighbouring operators. Further, *otro* functions exclusively as a pure anti-anaphoric marker, indicating that its containing DP is referentially disjoint from a salient discourse antecedent (in this respect, it differs from German *anders*, see Beck 2000). Consequently, *otro* is defined as augmented version of *uno* that introduces an additional variable and a non-identity requirement among variables (3).

(2) $[[uno]] = \lambda P.\lambda x.[P(x)]$ (3) $[[otro]] = \lambda P.\lambda x.\lambda y [P(x) \wedge P(y) \wedge x \neq y]$

Reciprocals - In (1), the plural subject binds a covert variable in both *uno* and *otro*, providing the corresponding obviative semantics (Arregi 2001). In order to obtain the reciprocal reading, we need to assume a cumulation operator ** associated to pluralities (Sternefeld 1998, Beck 2001), which pluralizes the predicate in question.

(4) *Cumulation*: ** is the function $D_{\langle e\langle et\rangle\rangle} \rightarrow D_{\langle e\langle et\rangle\rangle}$ such that, for any relation R in
    $D_{\langle e\langle et\rangle\rangle}$, and   any x, y in $D_{\langle e\rangle}$, $[**R](x, y) = 1$ if either:
    a. $R(x, y) = 1$, or
    b. $\exists x1.x2.y1.y2.[x = (x1 \wedge x2) \wedge y = (y1 \wedge y2) \wedge [**R](x1, y1) \wedge [**R](x2, y2)]$

To complete the analysis, the variables in *uno* and *otro* must be bound by whichever operators they are embedded under (or ∃-closed otherwise), following Heim's 1982 analysis of indefinites. In (1), the operator in question is ι corresponding to the definite article. The final representations are given below.

(5) a. [TP [Andrés & Blas] **[vP the one talked to the other]] *(structure of (1) at LF)*
    b. {Andrés, Blas} $\in$ ιx.ιy [[**talk](x, y) $\wedge$ $x \neq y$] *(semantic translation of (5a))*

Extensions - given that *uno* and *otro* inherit the quantificational force of neighbouring operators, the prediction of this analysis is that the exact reading of a Spanish reciprocal will depend on the operators that embed *uno* and *otro*. I will show that this is correct, and that it is possible to derive the whole typology of reciprocal readings in Dalrymple et al 1998. To give an example, embedding *uno* under a universal quantifier, while leaving *otro* bare (and therefore ∃-closed) leads to a *one-way strong* reading, where we assert that each of the men talked to some other man, but without

exhausing all ossible [talk(*x*,*y*)] relations (6). During the talk, I will provide detailed derivations of several variations on this pattern.

(6) a. Los hombres hablaron **cada uno** con **otro**.
   the men   talked   each one with other
   b. {men} ∈ ∀*x*.λ*y*.[[**talk](*x*, *y*) ∧ *x* ≠ *y*] *(one-way strong reciprocity)*

Arregi 2001 "Spanish reciprocals" ms., MIT Beck 00 "The semantics of *different*" *L&P 23;*
Beck 2001 "Reciprocals are definites" *NLS 9;*
Dalrymple et al 1998 "Reciprocal expressions and the content of reciprocity" *L&P21;*
Heim 1982 *The semantics of definite and indefinite NPs*, PhD Umass;
Heim et al 1991 *"Reciprocity and plurality"* *LI22;* Sternefeld 1998 "Reciprocity and cumulative predication" *JofS 6.*

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Grammaticalization processes in the development of indefinite determiners in English

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It has been argued by many linguists that the prototypical indefinite article *a* developed from the numeral *one* through processes of grammaticalization (e.g. Traugott 1982, Hopper & Martin 1987). In previous studies, we have shown on the basis of diachronic corpus data that other indefinite determiners such as *some*, *several* are also the result of grammaticalization processes (Breban 2008, 2009). For these three elements the grammaticalization process led to a new use as "primary determiner" in the noun phrase, i.e. they can occur on their own as sole determiner. As such they have to be contrasted with pre- or postdeterminers, e.g. *such* in *such a problem* and *different* in *(he was seen with) a different woman (the next day)*, which are "secondary determiners" that have to co-occur with a primary determiner and cannot function on their own as determiner in a noun phrase. We have argued in earlier work that English secondary determiners can also develop through processes of grammaticalization (Breban & Davidse 2003). For example, the postdeterminer use of *different* illustrated above developed from its qualitative adjectival use meaning "unlike", e.g. *when she met him again, he was a very different man*. In this paper, we want to look into the relation between the grammaticalization processes leading to indefinite primary and secondary determiners. (1) In what respects are they similar/different? Do they share the same sources? Are the same semantic and syntactic processes of change involved? (2) Do the two processes interact? And if so, how do they interact? We will investigate these questions on the basis of a new diachronic corpus study of *(a) certain*, which in present-day English can be used both as a secondary determiner in the determiner unit *a certain*, e.g. *she'll punch a certain Sunday Times journalist if she ever sees him*, (see e.g. Ionin 2008 and references therein), and as a primary determiner signalling quantification, as in *certain international and nearly all private trains*. First, we will reconstruct the specific shifts of meaning and of syntactic behaviour leading to the grammaticalized uses, on the basis of study of extended diachronic datasets (from the Helsinki Corpus and the Corpus of Late Modern English Texts) and synchronic data (from the COBUILD Corpus). In a second step, we will compare the findings of this case study with those of the prior studies of the grammaticalization processes of other indefinite determiners in English including *a*, *some*, *several*, *different* and *other*, in order to

come to a general appreciation about the relation between primary and secondary grammaticalization.

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