**One or two *UNTIL*s? The case of *single-UNTIL* languages**

The nature of *until* in strong(S)-NPI licensing contexts, a.k.a. *punctual until*, still remains an open question. Condoravdi (2008) posits two distinct lexical entries to explain the puzzle in (1):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| (1) | a. | John was**n’t** angry ***until*** *two*. | a’. John was angry until two. |
|  | b. | John did**n’t** become angry ***until*** *two*. | b’. \*John became angry until two. |

*Durative until*, as in (1a-a’), combines with an atelic event description (positive or negative) and simply asserts that an eventuality extends throughout a time interval. By contrast, *punctual until*, as in (1b), looks like a SNPI that combines with a telic event description and obligatorily locates an eventuality (e.g. *John’s becoming angry*) in a time interval (e.g. *from two onwards*). An analysis that relies on such a dramatic lexical ambiguity fails to explain why punctual *until* should behave as a SNPI since its meaning does not warrant NPI behavior (e.g. punctual *until* does not seem to correspond to the lowest point of a scale). A second problem with this analysis is that while it is true that some languages make an overt lexical distinction between the two *until’s* (e.g. Giannakidou 2002, Condoravdi 2008), the majority of languages do not. What the ambiguity analysis leaves unexplained is why most languages would tend to choose the *same* word for both uses. There was in fact a previous approach, which did not have to stipulate an NPI *until*: NPI *until* was simply *until* outscoping negation (Mittwoch 1977). However, this approach could not readily capture case (1b), i.e. when *until* outscopes the negation of a punctual event. What these considerations suggest is the need for a theory that integrates insights from both Condoravdi style and Mittwoch style approaches.

In this talk I will build such a theory for *single-UNTIL* languages, i.e. those languages that do not make an overt lexical distinction. I will derive the scopal analysis using a system of obligatory implicatures (as in many current proposals, e.g. Chierchia 2013). In general terms, I claim that *un- til*-phrases are low adverbs and covert extraposition of the *until*-phrase to a higher position is only possible when this derives an interpretation, with respect to scope bearing operators, that could not be obtained from the base position. This is to be viewed as an economy condition, reminiscent of Fox’s (1995) treatment of scope restriction in VP-ellipsis. I will show that such an analysis has further interesting consequences. In particular, it predicts the ungrammaticality of sentences with quantified DP subjects like *\*few people left until two* vs. the grammaticality of *nobody left until two*: only in the latter case, *until* will be able to attach above negation and outscope the subject quantifier. Ultimately, the upshot is that the SNPI behavior of *until* and its factivity are derived, but turns out to be an epiphenomenon of independent scope constraints. The choice between single *until*/two *until’s* is parametric in nature.

Selected References

**Chierchia, Gennaro**. 2013. *Logic in grammar: Polarity, free choice, and intervention*. Vol. 2. Oxford Uni- versity Press. *•* **Condoravdi, Cleo**. 2008. Punctual *until* as a scalar NPI. In K. Hanson and S. Inkelas (eds.) *The nature of the word. Essays in honor of Paul Kiparsky*. Cambridge MA: MIT Press. 631654. *•* **Fox, Danny**. 1995. Economy and scope. *Natural language semantics* 3(3): 283-341. *•* **Giannakidou, Anastasia**. 2002. UNTIL, Aspect, and Negation: A Novel Argument for Two “Until” s. In *Proceedings of SALT* (Vol. 12, pp. 84-103). *•* **Mittwoch, Anita**. 1977. Negative sentences with until. *CLS 13*: 410-417.

1