
Experimenting on odd scalar sentences with empty domains

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Abstract

If Magrian oddness *Some Italians come from a warm country* is observed in sentences with empty domains like *Some Italian kings come from a warm country*, then scalar implicatures (SI) are computed, i.e., quantification is possible, over empty domains. We collected acceptability judgements for toy-world scenarios to avoid relying on participants' encyclopedic knowledge and to ensure domain emptiness. The results show that sentences with empty domains and mismatching implicatures are more deviant than sentences with empty domains but without mismatching implicatures. It provides experimental evidence of SI computation over empty domains, arguing for the Meinongian understanding of natural language quantification.

Keywords: scalar oddness, scalar implicatures, empty domains

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