
Disambiguating information in context and prosody

Noa Attali*¹, Lisa Pearl¹, and Gregory Scontras¹

¹Department of Language Science, University of California, Irvine – United States

Abstract

We investigate the extent to which listeners can use context and prosody to interpret a potentially ambiguous utterance in everyday conversation; moreover, to what extent the disambiguating role of naturalistic prosody is redundant with that of context. We focus on *every*-negation scope ambiguity (e.g., *Every vote doesn't count*) as a case study of ambiguity. In prior work, we gathered 63 naturalistic uses of this ambiguity from conversation recordings. Here, we preregister a study (N = 126) comparing interpretations of these uses when they are perceived as text-only, audio-only, text-in-context, and audio-in-context

Keywords: scope ambiguity, context, prosody

*Speaker