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A uniform semantics for declarative and interrogative complements

(Joint work with Nadine Theiler and Maria Aloni)

We propose a semantics for declarative and interrogative complements and for verbs like *know*, *believe* and *wonder*, which embed either kind or both kinds of complements.

Following Groenendijk and Stokhof (1984), we pursue a *uniform* account, in the sense that we take both kinds of complements to be of the same semantic type and we assume a single lexical entry for verbs like *know* that embed both declarative and interrogative complements.

This approach avoids a number of problems for non-uniform theories, such as the *reductive* theories of Karttunen (1977); Heim (1994); Lahiri (2002); Spector and Egré (2015), among others, and the *twin relations* theory of George (2011). On the other hand, our account also addresses the main limitation of Groenendijk and Stokhof's proposal, which is that it is primarily designed to derive strongly exhaustive readings for interrogative complements. Our account is more flexible in that it straightforwardly derives mention-some and intermediate exhaustive readings as well.

Finally, the proposed semantics also accounts for the fact that verbs like *believe* only license declarative complements and verbs like *wonder* only license interrogative complements.

These selectional restrictions are shown to follow from the lexical semantics of the embedding verbs and the assumed semantic properties of declarative and interrogative complements.

A draft of the paper is available at the Semantics Archive:

<http://semanticsarchive.net/Archive/DE5M2Q4Z/paper.pdf>