

## The pragmatic status of strong exhaustive readings of embedded questions (Poster)

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Freitag,  
06.03.2020  
13:15–14:15  
ESA1 W Foyer

We provide support for the view that the strong exhaustive (SE) reading of embedded questions under *know* has the status of a pragmatic inference (Uegaki 2015), similar to a scalar implicature (SI) (cf. Spector 2006). Hereto, we present experimental data and show that both SE inferences and SIs can be blocked by the German discourse particle *schon*. **Background:** Originally, it was assumed that the SE reading is the semantic and only interpretation of such questions (Groenendijk & Stokhof 1984). However, Cremers & Chemla (2016) present experimental evidence for the acceptance of weaker intermediate exhaustive (IE) readings, that are entailed by the SE interpretation, and Cremers et al. (2017) relate exhaustivity inferences to SIs. Along the same lines, Uegaki (2015) analyses the SE reading as a pragmatic inference that can be suspended. **Experimental data:** We will report on experiments that also attested IE readings for questions embedded under *know* in German but found that these are less preferred than SE readings: The majority of participants (72%) judged sentences like (1) as contradictory, i.e. they drew the SE inference and did not access or accept an IE interpretation.

(1) Jan knows who of the flatmates ate pasta, but he does not know that Beth and Chloe didn't.

Thus, the pragmatically strengthened reading constitutes the preferred interpretation. This is a parallel to SIs. **The particle *schon*:** Zimmermann (2018) analyses *schon* ('alright') as a not-at-issue root modal operator indicating that the factual evidence in favour of *p* outweighs evidence for *not-p*. Stressed *SCHON* can block PCIs, SIs as well as SE inferences (2a), thereby making the continuation in (2b) fully acceptable.

(2) a. Anna weiß (*SCHON*) wer auf der Party getanzt hat.

Anna knows PRT who at the party danced has

without PRT → Anna knows who didn't (SE)

with PRT ↗ Anna knows who didn't

b. ... but she does not know that these are all dancers. (?? without *SCHON*)

**Upcoming experiments:** **Ex. 1** tests the hypothesis that *schon* supports the blocking of the SE inference. We compare sentences as in (1) with and without the particle *schon* and expect that with the particle they will be judged as less contradictory than without it. **Ex. 2** investigates the hypothesis that the acceptability of sentence pairs like (3) increases when *schon* is added.

(3) Anna ate (*SCHON*) some gummi bears. She namely ate all.

**References:** Cremers, A. & E. Chemla (2016). A psycholinguistic study of the exhaustive readings of embedded questions. *Journal of Semantics* 33(1), 49–85. Cremers et al. (2017). Children's exhaustive readings of questions. *Language Acquisition* 24(4), 343–360. Groenendijk, J. & M. Stokhof (1984). Studies on the semantics of questions and the pragmatics of answers, PhD thesis, University of Amsterdam. Heim, I. (1994). Interrogative semantics and Karttunen's semantics for know. In: Proceedings of the Ninth Annual Conference and the Workshop on Discourse of the Israel Association for Theoretical Linguistics, 128–144. Jerusalem: Academicon. Spector, B. (2006). Aspects de la pragmatique des opérateurs logiques. Doctoral Dissertation, Université Paris 7. Uegaki, W. (2015). Interpreting questions under attitudes. Cambridge, MA: MIT dissertation. Zimmerman, M. (2018). Wird schon stimmen! A degree operator analysis of *schon*. *Journal of Semantics* 35(4), 687–739.