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## ***Some* and the pragmatics of indefinite construal**

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### **0. Introduction**

*Some* is a complicated little word: it participates in a variety of distinct constructions; it expresses a variety of subtly different meanings; and its use is subject to constraints which do not apply to other words with similar meanings. In this paper, I hope to sort out some of this complexity: to present some basic facts about *some*'s uses, and to offer some explanation for the ways *some* can and cannot be used.

But while this paper purports to be about *some*, it is also, in some sense, about *any*. In fact, it could hardly be otherwise. The close relation between these forms—in particular, their puzzling, polarity sensitive pattern of suppletion—requires that any account of *some* should include at least some explanation of its relation to *any*. More than that, a proper understanding of the ways *some* can and cannot be used may shed light on some of the enduring controversies which surround *any*. The basic questions with *any* are in fact precisely those which confront us with *some*: how, if at all, are the different uses of this form related to each other; and why are these uses constrained in the peculiar ways they are.

Ultimately I will argue that the evidence from *some* offers important, if somewhat indirect, support for a unified analysis of *any* as an indefinite determiner. The argument is essentially analogical in form. Starting from the assumption that *some* and *any* share a close semantic relation, my goal is to see how much of the analysis of *some* might apply to *any*. I will argue that the parallelism between the two is stronger than is commonly supposed, and that consequently, the way we analyze one of them should significantly constrain the way we analyze the other.

### **1. Some facts about *any* and *some*.**

The basic facts for *any* have been well-established at least since Horn (1972). Polarity sensitive, or PS *any*, as in (1a), occurs only in "negative" polarity contexts (which of course need not be strictly negative) and seems to have the force of an existential quantifier. Free choice, or FC *any*, as in (1b), occurs in modal and other non-episodic contexts, and seems to have a meaning closer, if not quite identical to that of a universal quantifier (cf. Vendler 1967).

- (1) a. There aren't any lemurs in Leipzig.  
 b. Any lemur enjoys a good swim.  
 c. No lemur drinks any whiskey.

(1c) shows that in some contexts both uses may happily coexist. On the PS reading, lemurs are claimed to be abstemious: they drink no whiskey. On the FC

reading, they are merely fastidious: they drink whiskey, but not *just any* whiskey.

A variety of analyses are possible here. The simplest might be that *any*'s two uses simply reflect two distinct senses associated with *any* (Ladusaw 1979; Carlson 1981). Another possibility is that *any* has only one meaning, that of a universal quantifier, and that the distinct PS and FC readings simply reflect different scope assignments *any* may take with respect to other operators (Quine 1960; Gil 1991). Others agree that there is only one *any*, but argue that it is not a universal but an indefinite. On this account, the distinction between PS and FC *any* reflects the difference between existential and generic construals available with indefinite determiners generally (Davison 1980; Kadmon and Landman 1993; Lee and Horn 1994; Horn 1998).

The facts about *some* are no less interesting, though they tend to receive less attention. We may note first a traditional distinction between the reduced form *sm*, as in (2a), and the full form, as in (2b).

- (2) a. There were *sm* lemurs sitting in the library.  
b. Some linguists enjoy drinking whiskey.

While the reduced *sm* simply introduces an indefinite instance of a nominal type, the full form seems to presuppose a contrast with other instances of the type. Thus the lemurs in (2a) need not contrast with some topical larger set of lemurs; but the whiskey drinking linguists in (2b) can only be construed as a subset of linguists in general. Partly because these two construals are usually associated with distinct pronunciations, they are often treated as distinct lexical items.

Other uses of *some* may be distinguished on syntactic and semantic grounds.

- (3) a. There's *some* linguist here to see you.  
b. Boy, that was *some* party last night!  
c. We danced *some*, we talked *some*, and then we went home.

(3a) and (3b) show *some* combining with a singular count noun rather than a mass or plural noun as in (2). In both cases *some* seems to carry an added implicature about the speaker's attitude toward its referent. In (3c) *some* actually functions as an adverb rather than a determiner.

However we explain the ways *some* is used in (2-3), we must also contend with the ways it cannot be used. First, while *any* is a negative polarity item (NPI), *some* is a positive polarity item (PPI), and as such cannot happily occur in the scope of negation. Where *some* does occur with negation, the result is either ill-formed, as in (4a-b), or else it forces a reading in which *some* takes wide scope over negation. Thus (4c) can only assert that there are some books which were not read, and not that there are no books which were read.

- (4) a. \*You don't have *some* peanut butter on your chin.  
b. \*There isn't *some* linguist here to see you.  
c. I didn't read *some* books.

As noted by Langacker (1991: 103), *some* is subject to a further constraint in that, unlike other indefinites, it cannot support a generic reading. Thus while NPs formed with *a/an* or with zero can refer either existentially, to an indefinite instance of a type, as in (5), or generically, to the type itself, as in (6), NPs with *some* only allow non-generic readings.

- (5) a. Sally saw {a/some} wombat hiding under the bed.  
 b. We have {some/Ø} wombats living in our attic.
- (6) a. {A/#Some} cat likes to chase mice.  
 b. {#Some/Ø} cats are mammals.

In the following sections I sketch out an analysis of these facts concerning *some* which I hope will extend in a natural and explanatory way to the facts concerning *any*. First, I argue that not all of *some*'s distinct uses should be treated equivalently. Some may be explained by general pragmatic principles of indefinite construal and hence should not (or at least need not) be stipulated as distinct lexical senses. Other uses, however, seem to have semantic and syntactic properties which do not follow in any obvious way from *some*'s other conventional uses or from more general linguistic principles. I propose to treat these as distinct lexical senses which are extended from *some*'s basic use as a determiner. Finally, I will argue that the constraints on *some*'s distribution—its status as a PPI and its resistance to genericity in all its variants—reflect a type of weak scalar construal which *some* imposes on its referent.

In the last section I will apply these results for *some* to a consideration of *any*. I will argue that these two forms are closely related, and that the constraints on *any*, like the constraints on *some*, reflect its basic status as an indefinite scalar operator. As for the different uses of *any*, I will suggest that these appear to be strictly parallel to the pragmatically determined uses of *some*, and therefore do not require any lexical stipulation of distinct senses.

## 2. Basic *some*: the indefinite construction

Following Langacker (1991: 96), I treat determiners in general, and *some* in particular, as grounding predications—that is, as forms whose basic meaning involves the way in which a conceptualizer makes mental contact with an instance of a nominal type. I thus take *some*, in its most basic sense, as serving to establish mental contact with a limited, indefinite instance of the nominal type designated by its head. I will refer to this instance as *some*'s profile, or equivalently, as its referent.

By an **indefinite instance** I mean one which cannot be uniquely identified simply on the basis of the nominal alone. The noun which *some* determines is, on its own, insufficient to put the hearer in mental contact with a unique instance of the type it designates. An indefinite instance can be specific or non-specific depending on whether or not the speaker has a particular instance in mind. In general then, I take definiteness to reflect a referent's status in the mind of the hearer, and specificity to reflect its status in the mind of the speaker.

By a **limited instance** I mean one which, although indeterminate in its extent, may contrast with other instances. The use of *some* systematically suggests such contrasts. While it may be that if *all the linguists danced* then *some of the linguists danced*, the use of *some* still suggests that only a limited subset participated. *Some's* limited reference distinguishes it from more general indefinites, like *a/an*, which can refer either to a single instance or generically to a whole class of instances, and also from *any*, which effectively refers to every instance of a kind.

The indefinite semantics of *some* allow it to be associated with a variety of different construals, but while these construals are semantically distinct, they need not be taken as distinct senses of *some*. On the contrary, these construals are all available with a variety of indefinite NPs, including at least those marked by *a/an*, *a few*, *many*, *several*, and the cardinals *one*, *two*, *three*, etc. These construals are not idiosyncratic features of *some* in particular, but rather apply to indefinite NPs generally. They do not in themselves support a polysemous analysis of *some*. In the rest of this section I distinguish three important dimensions of construal which may play a role in the interpretation of indefinites, and demonstrate their significance for the use of *some*.

**2.1. Existential vs. partitive.** The first dimension of construal depends on whether an indefinite NP simply introduces an indefinite referent into the current mental space—the existential construal, or whether the referent is understood as construed as part of a larger group familiar in the discourse—the partitive construal. Out of context, indefinites are often ambiguous between the two readings. Thus in (7), *some linguists* can refer either to a group of people who happen to be linguists, or to some subset from a familiar set of linguists.

(7) Some linguists were seen smoking in a corner of the bar.

Note that the availability of these readings is not a peculiarity of the word *some*. Similar ambiguities arise when we replace *some* here with other indefinite determiners like *a*, *three* or *many* (cf. Milsark 1977; Diesing 1992).

As it turns out, the distinction between existential and partitive construals is precisely what distinguishes the reduced, unstressed *sm* from its full counterpart *sóme*. *Sm* requires an existential construal, while the full form allows either an existential or a partitive construal. While one could treat *sm* as a separate lexical item from the full *some*, it is also possible that *sm's* reduced phonology reflects a general pattern of vowel reduction in unstressed function words. I am inclined to the latter interpretation, though nothing crucial hinges on the decision here.

The distinction between these two construals is grammatically significant. In particular, the existential reading is only available with *stage-level* predicates describing transitory states or events, as in (8a,b), and not with *individual-level* predicates denoting a stable characteristic or property of their subjects, as in (8c). This explains why (8c) is bad: the weak unstressed *sm* can only receive a non-specific, existential interpretation, but the individual-level predicate *often belligerent* can only apply to a specific individual or group of individuals.

- (8) a. There were some lawyers arguing in the garden.  
 b. Sm lawyers beat up one of the linguists.  
 c. \*Sm lawyers are often belligerent.

Similarly, although the partitive construal works with either individual-level predicates, as in (9a), or with stage-level predicates, as in (9b), its presuppositional nature does not allow it to introduce a new discourse entity. This explains the oddness of (9c), which forces a partitive reading in an existential *there* construction.

- (9) a. Some lawyers are very pleasant people.  
 b. Some of the lawyers apologized profusely.  
 c. ??There were some of the lawyers arguing in the garden.

The existential-partitive split and its relation to other grammatical phenomena have been issues at the center of much recent research on indefinites (Enç 1991; Ladusaw 1994; Byrne 1998). The important point here is that however this distinction is ultimately handled, it is not a peculiarity of *some* but a general feature of indefinite construal.

**2.2. Neutral vs. contrastive.** The next dimension of construal depends on the determiner's status in the information structure of an utterance. Normally, a determiner is less pragmatically salient than the nominal which it determines. But sometimes one wants to emphasize the choice of one determiner over another. The examples in (10) illustrate contrastive construals with both existential, (10a), and partitive uses of *some* (10b).

- (10) a. We did see **some** linguists at the party, but not **many**.  
 b. **Some** linguists danced in the garden, but most just sat and talked.

Again, the choice of construal carries grammatical consequences. In particular, the restrictions on *some* as a positive polarity item appear to be much stricter when it is used contrastively. On the neutral construal *some* can appear in negative sentences where it takes wide scope over negation, as in (4c) above; but, when *some* is used contrastively, the wide scope interpretation seems to disappear. Thus negation in (11) must be construed as metalinguistic—the (a) reading. The (b) reading, parallel to that of (4c), is not available.

- (11) We didn't smoke **some** cigarettes.  
 a. We didn't smoke "some" cigarettes, we smoked them all.  
 b. \*There are some cigarettes that we didn't smoke, but not many.

Apparently, then, the contrastive construal makes *some* stronger as a PPI. The examples in (12) further support this conclusion.

- (12) a. If he'd read some books about it, I imagine he'd have told us.  
 b. ??If he'd read **some** books about it, I imagine he'd have told us.

In (12a), on a neutral construal, *some* is not blocked by a conditional. In (12b), however, the contrastive construal leads to anomaly in the conditional context.

**2.3. Quantities and Kinds.** The final dimension of construal depends on the ontological status of an indefinite's profile. In general, an indefinite NP can designate either a **quantity** of a given nominal type, or a **kind** of the type. The examples in (13) illustrate these two possibilities.

- |         |   |                  |
|---------|---|------------------|
| (13) a. | Some drugs might make you feel better.    | Quantity or Kind |
| b.      | Some drugs can be very dangerous.         | Kind only        |
| c.      | There are some drugs in the refrigerator. | Quantity only    |

(13a) allows at least two readings with different truth conditions. On the quantity construal, there must be some quantity of at least one kind of drug which might achieve the desired effect. On a kind construal, there have to be multiple kinds of drugs which might help, though there might be others that would not.

Since the idea of a kind itself presupposes that there could be other kinds which contrast with it, the kind reading is inherently presuppositional. As such it inherits all the privileges and restrictions associated with the partitive construal; however, the kind reading also imposes certain restrictions of its own. Much like FC *any*, the kind reading for *some*, is limited to just those contexts which allow indefinites to be interpreted generically. Thus in (14), where *some* is used episodically for specific past events, the kind reading is systematically blocked.

- |         |   |               |
|---------|---|---------------|
| (14) a. | I saw some syntacticians sneaking around the garden.  | Quantity only |
| b.      | Some linguists smoked all the opium.                  | Quantity only |
| c.      | I introduced Sally to some phonologists at the party. | Quantity only |

While the quantity-kind distinction does affect truth conditions, few, I think, would posit two distinct meanings of *some* to account for them. Rather the difference seems to reflect something more fundamental about the ways we can construe a nominal type (cf. Langacker 1997). This at least would explain why a variety of determiners (*many*, *a few*, *three*, etc.) allow both quantity and kind construals. And as I will suggest in section 5, echoing the proposal of Lee and Horn (1994), the quantity-kind distinction may be exactly the distinction needed to distinguish the free choice and polarity sensitive uses of *any*.

### 3. Polysemy: the extended constructional family

While some of *some*'s variants may reflect general facts about the pragmatics of indefinite reference, others cannot so easily be explained away.

**3.1. Spesumptive *some*.** The use of *some* with a singular count noun adds a significant nuance to *some*'s basic sense. The examples in (15) are typical.

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| (15) a. | There's some guy here to see you. Says he's the Emperor of Japan.         |
| b.      | Sally met some linguist at a bar. Seems like he reset all her parameters. |
| c.      | Apparently some idiot thought this would be a good place for a mall.      |

As discussed in Warfel (1972) and Mazodier (1998), the use of *some* in these examples has a quasi-specific force. While the NPs here must each have a

unique referent, the use of *some* here suggests that for whatever reason the speaker either cannot or will not specify the identity of the referent. Because the usage involves a sort of presumption of specificity, Warfel dubbed this the **spesumptive *some***.

The presumption of specificity appears to be a non-defeasible feature of *some*'s meaning in this usage, and attempts to defeat it result in anomaly.

- (16) a. #Cecily is dating some English duke. He's an old friend of mine.  
 b. #Noah rented some film for us to watch. It's an old favorite of mine:  
*The Unbelievable Truth*.  
 c. Noah rented some films for us to watch. They're old favorites of mine: *Trust*, *Suspicion* and *The Maltese Falcon*.

The anomaly of (16b) compared with the naturalness (16c) clearly shows that spesumptivity is conventionally associated with *some* only in its use with singular count noun and not with its more basic use with mass and plural nouns.

**3.2. Adverbial *Some*.** Like many indefinite quantifiers, *some* has an adverbial use in which it modifies a relational predication, usually an activity verb or VP.

- (17) a. We danced some, and then we said goodnight.  
 b. She wrote poetry some when she was younger, but not so much anymore.  
 c. I explained my feelings some, but maybe not enough.

While other indefinites also have adverbial usages, the adverbial uses an indefinite allows may not be obviously predictable from its meaning.

- (18) a. Mort isn't { \*some / any / \*a lot / much / very } good at ice-fishing.  
 b. Harry is { \*some / \*any / \*a lot / \*much / very } good at ice-fishing.  
 c. Sally's { \*some / \*any / a lot / much / \*very } better than Harry.

There may be some principled explanation for these differences between adverbial *some*, *any*, *much* and *a lot*, but it seems likely that speakers have to learn these patterns as idiosyncratic facts for each form. If this is correct, then the adverbial usage of *some* must be recognized as a distinct sense.

**3.3. Exclamative *Some*.** The examples below illustrate exclamative uses of *some* with singular count nouns (19a) and mass nouns (19b). The usage allows either an appreciative interpretation, the default in (19a-b), or an ironic reading, as in (19c).

- (19) a. Boy, was she (ever) **some dancer!**  
 b. That was **some wine** she brought to the party!  
 c. **Some friend** she turned out to be!

Exclamative *some* has two properties typical of exclamatives in general (cf. Michaelis & Lambrecht 1996). First, it can only be used to express a speaker's subjective evaluation of a referent. This explains why (20a) is odd (at least without free indirect discourse), because here the subjective evaluation is not

that of the speaker. Second, exclamative *some* involves the assertion of a scalar extent: the referent must be understood as an extreme exemplar of its type. This explains why it normally only occurs in predicative NPs, thus barring examples like (20b) where *some* is not part of the predicate, and allowing examples like (20c).

- (20) a. \*Harry thought she was **some** dancer, but I disagreed.  
 b. \***Some** friend stole my prized bottle cap collection!  
 c. She must have been **some** friend to rip you off like that!

The semantics of exclamative *some* is radically different from that of all other *some*s. First, it forms a definite NP whose referent must be uniquely identifiable: an exclamation presupposes something to exclaim about. Furthermore, the very notion of exclamation seems somehow at odds with other uses, as in (21), where *some* seems more compatible with hedging and understatement than exclamation.

- (21) a. I have *some* idea of what you mean, but it's still a bit hazy.  
 b. She's read *some* Lacan, but not much.

But understatement is often just a step away from exclamation, and *some*'s use as an exclamative may be seen as a natural extension from a more basic understating function. The examples in (22), with their air of pregnant understatement, offer a link between the hedges of (21) and the exclamatives of (19).

- (22) a. *Some* people actually enjoy the weather in San Diego.  
 b. Of all the boys I've known, and I've known *some*,  
 Until I first met you, I was lonesome. (from "Bei Mir Bist Du Schön")

Here, sentences which seem unassuming may be effectively very forceful. Thus one might use (22a) with someone unhappy about San Diego's excessive sunshine to suggest that not only do **some** people enjoy this weather, but in fact most people do. Similarly, the song lyrics in (22b) suggest that the speaker has in fact known quite a few boys: the use of *some* allows her to claim this worldly experience without sounding like she is bragging.

While these examples are not true exclamatives, they do point to a natural link between the exclamative use and other more understated uses. The important point is that while *some*'s exclamative use probably has to be stipulated, it is not an arbitrary fact but is motivated by *some*'s other uses, and in particular by its rhetorical use in understatements, (21), and pseudo-understatements, (22).

#### 4. *Some* and the pragmatics of understatement

As noted above, what distinguishes basic *some* from other indefinites is the limited nature of its indefinite reference. But to say that *some*'s reference is limited does little more than restate the facts about its distribution. The question

is, why is it limited? My basic proposal here is that *some*'s limited reference reflects its basic function as an expression of understatement.

Intuitively, understatement involves the expression of a less informative proposition where a more informative proposition might have been expected. As such, understatement is essentially a scalar phenomenon: it depends on the construal of an expressed proposition against an ordered set (i.e. a *scale*) of alternative propositions. Typically, any scale is structured around a norm representing default contextual expectations. The assertion in (22a) thus counts as an understatement because the expressed proposition—that *some people enjoy the weather*—makes a weaker claim than what one would expect—that *most people enjoy the weather*.

As noted in Israel (1996, 1998b), lexical forms may be specialized for the expression of understatement, and such specialization often gives rise to polarity sensitivity of one sort or another. Thus English *much* tends to occur in negative contexts where it can form a relatively weak proposition; similarly, a PPI like *somewhat* is blocked in negative contexts where it might sound emphatic. Other forms, like *a bit*, are rhetorically underspecified, and so can be used either to form understating propositions, as in (23a), or emphatic ones, as in (23b).

- (23) a. Sally was {a bit / somewhat /\*much} confused by his explanation.  
 b. Sally wasn't {a bit /\*somewhat /much} impressed by his nonchalance.

My claim here is that *some*, like *much* and *somewhat*, is essentially understating. *Some* profiles a limited instance of a nominal type construed against the set of all other instances of that type, and *some* requires that the proposition to which it contributes must be uninformative with respect to these other instances.

The understating nature of *some* is clearest in rhetorically loaded examples like those in (22). In other cases, and especially on the existential construal, the effect of understatement may be much more subtle. The examples in (24), for instance, lack the rhetorical pregnancy one normally associates with understatement.

- (24) a. Noah has sm really delicious mushrooms.  
 b. Some mushrooms are poisonous. You should be careful.

While such uses may be rhetorically neutral, they are nonetheless consistent with an understating scalar construal in that they present an expressed proposition against a background of more informative alternatives. The background propositions are much less prominent here, but they are nonetheless implicit in the contrast of *some* with alternative forms like *a lot*, *most* and *all*.

The analysis of *some* as inherently understating provides a simple explanation for the constraints on its distribution and interpretation. Because *some* is an understater, it cannot be used to convey information about all the instances of a given type: a set of *some* instances always, at least implicitly, contrasts with other instances. *Some* is thus a PPI: it cannot be interpreted in the

scope of negation, because the negation of an indefinite precludes the possibility of any contrasting instances. And it cannot be interpreted generically for the same reason—because a generic interpretation implies the participation of every normal instance of a type.

## 5. The Rhetorical Symmetry of *Some* and *Any*

*Some*'s status as an understater also explains its relationship with *any*, which is the emphatic counterpart of the understating *some*. While *some* requires a construal in which the expressed proposition is weaker than some potential alternative, *any* requires its expressed proposition to be stronger than any potential alternative. Figure 1 schematizes the relationship between these forms.

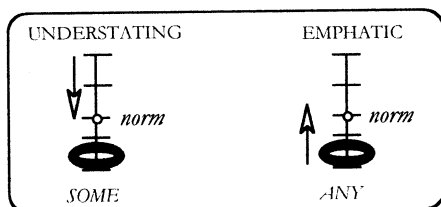


Figure 1: The Rhetorical Counterparts

The only difference here is in the inferencing the two forms demand. Both profile an indefinite instance construed against an ordered set of alternative instances, and in both cases, the ordering of alternatives supports scalar inferences. The upward arrow for *any* indicates that *any*'s profile licenses inferences about all other instances of a type. The downward arrow for *some* indicates inferencing from scalar alternatives to *some*'s expressed proposition. The understating semantics of *some* blocks it from licensing inferences about scalar alternatives. *Some* is understating because it suggests that one might have said something else which would have been more informative.

If *any* and *some* really are so closely related, then we should expect to find more or less the same set of construal types associated with both of them. This prediction appears to be fairly robustly confirmed.

**5.1. Existential vs. Partitive *Any*.** Like *some*, *any* allows both existential and partitive readings depending on whether a profiled instance is construed as some part of a larger whole. The *of* phrases in (25) force the partitive construal.

- (25) a. Noah didn't eat any of the brussel sprouts.  
 b. ??There weren't any of the linguists at the party.

(25b) suggests that as with *some*, the partitive construal of *any* is awkward, at best, in existential constructions. The parallelism here supports the analysis of *some* and *any* as twin scalar indefinites, and validates the view of the existential-partitive split as a matter of indefinite construal rather than lexical semantics.

**5.2. Contrastive vs. Neutral *Any*.** Like *some*, *any* allows both contrastive and neutral construals. In (26), for example, the use of heavy stress on *any* indicates a contrast with other potential quantities of brussel sprouts.

- (26) Gwendolyn: I really want a brussel sprout! Don't you have even one?  
 Jack: No! I don't have **any**.

As noted above (section 2.2), the contrastive use of *some* is stricter in its sensitivities than is the neutral use. Similar things happen to *any* (cf. Israel 1998a). On the neutral use, *any* is a liberal NPI, and is licensed in such weakly negative contexts as the focus of *only*, in (27), and negated *because* clauses, in (28). But these possibilities are not available on the contrastive use.

- (27) a. Only people who've read any Heidegger will appreciate this argument.  
 b. \*Only people who've read **any** Heidegger will appreciate this argument.
- (28) a. Annette didn't get fired because she stole any money.  
 b. \*Annette didn't get fired because she stole **any** money.

It has sometimes been suggested that the difference between the stressed NPI *any* and its lax liberal counterpart might have separate lexical entries (Krifka 1995; Rullmann 1996). The analogy with *some* here suggests that the two may simply be pragmatic variants of a single basic form.

**5.3. Quantity and Kind Scales.** Like *some*, *any* can profile either a quantity or a kind of the nominal type represented by its head. Thus given the type *mushroom*, the determiner can refer either to an indefinite quantity contrasting with other possible quantities (one mushroom, two mushrooms, three mushrooms, etc.), or to an indefinite kind of mushroom contrasting with other possible kinds (poisonous, expensive, delicious, disgusting, etc.). As it turns out, the quantity-kind distinction neatly captures the difference between polarity sensitive and free-choice *any*.

PS *any* is always construed with respect to a quantity scale. Thus in each example in (29) *any mushrooms* effectively means 'any quantity of mushrooms.'

- (29) a. Brett doesn't have any mushrooms.  
 b. Do you have any mushrooms?  
 c. I'd be surprised if Laura had any mushrooms.  
 d. \*Craig probably has any mushrooms. Let's call him.

FC *any* involves the construal of an indefinite with respect to a kind scale. In (30) *any mushroom* thus effectively means 'any kind of mushroom.'

- (30) a. Mildred will eat just about any mushroom.  
 b. Any mushroom has spores.  
 c. You want a mushroom? Take any mushroom you want.  
 d. \*Noah found any mushrooms growing in the garden.

The analysis of PS and FC *any* in terms of quantity and kind scales is due to Lee and Horn (1994), who argue for a univocal analysis of *any* as an indefinite

incorporating the semantics of a scalar focus particle *even*. On their account the difference between PS and FC *any* simply reflects the fact that *any* nominal can be construed either with respect to a scale of alternative kinds or to a scale of alternative quantities.

The parallels with *some* suggest that this may indeed be the right way to think about *any*. On this account then the two *any*'s reflect different pragmatic variants of a single lexical entry. The split is thus not an idiosyncratic property of *any*, but simply the manifestation of a general fact about the pragmatics of indefinite construal.

## 6. Some Conclusions

In this paper I have offered a broad, if much too brief, overview of the semantics of *some* and its relation to *any*. The evidence seems to justify the following modest conclusions:

- *Some* is polysemous. It is associated with at least four distinct lexical senses: basic, presumptive, adverbial, and exclamative.
- *Some* is pragmatically ambiguous. General principles of indefinite construal provide a variety of readings for the basic sense of *some*.
- The distributional and interpretive constraints on *some* reflect its function as an expression of scalar understatement.
- *Some* is the understating indefinite counterpart of the emphatic indefinite *any*.

I have attempted here to present a case for what might be called *responsible polysemy*. While I assume that polysemy is both normal and widespread in the lexicon, I do not assume that every alternative construal of a given form ought to be enshrined as a distinct lexical sense.

In this respect the study of *some* and *any* seems particularly instructive. For *some* although not every interpretive variant need be recognized as a distinct sense, **some** variants must. *Some* is therefore polysemous. But with *any* it appears that the most important interpretive variants may well be explained by general principles of indefinite construal. If this turns out to be correct, then *any* might not be polysemous.

It is probably premature just yet to close the book on the topic of the two *any*'s (see Horn 1998 for a useful overview of how much has already been written). After all, just because a variant is predictable on general principles doesn't mean that it can't also be learned as an individual item. Inevitably the debate about *any* will continue. As it does, however, we may do well to remember the relations of *any* to *some* and other indefinite determiners. The close pragmatic parallels between *some* and *any* suggest that these relations may be richer and more interesting than one might have expected. Unfortunately, further study will be required before we can know just how rich and interesting they will be.

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