Polarity Sensitivity: The Role of Higher Order Implicatures.

There has been considerable debate, recently, on the relation between NPIs and FCIs and on the role that Scalar Implicatures (SIs) may play in understanding such relation. While important new connections have emerged as a result of this work, there are many questions that remain open. For example, Chierchia (06) proposes that NPIs and FCIs activate the same (or very similar) domain alternatives. NPIs exploit these alternatives through an operator E (a null counterpart of *even*). FCIs, on the other hand, are associated with an "antiexhaustivity" operator (denoted as O¯). In contrast with this, SI are obtained via an exhaustivity operator O (a null counterpart of *only*) which operates on scalar alternatives, along the lines argued for in Fox (06).

In the present paper, I would like to push this line of inquiry further and propose that SIs, NPIs and FCIs are all obtained through applications of the exhaustivity operator O. In particular, O applied to domain alternatives will generate an NPI behavior. This is sort of like what Krifka (95) proposed for weak NPIs – and hence it will have to overcome the seemingly serious difficulties that that proposal faces. Moreover, O applied to *exhaustified* domain alternatives will produce Free Choice effects. In the latter case, it will be just like having higher order scalar implicatures, of the very sort that according to Fox are responsible for the interaction of modals and disjunction (i.e. for the observation that *John may be at home or in the office* implicates *John may be at home and John may be in the office* – a fact also studied in Zimmerman 00). So the difference between NPIs and FCIs boils down to the fact the former disallows, while the latter allows, incompatible (i.e. exhaustified) domain alternatives.